Mistakes Leaders Make

In a world where we see leaders at every level and in every enterprise fall and fail, author and speaker Dave Kraft in his book *Mistakes Leaders Make*, provides a much-needed wake-up call. Essentially, he offers a thought-provoking checklist of several ways that leaders can compromise (or completely destroy) their effectiveness as a leader. In many ways, this book serves as early-warning system, alerting leaders to the most common pitfalls that set up a leader for failure.

Take a look at these **Book Notes** to get a flyover. But most of all, read the entire book thoughtfully and prayerfully, asking the Holy Spirit to help you see any trend lines that need to be redirected so that you run the race—and finish the race—well.

Chuck Olson
Founder | Lead With Your Life

Title: *Mistakes Leaders Make*

Author: Dave Kraft

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Book Description:
Anyone involved in leadership knows that it's tough and mistakes are bound to happen. But some mistakes are more costly than others and can result in the end of effectiveness, the loss of important relationships, and disqualification from ministry.

Using the story of a fictitious church team to demonstrate the problems, principles, and practice of finding solutions, leadership expert Dave Kraft uncovers the top 10 critical mistakes leaders make and shows you how to avoid them so you can have ministry and relationships that last.

Book Quotes:

The first and greatest mistake, which in essence gives birth to all the other mistakes, is not allowing Jesus to have his rightful place in our life and ministry. LOCATION: 233

Henri Nouwen once said that the main obstacle to loving God is service for God. LOCATION: 303

Leaders must guard against ministry becoming a mistress. A mistress is someone who takes the place that only your wife should occupy. Ministry must never take the place of Jesus himself in your heart and in your values. As 1 John 5:21 says, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." The New Living Translation says, "Dear children, keep away from anything that might take God's place in your hearts." Our hearts are idol factories, and ministry, for many leaders, is the king of idols. LOCATION: 311

It's healthy to compare me with me but unbiblical to compare me with others. LOCATION: 465

Comparing shows that I don't trust the sovereignty of God in my life. It reveals that I don't really accept and am not genuinely thankful for who I am and what God is allowing me to accomplish. It shows that I am jealous and envious of others. LOCATION: 497

Pride is a difficult issue for leaders to recognize in themselves and even more difficult to deal with. It often hides under the cloak of confidence and conviction. It is the root cause for the undoing and fall of most leaders. LOCATION: 551

I used to think that humility meant staying in the background, not saying much, being embarrassed when I was complimented, and regularly reminding myself that I was nothing. I now realize that true humility is a strong sense of God-confidence, which interesting enough can often be confused with pride and self-confidence. True humility should lead to a strong confidence in how God made me and to honestly living that out, not in a prideful way but in a grateful and honest way. Humility is being yourself, the person that God created you to be, and being thankful for who you are. Humility is not trying to be less or more than you are, but having sober judgment (Rom. 12:3) as to who you are, and who you aren't. LOCATION: 646

Pride and envy are close cousins. Pride is thinking so highly of myself that I wish people were more like me. Envy is wishing I were like other people. It is not a matter of thinking more of myself or less of myself, but thinking more of Jesus. The more I dwell on the cross, the gospel, the resurrection, and the incredible grace that has been offered to me, the less I focus on me. LOCATION: 663

The proud leader who is full of himself cannot lead people in a biblical manner, and he will sooner or later manipulate and intimidate his way to success, using people as a means toward and springboard for his ungodly desires. LOCATION: 692

For any ministry to grow and be healthy, it is paramount that the leader balance his time between different kinds of people. The primary responsibility of a leader is to develop additional leaders so as not to be continually overwhelmed as the ministry grows. If all the leader's time is devoted to shepherding and counseling hurting people to the exclusion of nurturing hungry future leaders, the ministry cannot continue to grow as God would desire. And there is a good chance the leaders will eventually burn themselves out. LOCATION: 1244

You don't train for talent, you hire for talent. All the training in the world won't change a person's God-given DNA or help him or her be somebody God never intended. A person who doesn't think in detail, and never has, will never have this as a strength and should not be in a role where that is a major expectation. LOCATION: 1377

It's not what you know, but what you do, in dependence on the Holy Spirit, with what you know that makes the difference. LOCATION: 1397

Here is a good formula to remember: Information + meditation + repentance + application = transformation. Understand that application is my responding in the power of the Holy Spirit to what God is making clear to me. LOCATION: 1466

Trust is the cornerstone of relationships. When a husband or wife doesn't trust his or her spouse or when supervisors don't trust their staff, relationships start to unravel. No attribute is more critical than trust in relationships and none is as rare. LOCATION: 1503

In Leaders Who Last, I write about four key responsibilities of a leader. We are to shepherd, develop, equip, and empower. LOCATION: 1560

Empowering people has to do with creating an atmosphere that frees people to be their best and do their best for the Savior. Among other things, it means not controlling things too tightly and giving people more freedom to innovate/create and put some of their own ideas and personality into their work. LOCATION: 1561

The more freedom you give people to do their jobs the way they'd like to do them, the more satisfaction they'll get from their work. LOCATION: 1588

We have explored the following critical mistakes:
• Allowing ministry to replace Jesus
• Allowing comparing to replace contentment
• Allowing pride to replace humility
• Allow pleasing people to replace pleasing God
• Allowing busyness to replace visioning
• Allowing frugality to replace fearless faith
• Allowing artificial harmony to replace difficult conflict
• Allowing perennially hurting people to replace potential hungry leaders
• Allowing information to replace transformation
• Allowing control to replace trust LOCATION: 1650

When preparing to write this book, I compiled a secondary list of mistakes that could be addressed:
• Allowing selfish ambition to replace godly ambition
• Allowing reactive to replace proactive
• Allowing discouragement to replace dreaming
• Allowing teaching to replace training
• Allowing tactical to replace strategic
• Allowing politics to replace principles
• Allowing talking to replace listening
• Allowing careless firing to replace careful hiring
• Allow competence to replace character
• Allowing pornography to replace purity LOCATION: 1657

As I reflect on all of the mistakes listed above, and as I think back on my own experiences with the fifteen churches I have personally been a part of in my forty-three years of ministry, I want to share these closing thoughts:
1. The more that leaders have their identity and worth in Jesus—who he is and what he did through his cross and resurrection—the less chance there will be to fall into any fatal mistakes.
2. I pray over 1 Chronicles 4:10 most every day for anointing, opportunities, and protection. I ask for protection from lust by praying for purity; pride by praying for humility; greed by praying for contentment; and anger by praying for patience. If I fall into big trouble, it will probably be in one of these four areas. Praying daily over them and being aware of the warning in 1 Peter 5:8 that the Devil is patiently waiting to devour keeps me alert and watchful in the Spirit. It is noteworthy that verse 8 is in the middle of Peter's words to leaders. The Evil One is especially after leaders and will use their mistakes to inflict great damage.
3. We need to ask for wisdom and boldness to recognize these mistakes and to take action when God makes it clear to us.
4. As you have journeyed with me in the life of Covenant Community Church and some of its leaders' serious mistakes, I trust you have heard the Holy Spirit speaking to your heart.
LOCATION: 1665

Note: should you wish to find any quote in its original context, the Kindle "location" is provided after each entry.