SuperLeadership: Beyond the Myth of Heroic Leadership by Charles C. Manz, Henry P. Sims, JR.

The main thing that caught my attention about this article was how it was describing a new way to look at leadership. Instead of looking at leaders as these heroic historical icons the authors take a more practical approach to looking at leadership in modern contexts. The main idea of this article is the idea of SuperLeadership. The authors define SuperLeadership with the following statement, “the most appropriate leader is one who can lead others to lead themselves” (Manz, 1991). SuperLeadership is all about empowering your followers to become better versions of themselves. This is something that I am very passionate about in the context of ministry and empowering people to become healthy leaders. The authors of this article go through four different approaches to leadership (strong man, transactor, visionary hero and SuperLeader) coming to the conclusion that the SuperLeader approach is the most effective way to lead. The focus of SuperLeadership is mainly on the followers. The reason the authors named this approach “SuperLeader” is because the leader is able to unlock and unleash all of the strengths, skills, and abilities of the followers that surround that leader, thus making them “super”.

This approach is all about helping your followers develop the skills to be more effective contributors to an organization or whatever other context you might be leading in. Last summer I took Management 311 here at Western Washington University and the entire class was based on this type of organizational leadership. There are countless examples of organizations that are currently thriving because they have instituted this type of SuperLeadership in their organizations and embedded it into their very culture. A large portion of this article goes on to explain the seven steps to becoming a SuperLeader. These sevens steps are (1) become a self-leader (2) modeling self-leadership (3) encouraging self-set goals (4) create positive thought patterns (5) develop self-leadership through reward and constructive reprimand (6) promote self-leadership through teamwork (7) facilitate a self-leadership culture. For more information of these seven steps to becoming a SuperLeader reference the original article.