

A red banner with white text, featuring a white double-slash graphic on the left side.

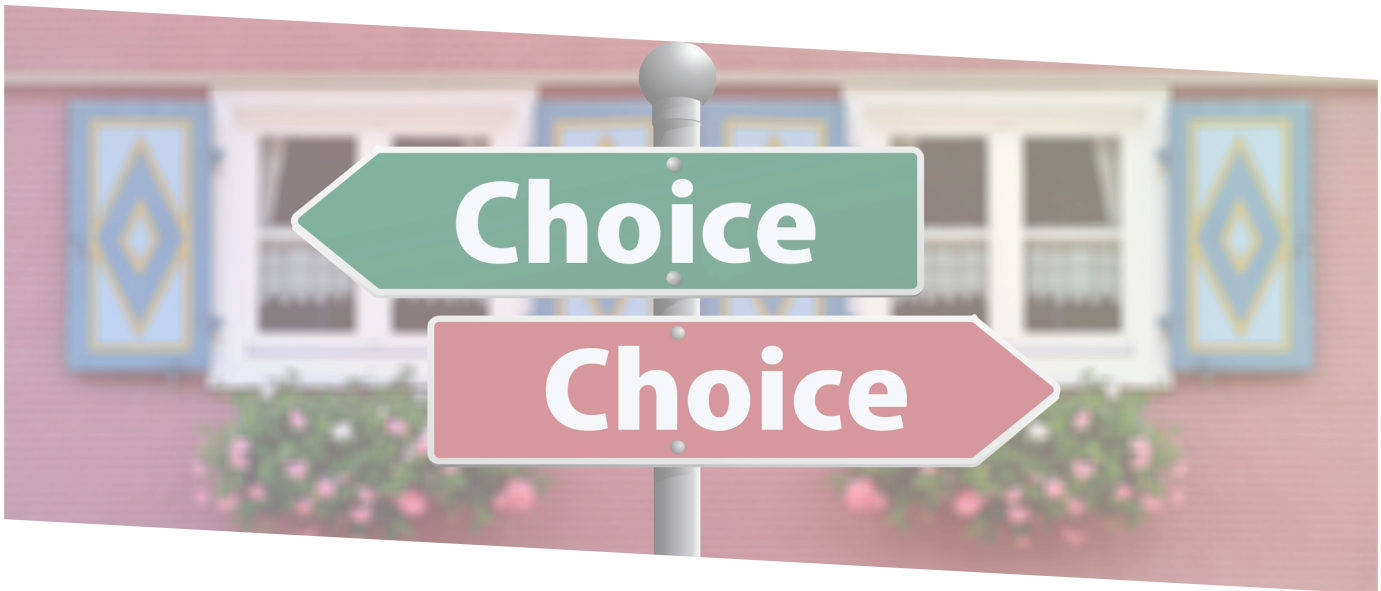
# Choices

A red banner with white text at the bottom of the page.

*Every decision is a trade-off.*

## Lesson Summary:

Every choice is a trade-off. Choosing one action means sacrificing another. Leaders can do anything, but not everything.



## Making iLead Effective and Fun For Your Group

1. Form groups of 3 to 4 people.
2. One person volunteers to be the group leader and first reader.
3. Take turns reading each section of the material out loud. **You may pass to the next reader if you would like.**
4. Respect and value each person in the group. Encourage others as you share.
5. Discuss openly. As you read, write down or underline what is important to you.
6. Evaluate yourself. Review. Reflect.
7. Take Action. Have fun!



Whenever you see this icon, it is time for the next person to read. As always, you may “pass” your turn on to the next person.

# Trade-Offs



Wikipedia defines “trade-off” as something that means “losing one quality or aspect of something in return for gaining another quality or aspect. It implies deciding with full comprehension of both the upside and the downside of that choice.”

The leader believes what he or she gives up is worth the price of what he or she may gain. We do this every day without thinking. Board games almost always involve trade-offs. For instance, in chess, do you trade a bishop for a position you want? In Monopoly™, do you trade in some money for a hotel on Park Place?



When you think about it, every choice is a trade-off. Every purchase you make in a store is a trade-off: money for products. What makes the decision hard is that we really want both!

## REFLECT AND RESPOND:

**What is a trade-off you have had to make this year? Was it difficult? Why?**

**Share your answer with your group.**



## What's Most Important?

The most effective leaders have found a way to simplify their decisions, mission, and, consequently, their lives. They understand that they must choose what's important enough to keep and what isn't. Leaders don't allow their lives to be so cluttered that they lose sight of what's most important to their growth.



