



Servant Leadership Quotes

“The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant.”

– Max De Pree

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”

– Mahatma Gandhi

“Not everybody can be famous. But everybody can be great, because greatness is determined by service. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You don't have to know about Plato or Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know Einstein's theory of relativity to serve. You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love.”

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

“Life's most urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

“One of the great ironies of life is this: He or she who serves almost always benefits more than he or she who is served.”

– Gordon B. Hinckley

“I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.”

– Rabindranath Tagore

“I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve.”

— Albert Schweitzer

“Relationships are never about power, and one way to avoid the will to power is to choose to limit oneself—to serve.”

— Wm. Paul Young

“Though my work may be menial, though my contribution may be small, I can perform it with dignity and offer it with unselfishness. My talents may not be great, but I can use them to bless the lives of others.... The goodness of the world in which we live is the accumulated goodness of many small and seemingly inconsequential acts.”

— Gordon B. Hinckley

“Give of your hands to serve and your hearts to love.”

— Mother Teresa

“I don't want my life to be defined by what is etched on a tombstone. I want it to be defined by what is etched in the lives and hearts of those I've touched.”

— Steve Maraboli

“When you find yourself in need of spiritual nourishment, it is in the opportunities to serve others that you will find the abundance you seek.”

— Steve Maraboli

“Service is the very purpose of life. It is the rent we pay for living on the planet.”

— Marian Wright Edelman

“True leaders understand that leadership is not about them but about those they serve. It is not about exalting themselves but about lifting others up.”

— Sheri L. Dew

“Make sure your business is creating a service experience so good that it demands loyalty.”

— Steve Maraboli

“Good leaders must first become good servants.”

— Robert K. Greenleaf

“True leadership must be for the benefit of the followers, not to enrich the leader.”

— John C. Maxwell

“Servant-leadership is more than a concept, it is a fact. Any great leader, by which I also mean an ethical leader of any group, will see herself or himself as a servant of that group and will act accordingly.”

— M. Scott Peck

“We must be silent before we can listen. We must listen before we can learn. We must learn before we can prepare. We must prepare before we can serve. We must serve before we can lead.”

— William Arthur Ward

“My research debunks the myth that many people seem to have . . . that you become a leader by fighting your way to the top. Rather, you become a leader by helping others to the top. Helping your employees is as important, and many times more so, than trying to get the most work out of them.”

— William Cohen

“People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care.”

— John C. Maxwell

“If leadership serves only the leader, it will fail. Ego satisfaction, financial gain, and status can all be valuable tools for a leader, but if they become the only motivations, they will eventually destroy a leader. Only when service for a common good is the primary purpose are you truly leading.”

— Sheila Murray Bethel

“A person who is worthy of being a leader wants power not for himself, but in order to be of service.”

— U.S. Senator Sam J. Ervin, Jr.

"A new moral principle is emerging which holds that the only authority deserving one's allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the led to the leader in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of the leader. Those who choose to follow this principle will not casually accept the authority of existing institutions. Rather, they will freely respond only to individuals who are chosen as leaders because they are proven and trusted servants. To the extent that this principle prevails in the future, the only truly viable institutions will be those that are predominantly servant-led."

– Robert K. Greenleaf

"Servant-leadership is all about making the goals clear and then rolling your sleeves up and doing whatever it takes to help people win. In that situation, they don't work for you, you work for them."

– Ken Blanchard

"The quality of a true warrior is that he is in service to a purpose greater than himself; that is, to a transcendent cause."

– Robert Bly

"Ultimately, a leader is not judged so much by how well he or she leads, but by how well he or she serves."

– Kevin Cashman

"It is high time the ideal of success should be replaced with the ideal of service."

– Albert Einstein

"I don't think there's anything as wonderful in life as being able to help someone else."

– Betty Ford

"The noblest question in the world is, What Good may I do in it?"

– Benjamin Franklin

"You will find yourself by losing yourself in service to your fellow man, your country, your God."

– Mahatma Gandhi

"The great use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it."

– William James

“Are you on this planet to do something, or are you here just for something to do? If you’re on this planet to do something, then what is it? What difference will you make? What will be your legacy?”

– James Kouzes and Barry Posner

“I want to sleep for eternity with a broad smile on my face. I want those who remain behind to say this man has done his duty.”

– Nelson Mandela

“Whoever wants to be great must become a servant.”

– Book of Mark

“Do what you can, where you are, with what you have.”

– Theodore Roosevelt

“Everyone must work to live, but the purpose of life is to serve and to show compassion and the will to help others.”

– Albert Schweitzer

“...when you choose the paradigm of service, looking at life through that paradigm, it turns everything you do from a job into a gift.”

– Oprah Winfrey