



Principle Centered Teaching

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Introduction

The purpose of this entire GATS series is to equip the Minister (Teacher/Administrator) for his service. First one must identify or define who/what a “Minister” is. Holding to a wrong concept of what it means to be a minister will certainly undermine and frustrate one’s attempt towards effective, credible ministry.

How did Christ define “minister?”

But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant [minister, KJV], and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave [servant, KJV]; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served [ministered unto, KJV], but to serve [minister, KJV], and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Matthew 20:25-28¹

¹ Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture is quoted from the *New American Standard Bible* (Zondervan Publishing House: Grand Rapids, 1960).

Christ taught that a “minister” is a servant. He came to serve, not to be served.

Servant: diakonos

- 1) Thayer Definition: One who executes the commands of another, especially of a master; a servant, attendant, minister.
- 2) Strong Definition G1249 **διάκονος**, diakonos, *dee-ak'-on-os*: Probably from **διάκω** diako (obsolete, to *run* on errands); an *attendant*, that is, (generally) a *waiter* (at table or in other menial duties); specifically a Christian *teacher* and *pastor* (technically a *deacon* or *deaconess*): - deacon, minister, servant.

Lofty thoughts are often conjured up in one’s mind when defining a “minister.” However, by definition, a minister is one who holds the secondary position as an attendant or servant to the one(s) who hold(s) the primary position. Ministry is not about being number one, but about serving that which is number one and greater: **the Body of Christ**. Consistent practice of servanthood behavior with Christ-like character is what makes one a credible “minister.” There is no other way! If one does not serve, but expects to be served, one then makes himself or herself above the Master.

Ministry (teaching) is servant-leadership: leading by serving and serving by leading. Servant-Leadership is a reciprocal process. It occurs between people. It is not done by one person to another. One cannot truly lead without willing followers; others will not truly follow without a willing leader. Let’s equip the Servant for his service!

PARTICIPANT EXPECTATIONS

Sensitivity

Participation

Inspiration

Responsibility

Incorporation

Teachable Attitude



OBJECTIVES

To enable participants to:

- **Develop Teams**
- **Define Principle Centered Teaching**
- **Value values**
- **Discover and practice biblical principle centered leadership qualities**
- **Self-assess Excellency in Teaching/Leading**

Team Identity Worksheet

Instructions: Using creativity, fun and your entire team, develop a team name, logo, values, and slogan/song. Do this on flipchart paper. Fill the flipchart paper with your artwork. After completing your team poster, each team member is required to sign it. A team representative will present your Team identity to the other teams in the group.

Team Name
Team Logo
<div style="text-align: center;">Team Values</div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Team Slogan/Song

Principle Centered Teaching

"Ideal teachers are those who use themselves as bridges over which they invite their students to cross, then having facilitated their crossing, joyfully collapse, encouraging them to create bridges of their own." -- *Nikos Kazantzakis*

A “principle” is a foundational truth or firmly established value; a moral or ethical standard or judgment.

A “teacher” facilitates (makes easier) student education/learning.

When one bases their teaching upon, and their focus flows out of critical values and foundational truths, it is principle centered and will facilitate learning.

Research by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching reveals that about 15% of one’s teaching success is attributable to skill in technical knowledge (content) of their field while 85% of one’s success is due to application of human relation principles: the ability to express ideas, assume leadership, and arouse enthusiasm in other people. The teacher or minister destined for the greatest success must excel in both technical (biblical) and human skills. One will never be so learned so as to lastingly impact people on that merit alone. Abrasive, insensitive, crude or incompetent relational skills outside the lectern (or in the pulpit, for that matter) will damper, if not totally invalidate the message/lesson (and even anointing) in the lectern. Simply teaching great content does not equate to excellent leadership. It is just a small contribution to the equation. Positive influence in teaching must be consistently centered upon principles.

