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MICHAEL PORT, *New York Times* best-selling author of *The Think Big Manifesto*

MATT CHURCH

AMPLIFIERS

The Power of
MOTIVATIONAL LEADERSHIP
to Inspire and Influence

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Manifesto: it's not just talk

Leaders today need to go 'old school'—they need to get back to those original base actions of meeting, talking and inspiring the people around them. They need to get out from behind their strategy and bring leadership to life. They need to be able to make a difference personally. Their very role as leaders, the purpose of their existence, is to make a difference and the difference they make is one of *amplification*.

Great leaders need to be able to make more out of what is going on around them—they maximise what is working. Great leaders *amplify* the messages that matter; they *amplify* the commitment to getting things done; they *amplify* the positive mood in a culture; and they *amplify* the results they get. *Amplifiers* are those leaders who make a difference at all levels within a business, a community or a family.

The challenge is that being an amplifier is a choice you make, more so than a promotion you get or a set of capabilities you develop. It's the choice you make to be a motivational leader, to make a positive difference to the human condition in and around you.

A memo or a slide show are all well and good, but they are minnows when stacked alongside the whale that is motivational leadership. Motivational leadership is the ability to influence culture and drive change. It can be applied powerfully at home, in communities and in organisations everywhere.

We desperately need leaders who can lead. We need *amplifiers* — those leaders who can reduce fear and replace it with confidence, and reduce confusion and replace it with clarity, mobilising us all in pursuit of a better future. Motivational leadership is not a ‘nice to do’: it’s a necessity, and one that becomes increasingly needed as we move further into a technological age where we find ourselves time poor and information rich. We need leaders who can take this data deluge and provide meaning, engagement and relevance around all the stuff that matters.

We need amplifiers.

That need is critical now as the world faces an unprecedented rate of change. In his essay *The Future of Work*, Jeff Brenman, futurist and designer from Apollo Ideas, says: ‘we are teaching our kids to prepare for jobs that have not been invented yet, solving problems we don’t even know we have yet’.

This era of massive disruption requires less long-term know-how and more immediate do now! Now more than at any other time in history we need to be able to adapt quickly; we need to shift what we are doing at a moment’s notice, take in new information and make well-informed, rapid decisions.

In their book *Decisive: How to Make Better Choices in Life and Work*, brothers Dan and Chip Heath, change management consultants, share a framework for making decisions in this new world order. They believe we need a process that saves us from ourselves when it comes to making great decisions. They describe a range of ‘villains’ that prevent us from making good decisions:

If you think about a normal decision process, it usually proceeds in four steps:

- You encounter a choice. But narrow framing makes you miss options.
- You analyze your options. But the confirmation bias leads you to gather self-serving information.
- You make a choice. But short-term emotion will often tempt you to make the wrong one.
- Then you live with it. But you’ll often be overconfident about how the future will unfold.

And what we’ve seen is that there is a villain that afflicts each of these stages.

Amplifiers are discerning, they spend time helping people make better decisions. Creel Price, author of *The One Thing to Win at the Game of Business*, calls leadership 'decisionship' because, in his entrepreneurial experience, making decisions is the essence of leadership.

Amplifiers support decision making as a business and leadership imperative. Decisions lead to actions, actions lead to results, results lead to beliefs, which then go on to affect choices. It's critical to make motivational leadership be about what gets done — otherwise it really is just talk.

We need change makers not change managers. Amplifiers are absolute change makers. They agitate and stir the ponds of complacency and communicate vision in a dynamic, engaging and relevant way so that all are on board, in the right seats and heading on the same journey.

Strategy, it seems, is failing many, as it is almost impossible to create solutions for futures further out than 12 to 36 months. History may end up recording this current era as the Age of Disruption: computer companies are killing music companies; disintermediation (the removal of the middle man) is destroying brokerage businesses; and geo-arbitrage (low-cost labour) is killing age-old 'safe' careers such as accounting and law. We are most definitely living in interesting times.

Make no mistake — strategy is critical. It's simply not all that it's been made out to be. It is an analytical idea and as such lives in the left hemisphere of the brain, whereas culture is less specific and lives in the right hemisphere. The famous statement by US general George Patton sums it up: 'A good plan, violently executed now, is better than a perfect plan next week'. Strategy is a great start; it is simply a good plan, though, if the culture that implements it lacks the ability to execute.

