

LEADERSHIP REFLECTIONS

Commit Yourself

Is there something you KNOW you need to do, that you don't want to do? Do you know you need to make more sales calls, or start an exercise program, or learn a difficult new skill, or confront someone, but you just don't want to do it? It is very difficult to persuade someone to do something that they don't want to do. And the same holds true when persuading yourself. If you really don't want to do it, you won't. Yet there is something in you that knows you must. So, ask yourself, "Why?" And as you begin to see what it is you really want, you'll find a way to make the commitment. You don't want to start an exercise program - its hard work. But you DO want to feel better, and you DO want to improve your golf game, and you DO want your clothes to fit better. So, re-define the activity. Instead of trying to persuade yourself to start an exercise program, start a "feel better-golf improvement-more comfortable clothes" program. Those are things you do want, things you'll be willing to "sign yourself up" for. It's more than a matter of semantics. You'll do whatever you want to do, no matter what it takes. Get clear on what you really want, and nothing, not even your own reluctance, can stand in your way.

Dealing with Rejection

In order to accomplish anything, we must regularly face rejection and disappointment without being sidetracked by them.

The only way rejection can get you down is by reinforcing the doubts you already have. Maybe those doubts are justified, maybe they're not.

The way to bulletproof yourself against disappointment and rejection is to erase your doubts. And the best way to do that is through commitment and preparation. False bravado or arrogance will do nothing to remove doubt. You must convince yourself of the worthiness of your pursuit. Know that you're capable, know that you're prepared, know that you're committed, and know that you're willing to do whatever it takes. That is the way to remove doubt.

Believe, in your heart of hearts, in what you're doing and nothing will be able to knock you off track. When you truly believe, each disappointment you encounter just makes you stronger.

Do What You Say

One of the most impressive qualities you can develop as an effective leader is the ability to do what you say you will do. The way to attain that quality is quite simple. Say you'll do only those things you intend to do. If you have no intention of doing something, then keep your mouth shut about it. When you do what you say you'll do, even those who disagree with you will respect you. When you do what you say you'll do, you develop a valuable reputation for effectiveness and dependability. If you find yourself telling people only what they want to hear, watch out! You're setting yourself up for problems. If what you say is based on what people want to hear, rather than what you intend to actually do, sooner or later you'll find yourself in the difficult position of having to break your word. Effective leadership demands the courage to speak the truth, even if that truth is sometimes unpleasant, uncomfortable or painful. Speak the truth, follow through on what you say, and you'll be amazingly effective in getting things done.

Effort and Patience

Effort gets things done. Patience sees them through. Both are crucial to success. Without patience, the passing setbacks and disappointments would soon overwhelm even the hardest

effort. Without effort, patience would accomplish very little.

When you can balance effort and patience, it is a powerful combination. You can make almost anything happen with enough effort, but not right away. The most effective effort is continuing effort, which patience makes possible.

Though they may at first seem to contradict each other, effort and patience actually work great together. The most spectacularly successful people in any field are those who have the patience to continually apply their effort for as long as it takes to succeed.

Know when to push and when to wait. Balance aggressive effort with a deep, underlying patience and the results you achieve will be truly amazing.

Excuses

There are plenty of very good reasons not to do what needs to be done. You've had a hard day, and you've got a headache - that's a good reason not to make that one more call. But what do you want more - excuses or success? Excuses may make you feel good right now. However, they will lead to pain in the future. A year from now, when it's too late to do anything, the excuse you feel so good about today won't do much to ease the pain of regret you'll feel for not having taken action.

You have two choices. You can resort to excuses, and thereby let circumstances control your life. Or, you can take action in spite of the reasons not to. Just do it anyway. Take control of your life. Live with purpose, passion and direction.

Go the Distance

True success at almost anything takes long, sustained effort. How do you discipline yourself to go the distance? How do you keep on track, day after day, month after month?

You do it by taking satisfaction and enjoyment from the journey. By experiencing each moment fully and knowing that you are living with purpose, moving in the direction of your goals.

You don't tell yourself things like, "only two more years of this agony and I'll be able to retire." That attitude won't sustain you. Yes, you must see the prize at the end. You must also see yourself moving toward it all the time, and you can't do that if you're miserable in the moment.

From the moment you set your sights on a goal, and make the commitment to pursue it, and start to take action, you begin to reap its rewards. The actual attainment is only the final reward -- there are many more along the way.

Don't postpone your happiness and fulfillment. Take satisfaction in the pursuit of your goals, and you'll go the distance.