A recent study states that ninety percent of disciples want their leaders to be honest above all else. The study also stated:

In every survey we conducted, honesty was selected more often than any other leadership characteristic; it consistently emerged as the single most important ingredient in the leadership-constituent relationship. It is clear that if we’re willing to follow someone – whether it be into battle or into the boardroom, into the classroom or into the back room, into the front office or to the frontlines – we first want to assure ourselves that the person is worthy of our trust. We want to know that the person is being truthful, ethical, and

*principled. We want to be fully confident of the integrity of our leaders, whatever the context.*²

Honesty, a **principle**, is the number one characteristic of admired leaders. “Competency” came in fourth and “intelligent” came in eighth!

Principle-centered teaching is created when the **values** of the **follower** (student) and **leader** (teacher) **overlap**, masterfully facilitating learning. Control is apparent, but it is not external; it is self-control. It elicits a willingness to risk doing the right things because they are valued and modeled by the leader. People follow the leader because of who he or she is, for leadership is a collection of practices and behaviors – not a position! True teachers are leaders! True leaders are teachers! Teaching and leading are two sides of the same coin; they’re inseparable! This can be seen in the definition of “leadership”:

“Leadership” is a compound word made up of two parts: “leader” and “ship.”

Leader: one who leads, guides, and directs by influence.

Ship: to shape (by *ability or skill*).

You are not *leadership* until your influence has positively *shaped* something or someone. Thus, the end result of your leading is what qualifies you for leadership, hence a true teacher.

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner in their best-selling book, *The Leadership Challenge*, make an appropriate statement concerning what followers expect of leaders:

If there’s a clear and distinguishing feature about the process of leading, it’s in the distinction between mobilizing others to do and mobilizing others to *want* to do. People in positions of authority can get other people to do something because of the power they wield, but leaders mobilize others to *want* to act because of the credibility they have. There are monumental differences between enlisting support and giving orders, between gaining commitment and commanding obedience. Leaders sustain the requisite credibility by their actions—by challenging, inspiring, enabling, modeling, and encouraging.³



² James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995), p. 22.

³ Ibid. p. 31.

Biblical leadership is determined and awarded by disciples based upon **credibility**. One must first show oneself a principle centered servant-leader before disciples will bestow the title and authority of leadership. After Jesus modeled leadership, Nicodemus said, “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him” (John 3:2).

God qualified whom Moses was to select as elders for Israel:

The LORD said therefore unto Moses, Gather for Me seventy men...whom you know to be elders of the people...and I will take of the Spirit who is upon you, and will put Him upon them, and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you will not bear it all alone.

Numbers 11:16, 17, emphasis added

An elder could not be an elder unless he had already displayed **principles** and **behaviors** of an elder. Moses was simply certifying or endorsing that which already had been on display. One did not assume the title, Elder, and then demonstrate qualities fitting of the new position. The authority for the appointment and fulfillment of the position was borne out of established credibility.

Behaviors + Characteristics = Credibility

Note the principle centered leadership/ministry criteria set forth by the Apostles when it came time to expand the leadership team in the newly developing Jerusalem Church:

So the twelve summoned the congregation of disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit...

Acts 6:2-5

The qualities sought after by the Apostles and congregation provide us with a simple Principle Centered Leadership Qualities Model:

- ⇒ Be of good reputation
- ⇒ Be full of the Holy Ghost
- ⇒ Be full of wisdom
- ⇒ Be full of faith
- = Credibility



The combination of these four qualities certainly spells credibility! (For additional qualities of church leadership, see I Timothy 3, Titus, and I Peter 5.)

Let's examine these four.

Good Reputation — Honest Report (KJV)

Wuest interprets "honest report" as "accredited." Though honesty is certainly a foremost and necessary trait in a leader, here the word means much more than "being honest." It was also necessary that others attest to a person's spirituality. Thayer defines it, "to be borne (good) witness to, to be well reported of, to have (good) testimony borne to one, accredited, attested, of good report, approved." The New American Standard Bible simply translates it, "of good reputation." Reputations and reports are earned not granted with a title or position. One must be worthy of belief or trust; reliable. M. D. Treece notes, "The reasons for this prerequisite may not have been to insure the man's honesty, but to be certain that they were compatible with reference to priorities."⁴ Authentic testimony to a person's character develops over time. Great leaders do what it takes to have such a testimony; they build trust relationships.