Cynthia Montgomery, in her book *The Strategist: Be the Leader Your Business Needs*, makes the case for the synergistic relationship between leaders and strategy. Montgomery's concern is that strategy has been outsourced to experts and advisers, to the detriment of business. She suggests that the fixed nature of strategy that most organisations adopt is flawed: 'What's been forgotten is that strategy is not a destination or

a solution. It's not a problem to be solved and settled. It's a journey. It needs continuous, not intermittent, leadership'.

Motivational leadership—amplification—trumps strategy every time. Boston Consulting Group, in their *Creating People Advantage* report, reference the power of culture and people management as the 'single biggest issue facing business leaders today'. This theme is picked up again and again in leadership texts. Corporate anthropologist and author of *Finding True North*, Michael Henderson, a global culture expert, states that in his research he has found 'culture to be eight times more powerful than strategy'.

In other words, the wrong people doing the right stuff is significantly less important than the right people doing the wrong stuff. In a logic-filled, post-industrial world it's easy to see why the head of business (strategy) has been given a lead role. It's time for the heart of business and society (culture) to take its place.

Amplification—motivational leadership—is the link between the two. It acts like the corpus callosum in the brain—a thick band of axons (nerve fibres) that connects the right hemisphere to the left hemisphere. It is the missing link between strategy—what we know we should do and attitude (the willingness to do it)—and execution (getting it done).

Motivational leadership is the quality we need to see in the conversations taking place everywhere, from the office corridors to the classrooms in schools, from the boardroom to the ballrooms in business, and from the bedrooms to the kitchen table in homes.

Someone has to lead.

This book will make the case for raising your levels of motivational leadership at home, in your community and in your business. It's a call to arms for developing the intent to influence; it's an invitation to become an amplifier.

Famous motivational speaker the late Zig Ziglar highlighted the impermanence of motivation during an interview with an adversarial journalist. The journalist, keen to establish the moniker of

hype-merchant on Mr Ziglar asked, 'Mr Ziglar, this motivation thing you peddle—it's not permanent is it?'

To which Zig replied, in his Texan drawl:

No son, motivation is not permanent, but then again neither is sanitation! And based on the proximity of our corporal selves in this interview and the absence of a noticeable stench, you must have washed today? And that being the case it is highly likely you will do so again, tomorrow and the next day? Occasionally you miss a day but you are quick to resume the habit. Motivation is most definitely not permanent and that's why it's critical you get into the habit of using it daily.

This book contends that, if you are responsible for others, you may as well leave the shower running continuously. If not, you will develop an attitudinal odour, a stinking thinking, and the people you lead will require a 'check up from the neck up' to cure the organisational infection that steals hope, belief and fortitude. (Channelled a bit of Zig in that last line, I reckon.)

The book's premise is quite simple: learn how to use motivational leadership to get things done in and around you. Get really good at being an amplifier: it's not just talk and you do make a difference!

The problem is that while the principles of motivational leadership are simple, the application of them requires some art, some finesse and no small amount of courage. It takes courage to stand up and shine a light. It is way too easy to leave that to others. There will always be cowards in the dark who take pot shots at those who shine a light on the path of others. One thing though is universally true—you cannot hold a torch to light another's path without also illuminating your own.

This book is divided into four parts. Part I describes the history and case for motivational leadership. It is an exposé or thought piece on the role of motivational leadership throughout history, and the power of motivational leadership to effect change and make the world a better place. Think of this as the *why* and *if* of being an amplifier.

Part II expounds the art and science for developing motivational leadership. Think of part II as the *how* and part III as the *what* and part IV as the *who* of being an amplifier.

If you are already a convert to motivational leadership, you can jump straight into part II and get to work increasing your amplification skills. If you remain unconvinced but open and willing, then let's get started working through the *why* in greater detail.

CHAPTER 3

Motivation versus manipulation

This book is about motivational leadership. It's about inspiring others and doing this in a way that is seriously amplified: not only doing it, but also doing it big and bold. Not only doing it big and bold, but also actively developing it in and around you. In effect, not only being a ripple in a pond, but creating lots of others who are doing the same. It's about not only being a motivational leader but also developing motivational leadership in others.

So where did all this motivation stuff begin?

Well, depending on how far back you go, you could suggest that we have had world leaders who did this well or badly as good examples. I imagine Genghis Khan and Chairman Mao were pretty good amplifiers; Christopher Columbus and Marco Polo must have used some good rhetoric to get people to believe in their crazy enterprises. We also certainly have some good information on speaking to influence from the ancient Roman school of public speaking in Rhodes during Cicero's time, but let's come forward a little closer to now.

The first modern era example of motivational leadership is in the teachings of Napoleon Hill in his classic Think and Grow Rich programs. His first book, *The Law of Success*, was published in 1928. Much of the material in that book ended up in his *Think and Grow*

Rich book. So we could say ideas about motivational leadership started formally about 100 years ago.