Habits

Many of the things we do each day, we do by habit. Habits can be very useful. If we had to constantly think about everything we did, we wouldn't accomplish much. Habits can be a hindrance, too. They can weigh us down and hold us back.

The key to success is to develop habits that take you where you want to go. When you think about it, doing the right thing is not usually any more difficult than doing the wrong thing. It's just

that we get ourselves in the wrong habits, and those habits hold us back.

For example, going for a run can be stimulating experience. While you're running, you feel great. The cool down is even better. This gives you a lift. And it is very healthy for you.

So why do you stay home and watch the 6th re-run of Sportscenter every night instead of going for a run? The answer - habit. Why do you reach for a bag of potato chips instead of an apple? Habit.

The apple is just as tasty and much healthier for you. But if you're in the habit of eating chips, that's what you'll eat.

Success in life takes effort, but it's not difficult or complicated. It is just a matter of knowing what you want, determining how to get it, and making a habit of doing those things that you need to do.

Habits are very powerful, because they're actions that are repeated over and over again. The good ones are well worth the effort it takes to establish them. Get in the habit of success. Choose your habits carefully, and they'll serve you well.

Keep Learning

In a world where knowledge and information are growing at an explosive pace, there is no formal learning procedure that can possibly keep up. The reason? It's almost impossible to discern today what you'll need to learn tomorrow. Yet one thing is certain, you will indeed need to learn.

The way to keep up is by learning how to learn. Learn how to use the knowledge resources available to you, such as the Internet, the library, media and other people. There are plenty of ways to learn what you need to know. Take responsibility for your own learning. Determine what you need to find out, figure out how to do that, and then learn it.

One of the best ways to learn is to attempt something challenging. Almost anything you set out to do will require that you learn something new in order to get it finished. When the project is completed, not only will you have a tangible accomplishment, you also will have learned something valuable. That knowledge will stay with you.

Challenge yourself to always keep learning. It's essential for success in everything you do.

Looking in the Mirror

Do you ever find yourself getting frustrated or angry with the actions of others? Whatever you see when you evaluate other people, is a projection of what is inside of you. When you find yourself thinking, "I wish she could make a firm decision", it is an indication of your own frustration at not being able to make a decision. In order to recognize something in others, you must first have it within yourself. Think about it. Is there something that makes you particularly angry? Why? Look inside yourself for the source of this anger. Even if you could change the behavior of others, it would not resolve your feelings. You are the only one who can change the way you feel. Trying to run away by blaming others, will only prolong the problem and make it worse. The really good news is, that this "mirror" has a positive side to it. The inspiring, uplifting things you see in other people are in you as well. When you see in others such things as compassion, genius, beauty, caring and affection, you're seeing a projection of yourself. You

see these things because they are a part of you.

Make People Feel Needed

Remember always that people want to feel needed. They want to help out and be a part of what you are doing. When you satisfy this desire in people, you receive their admiration, loyalty, respect and cooperation.

Other people can be a powerful source of ideas, of motivation, of business contacts - if you encourage their participation. Most people are only too willing to help. Most people are genuinely flattered when you ask for their opinion or their expertise.

On the other hand, you must not take advantage of people. Asking someone for their help out of laziness on your part will not win you any points. People are willing to help you only if they see you are putting forth your own best effort. No one will want to help you if you don't help yourself. However, if you're striving toward excellence every day, people will jump all over themselves to be a part of what you are doing.

And always show sincere appreciation. People will want to help you only if they feel you are truly grateful.

It's very, very difficult to accomplish anything alone. And it is quite unnecessary as well. There are plenty of people willing to help you if you will only ask.

Mistakes

"Do not look where you fell, but where you slipped." - African proverb

If you're taking action, you'll make mistakes. When you make a mistake, that's great! You just learned something.

Admit your mistakes and examine them carefully. Take responsibility for them, and learn from them. Mistakes are superb teachers. Knowing what doesn't work, can be a tremendous help in determining what will work.

Tom Watson, the founder of IBM, well understood the value of mistakes. Once, one of his employees made a huge mistake that cost the company millions of dollars. The employee, upon being called into Watson's office, said "I suppose you want my resignation." "Are you kidding," replied Watson. "I just spent ten million dollars educating you."

Successful, effective people learn from everything that happens, including mistakes. When you make a mistake, the best policy is to pick up the pieces and look carefully at what happened. Don't tear yourself up over it. Just examine it and learn from it. Then apply your new knowledge and try again.

