

Application Guide

THE EIGHT PARADOXES OF GREAT LEADERSHIP WITH DR. TIM ELMORE, PART 2



BOTTOM LINE:

Leadership is a constantly evolving practice; what worked yesterday might not work tomorrow. In order to be a great leader, one must be willing to step up to the challenge of a “both/and” perspective, rather than stepping back into the stifling familiarity of “either/or” practices.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

I. A paradox is two seemingly contradictory realities coexisting when it seems like they should be either/or situations.

II. Great leadership today is made up of timeless principles that guide our decisions and timely paradoxes that guide our interactions.

A. Social and emotional skills predict success; soft skills differentiate good leaders.

B. The final four leadership paradoxes by Tim Elmore:

1. Great leaders are both deeply personal and inherently collective.

a. This is the paradox of communication: the communicator knows what the individual is feeling but also understands the big picture.

b. Don't leave the personal in order to reach the collective.

2. Great leaders need to be teachers and lifelong learners.

a. Leaders have to teach others what they know in order to provide direction and make decisions. However, they should never get to a point where they believe they have “made it” and don't need any help.

b. There is always more to learn and room to grow; as soon as leaders stop learning, they put a cap on how far they will go.

3. Leaders model high standards and gracious forgiveness.

a. A standard of excellence should be set, but a level of forgiveness for failed attempts must be extended regularly.

b. Having high standards with no forgiveness will not create space for team members to take risks, because they will fear failing.

c. Having copious amounts of forgiveness with no standard for excellence will stunt the growth of a team because individual members will not give their best efforts.

4. Leaders are both timely and timeless.

a. Great leaders build off the history of the organization.

i. What is the heritage?

ii. Why do we exist?

iii. What were we trying to accomplish?

b. Leaders don't leave the core mission, but they acknowledge and adapt to the problems that arise today.

C. This type of leadership is doable for everyone; each of these paradoxes is an attainable skill set.

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QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION OR TEAM DISCUSSION

1. Soft skills are more relational. Which soft skills do you excel in? Which ones would you like to grow in?
2. The leadership community is acknowledging the growing importance of emotional intelligence. How are you currently utilizing leadership development in your organization to help grow and establish this concept?
3. Reflect on your communication practices:
 - In which areas do you connect personally with the individuals among you?
 - Do these individuals have a clear understanding of the larger picture your leadership team is moving toward?
4. When looking at the complete list of Tim's leadership paradoxes, what is your initial reaction? Do these ideas feel possible? Have they already been implemented as unspoken practices among your team, or do you feel your team is lacking in any of these areas? Explain.

RESOURCES MENTIONED:

- [The Eight Paradoxes of Great Leadership](#)
- [Leadership Paradoxes Assessment](#)
- [Habitudes](#)