The story goes — though it might be untrue — that Napoleon Hill, the father of self-help and modern motivational speaking, was interested in messages that impacted others. His desire was to understand how you could use oration and writing to affect people's lives. Being a man of faith he chose preachers as his mentors and role models. In his day a preacher often ran his sermons from a travelling tent, like a circus. Each month they would roll into a town. Desperate for entertainment and as a way of keeping the faith, people would take the family out for a sermon or two.

Hill would follow the most successful preachers, hoping to find patterns in the sermons. His desire was to see which sermons resonated best with the congregation, and after a while he recognised 16 core messages that seemed to be the most effective. Upon identifying these, he took some time to validate his findings and repackage them in a secular way. Basically, he removed the Jesus from the stories and built what we now know as the 16 mindsets, unpacked in the all-time bestseller *Think and Grow Rich*. These sermons became the various chapters in his book and modules in his courses.

The Napoleon Hill Foundation website shares a slightly different story on where the ideas in the book came from, built on the narrative and relationship between Napoleon Hill and his patron, Andrew Carnegie. The foundation says his theories came from interviewing more than 500 successful people.

So what does this have to do with your leadership and job as an amplifier? Well, in all things leadership, we need to look at what works. It does not matter much what story you believe—did he track preachers or interview successful people? The point is that Hill's messages are great starting points for developing an understanding of how to motivate others. These key messages work. They are like the tuning forks used by piano tuners that make the right sound when you tap them, a sound that is pleasing to the ear.

The ends may or may not justify the means but one thing is true: if you need to change how you communicate so that it's easier for

your audience to hear a message then that's what you need to do. In communication, the leader takes responsibility for adapting to the audience. If a kid won't clean their room when you ask them, try different ways of having the conversation. It's about behavioural flexibility. It's the same here with Napoleon Hill's messages—they get the motivation job done. Get good at treating them less like laws and more like themes.

These themes act as hosts for your ideas. An idea that rocks will be shared by others and become viral. Attach any message to, or surround it with, one of these themes and it is more likely to get through and be shared.

You can read Napoleon Hill's messages as tips on how to be more successful, but students of amplification—motivational leaders—read them as key message tones that will influence and direct behaviour positively. Speechwriters understand them as key hot buttons that motivate and inspire.

Here is the list of messages from Napoleon Hill's laws of success:

- 1 The law of the mastermind
- 2 A definite chief aim
- 3 Self-confidence
- 4 Habit of saving
- 5 Initiative and leadership
- 6 Imagination
- 7 Enthusiasm
- 8 Self-control
- 9 Doing more than paid for
- 10 A pleasing personality
- 11 Accurate thinking
- 12 Concentration
- 13 Co-operation

14 Profiting by failure

15 Tolerance

16 The golden rule.

Many people are republishing Hill's work and putting their own names on it alongside Dr Hill's, and the Napoleon Hill Foundation has released unedited copies on Amazon. A full explanation of the 16 laws is shared at the *Amplifiers* website, www.amplifiersthebook.com. Follow the links to the Napoleon Hill resources.

I have adapted five of these messages and unpacked them below to set them in a 21st century context. Study all 16, but, as an amplifier, get used to working with these top five. These five message overtones become the end point in most amplifiers' conversations. The five main messages are:

- 1 *Desire*. The idea here is that everything begins by first developing a form of wanting among the people affected. Nothing happens unless someone wills or wishes it to be. Amplifiers will work hard to ensure that people want change, or desire growth. An amplifier will do the prep work of aligning desires and exploring desires. One technique that does this well is to simply ask questions such as, 'Is this something we want? How would this make things better or different?'
- 2 *Belief*. It follows that once a desire has been established or identified that belief is the next step. Desire is an internal attachment to something: desire is in the person. Belief is then a question around whether they think it's possible to get what they desire. If they want it and think it's possible, they are then required to ask questions that are less reflective and begin to take action.
- 3 *Focus*. If the person wants something and believes it's possible, the next button that needs to be pushed is the one of focus. Focus helps to narrow down options and prevent the huge feeling of overwhelm we get at the start of something new or different. The amplifier's job at this stage is to reduce the choices available. You don't have to dictate this restriction: you simply want to encourage people to reduce the options themselves.