Moment of Truth

You've persevered through the dark, difficult times. You've taken each challenge in stride and overcome countless obstacles along the way. And just when you're beginning to turn the corner, just when it looks like it's all starting to go your way; a huge setback comes along and knocks you down. Just when things are starting to go well after a long and difficult effort, the momentum is suddenly snatched away from you.

That is when it is most important to not give up, to keep on going. Pick yourself up, no matter how discouraged you may be. Now is your opportunity to cross the threshold into a realm where success is virtually assured.

You were so close and then the world beat you back yet again. Find a way to keep on going. It is indeed a moment of truth. When you can pick yourself back up, weary though you may be, and get back in the game, at that moment you'll know with absolute certainty that nothing can stop you, that nothing can keep you down.

What would you attempt if you knew you could not be stopped? Keep going, no matter what, and you'll reach truly magnificent heights in whatever you choose to undertake.

Remaining Confident

Successful people still encounter disappointments and frustrations, but it is the way they respond to problems that makes them different from those who are overwhelmed by difficult situations. The challenge is to remain optimistic and confident. Being enthusiastic about what you can accomplish and the means by which you will realize your dreams is what confidence is all about. Problems can cause unhappiness and defeat you if you allow them to. Don't try to avoid the reality of possible delays or complications. Instead, remain confident; the ultimate attainment of your goals is within reach. Take advantage of the powerful resources that are already within you. At the heart of confidence is determination, self-reliance and a security in your own purpose.

Surpass Yourself

No matter how good life is, it can always be better. No matter how far you've come, there is always room for growth. No matter what you know, there is always something to learn.

What have you done today to surpass yourself? What can you do right now that will challenge yourself to higher and higher accomplishment? If you look, you'll find plenty of ways to surpass yourself. No one knows better than you how to make the best of what you have. Start a positive spiral upwards. You have what it takes to make tomorrow even brighter than today.

If you constantly look over your shoulder and compare yourself to others, it can hold you back. Focusing on what you don't have leads to a mentality of lack and limitation. Instead, concentrate on what you do have, and on how to make it even better. Seek not to put yourself down, but rather to surpass yourself. Strive to improve on your own performance. The most effective competitors are those who set their own challenges and then surpass them.

The Answer

I beg you...to have patience with everything unresolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves as if they were locked rooms or books written in a very foreign language. Don't search for the answers, which could not be given to you now, because you would not be able to live them. And the point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually without ever noticing it, live your way into the answer.

The Greatest Leader

The greatest leaders are those who lead not only with their words and ideas. The greatest leaders are those who lead primarily by their example. The most effective form of leadership is born out of the sincere desire and proven ability to make a positive contribution. Those who lead

best are those for whom leadership itself is not the primary aim. Those who lead best are those who can inspire others to embrace the positive values and priorities by which they themselves live. True leadership comes not from position but from participation and effectiveness. Those who are willing and able to get things done are best suited to lead. To be a leader, be a shining example. Do that which you would lead others to do, and do it spectacularly. Leadership at its best enlarges and duplicates the efforts of the leader. Make those efforts the best they can be, and they'll result in true, effective leadership.

The Important Things

It pays to spend time and effort on the truly important things.

Each day you rush from one thing to another, filling your schedule but too often emptying your life. Consider devoting some time to the things that really matter.

Are you really busy for the sake of being busy? Of course not. Somewhere there is a reason behind it all. Somewhere there are things which you hold dear. Keep those things in mind.

There is someone who would love to hear from you today. Take some time to call that person. There is someone who would truly appreciate your help. Take some time to offer it. There is something special you've been meaning to do, whenever you get the chance. Now is your chance. There's a book you've wanted to read. Why not start it today?

Your busy schedule has plenty of quantity. Think of how you could give it some true quality and meaning. Consider the people, the beliefs, the goals, the things which are really important to you. Make time for them, not someday, but right now. Don't just fill your schedule. Fill your life.

Will of a Leader

Having the will of a leader would mean developing a unique appreciation for who you are and recognizing your own strengths and qualifications. You can then concentrate on acquiring additional skills that contribute to the achievement of your goals. Many people often compare themselves to others without realizing the value of their own potential. They envy careers or successes that appear to be more attractive than their own. This negative comparison is damaging. Don't do it. Instead, concentrate on being the best you possible. You are somebody, an important person and a unique individual with great abilities and versatility. Unfortunately, many people don't realize what they have and never come close to taking full advantage of their gifts and resources. The real challenge, and the real reward, is to take who you are and what you are capable of doing, and create the means to achieve your dreams. Having the will of a leader is to discover self-reliance, to acquire the stamina to persevere, and to develop the vital qualities necessary for success.

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