⁴ M.D. Treece, *The Literal Word, Acts I* (Shippensburg, PA: Treasure House, 1993), p. 208.

Building trust relationships is the “human” element of credible leadership. Dave Ulrich, in his chapter, “Credibility x Capability,” of the Drucker Foundation Series, *Leader of the Future*, aptly states, “Credible leaders have the personal habits, values, traits, and competencies to engender trust and commitment from those who take their directions.”

First, to build trust relationships one must **love and accept him/herself**—just the way he or she was designed. (See Mt. 12:29-32; Rom. 12:1-8). If one cannot love him/herself, one cannot love others, build trust relationships, or make a lasting positive impact.

Next, one must be a **lover** of and a **believer** in people. Building trust and rapport is about getting along with other people. That’s something all credible leaders work at constantly. Be genuine. Be caring. Smile. Be friendly (Prov. 18:24). Learn some people skills, and pick up a burden for the lost and the perfection of the saints. According to Dale Carnegie, one should learn a lesson from a beloved puppy: “Have sincere interest in others and show it! You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.”⁵

Trust is **built**. Something built takes assembly. The problem is that too many don’t have the Instructions for Assembly. Many maintain a concept that trust comes pre-assembled with the “position” or “title.” As we’ve already seen, that’s not the case! One must earn their right to be trusted and heard. What behaviors and character traits earn one the right to be heard?

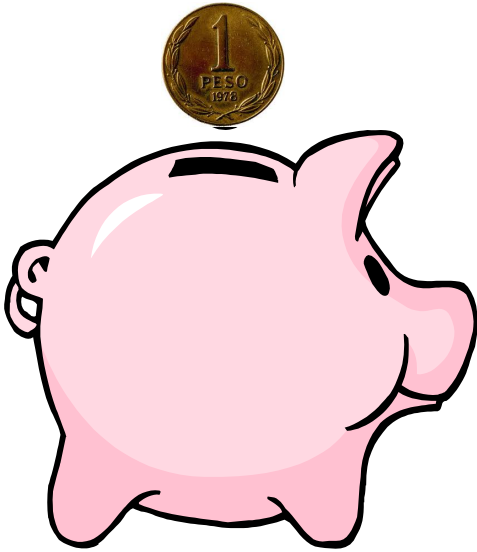
What must one do to build trust?

In order to keep people informed of how well or poorly they are doing without damaging trust, one must create a “Trust Account” with each staff member and student. All people have what is called an emotional bank account. Author Steven Covey describes this in his *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. It is either positive or negative. If it is positive, trust is present and results and performance are good. If it is negative, trust is absent and performance is poorer and attitudes are down.

An emotional bank account requires deposits before one can make withdrawals. For example, at a real bank one has to put money in before one can take it out unless one takes a loan with interest. So what does one do to make the emotional bank account positive and increase trust?

⁵ Carnegie, Dale and Associate, *The Dale Carnegie Leadership Mastery Course* (Simon and Schuster Audio, 2000).

Establishing a Trust Account



- Praising, recognition, positive feedback, creating a positive communication climate and standing behind him/her will deposit money into the account **one peso** at a time.
- Negative communication climate, complaining, negative feedback, confronting, and reprimanding will result in withdrawals from and damage to the trust account:
 - ⇒ **10 peso** (minimum) for a complaint, negative feedback or care-fronting, depending upon how it was handled.
 - ⇒ **25 to 50 peso** for a reprimand, correction or derogatory comment, depending upon the severity and how it was handled.
- Note it takes a minimum of ten positive acts to balance one negative act. In keeping with the above, research from the Target Corporation states it takes twenty positive shopping experiences to negate one negative experience.

