

Application Guide

15-YEAR CELEBRATION



BOTTOM LINE:

Timeless principles provide a foundation, but their application can evolve over the years. Enhancing and expanding foundational principles can help make leaders and organizations better.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

I. 2012: The 6 Questions Every Leader Should Ask

- A. In this conversation, we discussed the value of asking questions in order to understand the “why” behind the “what” and how essential it is for leaders to be learners.
- B. The only way to learn is to ask questions. These six questions are still relevant and important for organizations to ask today:
 - 1. Who needs to be sitting at the table?
 - 2. Where are we manufacturing energy?
 - 3. Where do I make the greatest contribution to the organization?
 - 4. Who is not keeping up?
 - 5. What have we fallen in love with that’s no longer the best way to accomplish something?
 - 6. What would a great leader do?

II. 2016: Challenging the Process

- A. In this conversation, we discussed how change can be tough, especially when it comes to organizational systems, as well as the importance of leaders challenging established processes.
- B. As a point leader, you cannot allow yourself to be managed into sameness to the point you lose the discipline of challenging the process.
 - 1. Maintaining systems matters, but they should not lead to you being stuck.
 - 2. There’s a tension between having to have systems in place and always having permission to appropriately question the systems.
- C. When leaders have permission to challenge the status quo, everyone in the organization has the opportunity to win.
 - 1. The organization will remain relevant.
 - 2. This environment attracts leaders because leaders like to be open to new ideas and typically resist the status quo, even when it’s working.
 - 3. Nothing goes underground because people are willing to speak up.
- D. When challenging the process, you still must respect authority.
 - 1. Begins with the security of the boss and their willingness to give permission for everyone to speak up.
 - 2. Public loyalty creates private influence; if we are raving fans publicly, we can be honest critics privately.

III. 2022: The Power of Knowing What You Don’t Know

- A. In this conversation with Adam Grant, we discussed finding common ground through values rather than belief.
- B. Our personal identities are ultimately built around what we *value*, not necessarily our *opinions*.

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- C. Common ground is necessary if we want to move in a direction organizationally.
 - 1. Shared values allow me to move you, and shared values set you up to move me.
 - 2. We all need to move because we are all wrong about something.
 - 3. Shared values drag us out of our optic worldview to understand how the world is for other people.

IV. 2023: From Strength to Strength

- A. Leaders tend to be achievers, but in this conversation, Arthur Brooks emphasized the importance of happiness and meaningful relationships over solely pursuing external success.
- B. Achievers often choose specialness because it comes through achievement, but happiness comes through love.
 - 1. You can be special and happy, but when we begin leaning too much into what we get because of a title or a position at work, we can get to the point where we neglect going home or don't enjoy investing in important relationships. That's a problem.
 - 2. Every leader must pay attention to the pull success can have on them, but no matter how successful you are, there will come a day when you leave and your specialness leaves with you.
- C. Attempting to achieve specialness often pulls people away from home.
 - 1. If you're not happy at home with your most important relationships, you cannot be truly happy.
 - 2. You will camouflage your unhappiness at work with achievement.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION OR TEAM DISCUSSION

- 1. Discuss which of the four principles revisited stood out to you the most.
- 2. Which of the four principles revisited does your organization do well? How so?
- 3. In which of the four principles revisited does your organization have some work to do? What can you do to begin implementing that principle?
- 4. Are there any principles your organization lives by that could be enhanced or expanded upon as the years have passed?

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