**Dr. Tim Elmore**  
Author and Speaker

**What is your key take-away from this passage?  
Summarize it in your own words.**

**Share your summary with the rest of your group. What did you learn?**

# Good Trades



In our world, choices and opportunities abound, and it can be really difficult to make trade-offs. Why give up one thing when it appears we can have it all and then some? “Trade-offs” are hard to apply because we tend to trade for unhealthy things.



In his book, “15 Invaluable Laws of Growth”, bestselling author John C. Maxwell lists some healthy trade-offs that leaders must make to realize their potential. They may be difficult tradeoffs to make, but you must decide what reaching the next level of your development is worth. You must ask yourself, "What am I willing to give up, to go up?".



Consider if you are willing to make the following healthy tradeoffs:

- **Affirmation for Accomplishment:** Stop worrying about pleasing people. Start getting something done with or without the affirmation of your peers.
- **Security for Significance:** Make sure what you do fulfills you personally and makes an impact. Try and find tasks that are more than just ‘work.’
- **Immediate Gain for Delayed Growth:** Delayed gratification is nonexistent in today’s culture. Fight it. Gratification is much higher for those who wait.
- **Exploration for Focus:** You will only go far if you specialize in something. Find what you were meant to do and stick with it!
- **Quantity for Quality of Life:** Remove excess from your calendar. Focus on things that enrich both you and others.
- **Acceptable for Excellent:** No one wants to be average. If something is worth doing, give it your best, or don’t do it at all.



## REFLECT AND RESPOND:

**Which of the above ‘healthy trades’ do you struggle with the most? Why?**

**Share your answer with your group.**

# Evaluating Your Choices



Remember, almost every decision is a trade-off. Leaders understand that evaluating choices must involve reflecting on their personal mission and long-term goals.

We must ask: Will this decision improve my chances of reaching my big goals or distract me from them? In his book “Good to Great”, Jim Collins suggests making good choices by introducing the Hedgehog Concept.



The concept is based on Isaiah Berlin's famous essay “The Hedgehog and the Fox,” which divides the world into ‘hedgehogs’ and ‘foxes.’ In the essay, Berlin says, “The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing.” And the hedgehog always wins.



To become more like hedgehogs, Jim Collins says leaders must ask three questions before making choices.

## 1. Passion:

What are you deeply passionate about? This could be a beautiful dream or a frustrating circumstance, but think about what impact you want to make on the world.



## 2. Ability:

What can you be great at doing? Take inventory of your talents and where you like spending your time. Your strengths are where you will make the most difference.

## 3. Goals

How do you want to make your impact? This question is likely about your career. Where do you see yourself working, and with whom? Set yourself up to work in a field that combines your passions, core values, and abilities.



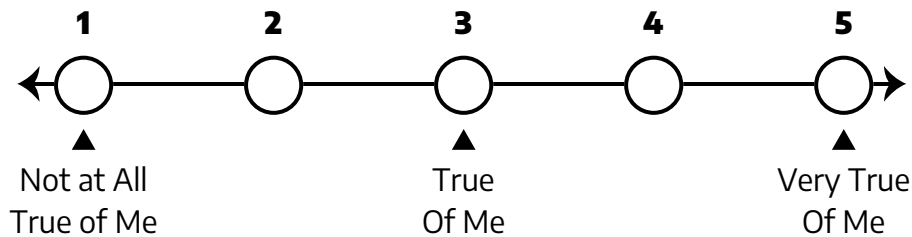
***Everything is a trade-off. The more successful you are, the harder it is to make trade-offs. That's why some people become successful and then become flat.***

**JOHN C. MAXWELL**

## Self-Evaluation

Using the scale below, evaluate yourself on how well you demonstrate the leadership value of this lesson.

**I make healthy trade-offs to reach goals that are important to me.**



**Why did you give yourself this rating?**

## Take Action

Write down 1-2 things that you need to stop doing this week in order to make room for things you know you must do to be successful. Take some time to share what you chose with your group. Ask them to hold you accountable for them next time you meet.

## Key Takeaways

- Every choice is a trade-off. Sometimes, we must trade good things for great things!
- Leaders can do anything but can't do everything.
- Leaders evaluate their decisions and make healthy trades as often as possible.
- Evaluate your choices based on your passions, abilities, and goals.



**Today**

**I will evaluate my**

**choices**

**and make healthy  
trade-offs to reach  
my goals.**