Balance: The object is to maintain an active balance (fill up one's trust account and keep it from getting too low or overdrawn by making regular deposits) in each staff member and constituents' account. As a leader, intentionally or unintentionally, one will inevitably be making withdrawals. However, proper coaching and feedback can minimize the extent of a withdrawal. One will know a withdrawal was made, but be happy it was only a dime. Remember, it takes ten positive acts to balance one negative act, and people keep score! Are you "in the black" with your staff and constituents or overdrawn? If you are overdrawn, you may have problem to solve.

Whether right or wrong, successful leadership depends far more on the follower's perspective of the leader's abilities. **Followers**, not the leader, determine when someone possesses the qualities of leadership. In other words, leadership is in the eye of the follower. One knows when their life has been positively shaped by another's and they have no problem awarding that person (reporting) leadership in their lives. Credibility earned it! Be of honest report!

Full of the Holy Ghost

J. B. Phillips, in *The New Testament in Modern English*, translates "full of the Holy Ghost" as "**spiritually minded**"—spiritually sensitive, discerning, and controlled. Barnes states that it means "people who are eminently under the influence of the Holy Spirit." The deacons the early church would choose must not just *have* the Spirit (Acts 2:4, 38)

but be *filled* with the Spirit, as they themselves were — “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all *filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness* [anointing]” (Acts 4:31, emphasis added). One cannot adequately or effectively fulfill a teaching ministry without the unction and *inspiration* of the Holy Ghost. Don’t step to a podium without it! It is essential to credibility. Don’t shortchange yourself or your constituents. If the New Testament congregation and leadership would accept nothing less, neither should we. It would do us well to hear what Paul shared with the Corinthians about his own ministry:

As for me, brothers, when I came to you, it was not with any show of oratory or philosophy, but simply to tell you what God has guaranteed...Far from relying on any power of my own, I came among you in great “fear and trembling” and in my speeches and the sermons I gave, there were none of the arguments that belong to philosophy; only a demonstration of the power of the Spirit. And I did this so that your faith should not depend on human philosophy but on the power of God.”
I Corinthians 2:1-4, Jerusalem Bible

Now that’s credibility! God, grant each teacher/minister a fresh anointing to teach, preach and lead with a demonstration of Your power. Pay the price. PRAY! Be anointed! Be full of the Holy Ghost! Exercise spiritual renewal.



Be **inspiring**! Leaders cannot ignite the flame of passion in others unless they first possess passion’s fire! If the teacher shows no passion, why should the student? Leaders communicate their passion through vivid language and an expressive style! Express enthusiasm for the compelling vision of the class/students. Inspire confidence. Breathe life and hope into the visions of others and enable them to see the exciting possibilities the future holds.



No subject is boring, unless you choose for it to be. Get **creative**. Be inspiring!

Full of Wisdom

Thayer defines and Wuest translates “full of wisdom” as “filled with broad and full intelligence.” Adam Clarke comments, “Prudence, discretion, and economy; for mere piety and uprightness could not be sufficient.” Wow! What does that mean to you? Phillips translates it “**practical minded**.” It is evident that one must be both spiritually



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minded and practically minded; a balance must exist between “spirit and truth” (Jn. 4:24), heart and head! One must be **competent!** One must be **well read**, *broad-minded*, prepared, and wise and *intelligent* in approach and delivery, varying teaching/preaching and communication styles to match the varied needs of the students. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown define wisdom as “aptitude for practical affairs.” Paul admonished Timothy to “study.” The best teachers are also the best **students**. Leaders are continuous learners. Learners read: current events, history, a variety of Biblical translations and helps (commentary, lexicon, dictionary, exposition), and broadly on principles and topics to enhance teaching and leading. Pay the price. Study. Be fresh. Be competent. Be full of wisdom!

*Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, **making the most of your time**, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.*
Ephesians
5:15-17

According to Paul, being full of wisdom also entails understanding what the will of the Lord is for your life and orchestrating your life so as to focus and maximize your time for the fulfillment of God’s directive purpose. Don’t let the routines of life steal one’s focus! The Contemporary English Version puts it this way: “*Don’t waste your time on useless work, mere busy work, the barren pursuits of darkness...use your head. Make the most of every chance you get: These are desperate times!*” “Each of us will have to answer for himself” (Rom. 14:12 NEB) on that day of accounting. Thus, a wise or practical minded teacher is also a **balanced** individual. (Covered in *Teacher and His Family Relationships* and *Teacher and Priorities*.)

Full of Faith

W. E. Vine defines faith as “a firm persuasion or conviction, producing a full acknowledgement of God’s revelation or truth.” The writer to the Hebrews teaches:

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, **the evidence of things not seen**. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that **things which are seen were not made of things which do appear**...But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him....Noah...Abraham...Sarah...all died in faith, not having received the promises, but **having seen them afar off**, and were **persuaded** of them, and **embraced** them, and **confessed**....*

Heb. 11:1-3, 6-13, KJV, emphasis added

One full of faith is a **visionary**—forward-looking—seeing, being persuaded of, embracing, and confessing what God wants to do. It is a faith that see their students through God’s eyes; seeing their potential, believing in the power of a human spirit empowered by the Holy Spirit, for with God nothing is impossible. In faith equip,

empower and **enable others to act**. Think win-win. Such active faith brings one a “good report” (credibility). While the world has always placed a premium upon visible things, the effort of the Spirit within man forever prompts him to reconsider the value of things that are not seen. This appreciation should not be discounted as minimal. An appreciation and persuasion of the unseen purpose causes one to act; not only to the embracing of the vision, but to the casting or “confessing” of the vision. *“Where there is no vision, the people perish”* (Proverbs 29:18, KJV). Be full of faith!

Nobody’s Perfect!

Famed consultant Peter Drucker said, “Don’t worry about doing everything right, just do the right things.” God’s not looking for **perfection**, but **progression**: not genius or natural ability, but availability. Do the right things! One might ask, “But what are the right things?” Certainly, having an honest report and being full of the Holy Ghost, wisdom, and faith are “right things” that foster credibility.

Thankfully, the right things for excellence in leadership involve basic **behaviors** that can be **learned** and immediately put into practice and basic **character traits** that can be **developed** over time. Neither behaviors nor character traits have anything to do with genetics or genius. Anybody with desire and the Holy Ghost can have them.

Servant-Leadership/Ministry is not hereditary, neither is it exclusive to those “born into it.” Leonard Ravenhill in “The Last Days Newsletter” tells about a group of tourists who were visiting a picturesque village. As they walked by an old man sitting by a fence, one tourist asked in a patronizing way, “Were any great men born in this village?” The old man replied, “Nope, only babies.”⁶ Servant-Leadership is developed, not discovered or born. It is not what you know; it is what you **do** with what you know that counts.

EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP INVENTORY⁷

Directions: Below are fifty items that represent critical leadership performance competencies. Please write the appropriate number from the following scale in front of each item to indicate how you would rate yourself in each area. Rate yourself as you really are instead of what you would like to be. Note: The term “people” equals *staff and constituents* in the inventory.

⁶ John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992), Introduction.

⁷ Rick Conlow, *Excellence in Supervision* (Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications, Inc., 2000), pp. 65-67. Adapted and used with permission.

Scale:

- 1 = Strongly disagree—definitely not me! 4 = Somewhat agree—like this person.
 2 = Somewhat disagree—unlike this person. 5 = Strongly agree—definitely me!
 3 = Neither agree nor disagree—neither
 unlike nor like this person.

