



by Aaron Childers

*Editor's Note: The following essay placed third in our [From Their Green Notebooks](#) essay contest. For the contest, authors were asked to reflect on lessons learned in their favorite episode(s) of the [From the Green Notebook Podcast](#). The top three winners received a one year subscription to the [DDPY Fitness App](#) and an autographed copy of Steven Pressfield's [A Man at Arms](#).*

I love reading. My bookshelves are overflowing with different topics, from military history to pure fiction. In fact, I have never met a used bookstore I didn't like. However, not every lesson has to be transmitted in print. In fact, living in Northern Virginia these last few years has made me appreciate things I can listen to. Whether I am running or sitting in DC traffic, the best way I get information is to hear it. I've learned that this is not only safer, but also more efficient than trying to read articles on an iPhone on I-95. When FTGN launched the Podcast in Fall 2020, I expected great things and I was not disappointed. After listening to the podcast over the last two seasons, I feel even more strongly that leadership is about people. To improve ourselves as leaders, we must seek out a variety of perspectives, become comfortable with the topic in our everyday lives, and be willing to share our own experiences.

Understanding leadership requires a variety of perspectives. [Sir Michael Howard](#) once wrote that if you are studying military history, you should look at the subject in "depth, breadth, and in context." I think the same is true for leadership. Whether it is [Jerry Depizzo](#) from O.A.R. talking about leadership in a band, or [Coach Eliah Drinkwitz](#) talking about how to build a football team, the Podcast encourages you to examine leadership beyond the military profession. Good leadership is all around us. We should all take the opportunity to expand our horizons and learn from those outside our comfort zones.

Leadership must be a conversation. Many of us have had awkward, one-way discussions involving someone lecturing about leadership. The podcast, however, breaks down the formality and opens up a discussion. The best episodes were more of a conversation than a lecture. The episodes with [Diamond Dallas Page](#) and [Kori Schake](#) were a steady back and forth between the hosts and the guests. This not only makes for great listening, but also shows how leadership is a topic best discussed, not lectured. If we expect people to retain lessons about leadership, we have to create space for dialogue.

Good leaders share their experiences. They share their stories, not for their own benefit, but for the good of those around them. Think about this: good leaders talk about leadership.

[Brigadier General Steve Marks](#) shared his daily routine to remain intentional about leadership. So many of the Podcast's guests lead extremely busy professional lives, yet have made time to share best personal and leadership practices. We, who are arguably less busy or committed, should follow this model and seek to share our own experiences with others. The guests on this show have set an example, just by giving their time to talk about something important.

Most bookstores have huge sections devoted to leadership, I know because I have spent countless hours and paychecks in these sections. But the truth is, sometimes we just need to listen. Sit back, relax, and take a lesson from those who come from a variety of professions, talk comfortably about leadership, and are willing to share their experiences. You might be surprised by what you learn.

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