

# Landscape Leader: Maurice Dowell



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Maurice Dowell is president of Dowco Enterprises, a full-service lawn care and landscape company in St. Louis, Missouri. Early in his career he was more of a “driver” in his business but has since learned that tactic doesn’t work to create loyalty and trust – two of the most important attributes of a good leader. Here, he talks about how he makes his employees feel like they are integral parts of the team and why his mother is his greatest leadership role model.

**How would you describe your style of leadership and why does this work for you?**

The natural part of me, the driver, dominated my early leadership years. That style worked short-term, but did not create loyalty and trust. One of Whitey Herzog’s former players described his leadership as having the ability to make everyone feel they played an integral part, and the team could not win without them. As I’ve matured, I adopted the Whitey philosophy. I work behind the scenes soliciting the opinions of others and then bring the team together to make decisions that we all can buy into. That has helped create a unit that collaborates and believes in each other, a team where members can see their stamp of influence on our organization.

**How do you work at consistently becoming better at leadership?**

Leadership is something I get to practice every day whether I want to or not. Good leadership brings good results. Experience truly is my best teacher.

**Who are your leadership role models and why?**

My mother was a great role model because she did what she said. You never wondered what she thought as she was frightfully transparent. You may not have agreed with her, but her convictions were real and she was not afraid to state them.

**What leadership book(s) inspire you and why?**

Michael Gerber's "E-Myth Revisited" was the book that changed my life. To a young guy selling, producing, marketing and doing everything else in my company, the concept of working on my business not in my business was eye-opening. John Maxwell's "21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership" is a must-read for any leader. I am always citing Stephen Covey's "Begin With the End in Mind."

**What, as a leader, have you done that gives you pride and why?**

I have mined a management team capable of producing high-end residential maintenance projects. I helped our church create a business-owners group along with a 12-step recovery program for men. For three years I worked on the board of Dart, a drug and alcohol treatment center restoring the lives of broken people, and I have helped raise two wonderful adults of whom I am so proud.

**What leadership words or quote inspire you most and why?**

"When you discipline yourself to do the things you have to do when you have to do them, the day will come when you can do the things you want to do when you want to do them." -Zig Ziglar

"Leadership: the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it." -Dwight D. Eisenhower

**If you were to give young leaders one piece of advice, what would that be?**

Ongoing training and education keeps you relevant and current. Never stop learning.

**In a leadership capacity, where do you see yourself in five years?**

My key responsibilities now are finance and company direction, ensuring the right people are in the correct seats in the company. While I don't see this as changing, I see myself handing off more of these key responsibilities to other leaders, while I take a 10,000-foot perspective on mentoring, talent appraising and financing.

**What leadership roles have you had in the industry and why are they important to you?**

I chaired an awards committee and membership committee for the National Association of Landscape Professionals, and I have worked on numerous other committees in an active or advisory capacity. It is not the roles that I have played in the industry that are important, it is the people I have met, the people who continue to encourage me and offer their support.