- ___ 1. I am matched for my ministry and have a burning passion for it.
 ___ 2. I teach or coach to help people improve performance.
 ___ 3. I build rapport with my people.
 ___ 4. I keep in touch with key issues by use of feedback sessions and student/staff/parent surveys.
 ___ 5. I give positive feedback regularly.
 ___ 6. I manage my time and resources well.
 ___ 7. I am accountable to my people (students), peers and other leaders.
 ___ 8. I handle people in a consistent manner, yet adjust my approach based upon the need.
 ___ 9. I communicate with my team and administration about my goals.
 ___ 10. I conduct effective meetings and exciting lessons.
 ___ 11. I express my feelings appropriately.
 ___ 12. I listen attentively even though I am able to anticipate what others are going to say.
 ___ 13. I provide clear communications on class assignments and expectations.
 ___ 14. I adjust my communication approach to match people's different communication styles.
 ___ 15. I restate or paraphrase what people say, and I ask if I got it right.
 ___ 16. I take responsible risks—act on faith.
 ___ 17. I communicate a clear long-term strategy to my team and administration.
 ___ 18. I inspire others toward a common goal and communicate positively about the future.
 ___ 19. I try new ideas and approaches to improve my teaching/administration skills.
 ___ 20. I set and review specific and measurable goals consistently with my team.
 ___ 21. I find innovative ways to overcome barriers.
 ___ 22. As a team, we consistently pray over goals and plans effectually.
 ___ 23. I inspire people regardless of their experience, knowledge or skill.
 ___ 24. I involve others appropriately in decisions that affect them.
 ___ 25. I delegate tasks effectively.
 ___ 26. I encourage, support, and empower people to make important decisions.
 ___ 27. I know when to direct, participate, facilitate, and delegate when leading teams/classes.
 ___ 28. I create commitment to projects in others: class buy-ins.
 ___ 29. I foster collaboration and openly share ideas with others.
 ___ 30. I celebrate and reward individual and team achievements.
 ___ 31. I say thank you for a job well done.
 ___ 32. I motivate through positive comments.
 ___ 33. I reward superior effort appropriately.

- ___ 34. I tell others about my student’s/people’s accomplishments.
- ___ 35. I give others courtesy and respect.
- ___ 36. I recognize my people formally and informally (e.g. plaques, certificates, notes, or verbally).
- ___ 37. I maintain staff and classroom/discipline.
- ___ 38. I consult effectively with individuals on problems to help people improve their results.
- ___ 39. I “carefront” poor performance effectively and appropriately.
- ___ 40. I handle complaints and criticisms professionally and in a timely manner.
- ___ 41. I develop written plans to improve guest (student & parent) satisfaction issues.
- ___ 42. I create an environment where bad news or correction does not obscure the good.
- ___ 43. I act based upon principles and values rather than react upon emotion or circumstances.
- ___ 44. I set an example by doing what I say. I practice what I preach.
- ___ 45. I have defined leadership principles based upon Christian values.
- ___ 46. I am honest, sincere, and genuine.
- ___ 47. I am committed to personal spiritual growth (prayer, read Bible, meditate, and faithful in church attendance and giving) and learning (reading and attending seminars/conferences).
- ___ 48. I strengthen my people by providing choice, giving power away, and offering visible support.
- ___ 49. I am balanced—predictable, dependable, responsible, punctual, and prepared.
- ___ 50. I project the image of Christ, a positive image of the Church, and sincerity with all.

Strengths

List five to seven strengths from the Inventory.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____

Improvement Areas

Identify three to four areas to improve from the Inventory.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____

**Excellence In Leadership Inventory Results
and Corresponding Seven Leadership Principles**

Be Credible—Build Trust Relationships (Add scores on statements 2-8)

Total _____

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate (Add scores on statements 9-15)

Total _____

Be A Visionary—Set Clear Expectations and Goals (Add scores on statements 16-22)

Total _____

Involve Others (Add scores on statements 23-29)

Total _____

Give Positive Recognition (Add scores on statements 30-36)

Total _____

Handle Problems Proactively (Add scores on statements 37-43)

Total _____

Be A Role Model (Add score on statements 44-50)

Total _____