- 4 *Commitment.* You will often see a leader make public declarations around what they plan to achieve. This is a technique that dances with the idea of commitment. Commitment is that step between the excitement of new and the harsh reality of what the individual needs to do. It's not only about the leader's promises, it's equally about the promises people make to themselves. Make sure you are including the sobering questions that drive commitment. When you have discussions around such questions as 'What might we have to give up?' 'What might we have to do differently?' 'What will we do if we hit some resistance on our way to our goal?' Here you are addressing commitment directly.
- 5 *Action.* Amplifiers have to be about action, performance and results. So it becomes critical that the final word for most conversations that motivational leaders have is on the subject of 'Do this!' Or 'What are you going to do?' Help people to focus on the few small actions they can take to get the ball rolling.

Here is how the five messages may look at the close of a speech. This shows them in action in one specific use—speaking. What follows is a made-up script. You can put your topic in the space provided and try this out next time you have to close a speech.

I guess, in closing, we need to realise that like most things in life [topic word] is only possible if you really want it. Today we are so overwhelmed with choice that we can have everything we want in life—just not all at the same time. You and I know that *desire* is not enough.

Whether what you heard today is new or something that is old, as if for the first time, it comes down to *belief*. Have we covered enough today for you to believe that this time things are going to be different?

But *belief* and *desire* don't mean you do anything. The difference between those who [insert the behavioural result you want] and those who don't is their degree of *commitment* to getting it.

Interested in something is *not* committed to it. [Insert personal story about something you have wanted to do for ages but are simply not committed enough to do anything about.]

So what you need to do is not get distracted by everything you need to do, but to just focus on the three things I shared with you today and nail them.

One thing that I know, having presented this message in one form or another for years to many people is that it is not the smartest or most talented people who get the best results.

It's those who take massive action towards their goal.

Whether it's in the motivational speaker context or a more intimate conversation, these themes are road-tested topics. Building the themes into your communications will make them more motivational. Keep the top five as a checklist, and each time you have something to say, either to a group or one on one, think about how you can incorporate them to deliver your key ideas effectively.

The master manipulator

The German prefix *über* (the literal meaning is 'above') has crossed over into the English-speaking world, where it can have connotations of superiority, transcendence, excess or intensity, depending on the words with which it's combined. Typically *über* is used in conjunction with other words as a superlative. Many contemporary technology magazines and pop culture blogs use it to describe something as great. So I might call you an *über-guru*, or *über-cool*, for instance.

Friedrich Nietzsche, a fervent philosopher who was anti-democracy, anti-Christianity, anti-Judaism, anti-socialist and a self-proclaimed anti-Christ, expressed his belief in a master race and the coming of a superman in many of his works. His theory *Übermensch* described an elite group of super humans who were better than the rest—*mensch* being a word used to describe a member of the human race.

We know where this thinking led. Friedrich and his editor, his sister Elisabeth, were both anti-Semites, and the Nietzsches' philosophies were taken up by Hitler and influenced his horrific views, as published in *Mein Kampf*.

Hitler was a dark, twisted manipulator and by all accounts he was a motivator—a charming manipulator uses all the right tools for all the wrong reasons. He used various techniques and strategies to manipulate crowds in his public addresses to advance his agenda. He planted people in the audience whose job it was to 'stir'. They stood in the crowd and interacted with his speech, yelling out support for his

ideas, cheering and starting ‘spontaneous’ applause. He is also reported to have used audio microphones and feedback loops to echo his voice and the audience response back onto the crowd, a known strategy for hyping up a mob of people.

I bring this up because in any discussion of motivational leadership with senior executive teams, the Hitler dimension usually comes up. This topic is usually raised as a question following any discussion around influence versus manipulation. The distinction is a troubling one for many.

The conversation usually becomes concerned with intent. Essentially the intent driving the amplifier is what draws the distinction between manipulation versus control. ‘If my intent is clean,’ one person will state, ‘then it’s influence. If my intent is not clean, then it is manipulation’.

It becomes a bit goodies versus baddies, and although the explanation sounds black and white, there are a few shades of grey.

The conversation often becomes heated and will typically divert, strangely, to the matter of gun control. Influence is compared to guns, one side of the room saying ‘guns don’t kill people, people kill people’. Others argue that the presence of guns is the root of the problem. The conversation then winds up in a right to bear arms and freedom of speech debate, and then it’s time for doughnuts.

Aaron Sorkin, writer, director and mastermind behind the brilliant television series *The West Wing*, discussed the challenge of democracy in his movie *The American President*. Fictional US president Andrew Shepherd says in a press conference:

America isn’t easy. America is advanced citizenship. You’ve gotta want it bad, ’cause it’s gonna put up a fight. It’s gonna say, ‘You want free speech? Let’s see you acknowledge a man whose words make your blood boil, who’s standing center stage and advocating at the top of his lungs that which you would spend a lifetime opposing at the top of yours.’ Now show me that, defend that, celebrate that in your classrooms.

