

Fred Smith, Sr.

When asked to paint a portrait of the leader, the sagely Fred Smith, Sr. offers the analogy of the leader as a symphony orchestra conductor. He explains that the conductor must know the capability of every instrument and person in the orchestra. Then, the conductor must translate that knowledge into music. All the instruments of the orchestra, with the varying degrees of talent amongst the orchestra players, must be synthesized by the conductor into a special sound.



The sweet sound of the music Fred has directed has resonated with people for generations. Through his writing, positions of leadership, and personal connections, Fred has mentored to many leaders over the decades of his eighty-nine years of life. The orchestra Fred has led has included many distinguished individuals, including Zig Ziglar, who recently dedicated a book to Fred calling him “the best and wisest teacher I have ever met.” To this day, Fred still actively mentors twenty high achievers in the United States and Canada.

In recent years, Fred has begun conducting to a global audience through the use of the world wide web. His insights have been made available at BreakfastWithFred.com, a tremendous resource for leaders and those who aspire to lead. Fred is a fascinating man to speak with, and unselfishly offers his insights without concern for direct personal gain (other than the self satisfaction of knowing he is positively contributing to a life). For the leadership wisdom Fred freely dispenses and the positive impact it has on the lives of those who embrace it, Fred Smith, Sr. is the Leader of the Month for February 2005.

Author, Mentor & Sage

Bio: Born 9-1-15; Married to Mary Alice Smith for 67 years. She died in 2004. Three children, Brenda A. Smith, Fred Smith, Jr. and Mary Helen Noland; six grandchildren: Heather Richardson, Meredith Hurd, Jeff Horch, Greg Noland, Catherine Smith and Haley Smith; 4 great grandchildren: Andrew Richardson, Colby, Caden and Colin Hurd.

Home: Dallas, Texas, USA

Current personal passion: mentoring; website www.breakfastwithfred.com

Dream: making a difference

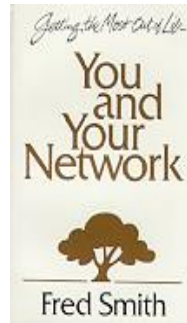
Most admired leader: Maxey Jarman. He was a totally cause-oriented leader who took a small shoe company with 75 employees and built it into a retail empire with 83,000 employees. He was my best friend for 46 years and had one of the clearest minds that I have known. He loved truth and was a visionary, seeing what was possible. He had certain fundamental beliefs, such as *utilize your strengths and buttress your weaknesses*. High achievers always have a vision of what can be.

Favorite book: The Bible: truth in one volume.

Favorite quotation: "Sit loose and close to people." - Smith's paraphrase of a quotation from Oswald Chambers. The quotation is elaborated on in this excerpt from Smith's *You and Your Network*: "One of the most helpful disciplines ever given is Oswald Chambers' 'Sit loose to things.' Own them, enjoy them, expect them, welcome them when they come, but still 'sit lose to' them. That way, if they go, they do not carry us with them. Things are to own and people are to love, rather than things to love and people to own. It isn't from the value of the car that we derive the value of the person who gets out of the car."

Place in the world you most like to visit: Blowing Rock, North Carolina, because it is a place my wife and I used to visit every summer. There is a quiet, comfortable pace there.

Leadership highlights: Corporate Vice President company ownership speaking and writing on leadership; 20 board memberships; author of three books (*You and Your Network*, *Learning to Lead* *Leading with Integrity*, and *The Pastors Soul*); articles in *Leadership Journal*; recipient of numerous national leadership awards (some of the most recent came from John Maxwell, Crystal Cathedral, Norman Vincent Peale Center for Leadership, and Roaring Lambs). Garry Kinder, co-CEO of KBI Group, in Dallas, Texas, shares the following about Fred Smith, Sr., "Fred is the greatest Christian leader in the last 100 years. Along with Peter Drucker, Fred is the finest management consultant of our lifetimes."

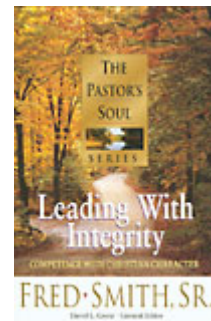


THE LEADERSHIP LIBRARY

Learning
to Lead



FRED SMITH



Fred Smith, Sr. and Leadership

Book recommended for aspiring leaders: Peter Drucker's writings and the book *Good to Great* by Jim Collins because I think it is one of the best I have ever read. Collins effectively describes the principles of how a good company can become great.

Traits most important in a leader: character, vision, persistency

Advice to aspiring leaders: Accept responsibility.

What and where are the best training programs for leaders? a position of leadership; on-the-job training.

What is your metaphor, story, or analogy for leadership? When I was a young man, I sat on a tombstone, and asked myself what I wanted the top of it to say when I was underneath it rather than sitting on top of it. I decided that the three words "he stretched others" were what I wanted it to say. So I adopted those three words as my life's

mission. I never lost that primary interest throughout my career and my life: defining and developing talent. I enjoy seeing people succeed, especially people who would not have had the same opportunity had they not worked with me.

What is the purpose of leadership? *to achieve a maximum potential*

Describe the difference between leadership and management: *I think of management as being efficient, doing what you are doing as well as it can be done. Leadership is being effective—dealing with the pecking order. Leadership is principles; management is techniques.*

The Breakfast With Fred Story

When Fred Smith, Sr. was in his early twenties he visited a cemetery and asked himself what he would want the epitaph on his tombstone to read. It was at that moment that he chose the phrase that would set his life direction: 'He stretched others.'

For many, a 6:30 breakfast with Fred Smith, Sr. is usually the start of a long and profitable mentoring relationship. Ask most people who have been stretched by him and they invariably reference breakfasts where the light bulbs went on. Throughout his life he has enjoyed the mentoring process of helping others live a successful, well-balanced life.

Today, family and friends know that at the age of 87 with his health uncertain, Fred has limited time left. So with a heightened sense of urgency, the BWF Project, a non-profit organization, was formed to produce new material from Fred and make it available, along with existing material, for future generations. In January 2003, The BWF Project officially launched www.breakfastwithfred.com. The vision of the website is to present the ideas and principles Fred has processed throughout his 87 years and clearly communicate them in a way that is relevant and useful.

The website features a daily front page article, a question of the day, nearly 300 one-liners, a weekly thought available through email, audio excerpts from Fred, recommended links, a discussion forum, plus over hundreds of writings from Fred and other contributors on the area of leadership and personal growth.

We hope this site challenges you to live a well-balanced life and we hope to see you every morning at Breakfast with Fred.



Visit <http://www.breakfastwithfred.com>