Then you can stand up and sing about the land of the free.

It’s been said that the sign of an advanced mind is the ability to handle ambiguity, contradiction and paradox. No doubt the intent to influence is a serious idea and one that in the right hands is powerful,

and in the wrong hands—well, it's equally powerful. This is not a book on ethics or morality; this is not a book exploring whether your intent is good or bad: it's a book on motivation. In essence, it's a gun manual.

The intent to influence: seven guiding principles

These seven guiding principles for the intent to influence are, I believe, the seven things that need to be monitored with advanced leadership to ensure we have an intent to influence rather than a need to manipulate:

- It's about service, not ego.
- It's about inclusiveness, not exclusiveness.
- It's about diversity, not uniformity.
- It's about freedom, not control.
- It's about momentum, not inertia.
- It's about courage, not fear.
- It's about love, not hate.

If you put one group down in order to elevate yours, then you are on a slippery slope as a leader. If sarcasm is the lowest form of wit, because it is humour that occurs at the expense of another, then building yourself and your team up by putting others down is the lowest form of leadership.

Amplifiers lift the game, stay on the high ground and focus on results, not on talk. They come from love, not hate; they are building the world, not breaking it down. The intent is to influence and make the world better for all, not better for some. Amplifiers are generous, and, whether consciously or not, ask of themselves 'Does this come from love?' before they speak or act.

About the author

Matt Church is one of Australia's most enduring motivation speakers. He has been named educator of the year by the National Speakers Association and has been awarded pretty much every accolade his peers can give. He is generous with his knowledge and is the name behind many of the world's leading non-fiction business authors and professional speakers. Matt lives in Sydney, Australia and continues to write, speak and teach the art of oration through his Speakership programs for aspiring amplifiers. In 2001 he founded an international education business, Thought Leaders Global, dedicated to helping clever people be commercially smart. He is the chairman of the business and spends his time developing curriculum and inspiring great thinking and great conversations.

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Along with his business partners at Thought Leaders Global, Matt can run leadership development programs in your business based on the principles in these and other books Matt has written. These program include Thought Leadership Development programs, Public speaking programs and Pitching and Positioning programs. Visit www.mattchurch.com/inhouse.

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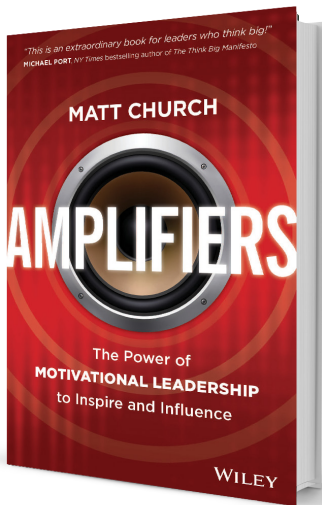
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by Matt Church



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Great leaders do much more than just make decisions; they inspire those around them to excellence and form the vital link between strategy and execution. *Amplifiers* explains how great leaders use the art and practice of motivational leadership to light the path to success and inspire others to take that journey with them. Written by Matt Church, one of the top motivational speakers in Australia, this practical, powerful guide explores how great leaders move people to action and excellence—and how you can do the same. Church gives you the essential skills and strategies of motivational leadership, from effective communication frameworks and roles to proven guidance on choosing high-impact words when speaking to others.

The Author

Matt Church is the founder of the international leadership development company Thought Leaders Global. He has been a motivational speaker for over 20 years and is the author of several other landmark business books.

Learn more at www.mattchurch.com.

Great leaders motivate Exceptional leaders inspire Transformational leaders amplify

Amplifiers are the rare and extraordinary leaders who amplify the best in themselves and others. They amplify the messages that matter, amplify the positive mood in a culture and amplify the results achieved. They are the masters of maximising human potential and developing other great leaders.


Author and global leadership expert Matt Church gives you the vital skills and strategies to strengthen your own amplification skills and ensure that you're a leader worth following.

Packed with tips, case studies and the powerful lessons of other great leaders, *Amplifiers* will show you how to:

- master the essential communication tools for making an impact
- bring out the best in people and help them to maximise their potential
- employ positive tactics that inspire others to achieve the unimaginable.

Great leaders aren't born; they are made. Whether you are the CEO of a global company or the coach of your local sports team, this book will boost your leadership skills and bridge the gap between strategy and execution.

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