

Application Guide

GREAT LEADERS LEAD THEMSELVES WELL, PART 2



BOTTOM LINE:

Leading yourself well is the foundation for leading others with enduring impact.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

I. Great leadership begins with **self-leadership**.

- A. The most difficult person any leader will ever lead is the person in the mirror.
- B. In order to be a leader worth following, leaders must make three intentional commitments to themselves every day.
 - 1. "I will not lie to myself, even when the truth makes me feel bad about myself."
 - 2. "I will prioritize what I value most over what I want now."
 - 3. "I will not attempt to lead myself by myself."

II. **Great leaders commit to prioritizing what they value most over what they want now.**

- A. We all have **appetites**, but we cannot trust them to lead us.
 - 1. Every appetite only knows two words: **"more"** and **"now."**
 - 2. Greater authority creates greater opportunity for appetites to influence decisions because the more responsibility you have, the greater the temptation to opt for status and ego is.
 - 3. Appetites are temporary and when we chase them, we are chasing something that will never fully be satisfied.
 - 4. Appetites will never go away, but when we can name them we can choose not to let them lead us.
- B. We can trust **values** to lead us because values are sustainable throughout a lifetime.
 - 1. Leaders who consistently choose values over appetites create healthier organizations and healthier cultures.
- C. Questions to ask to deal with our appetites and uncover our values:
 - 1. First ask, "What do I want?"
 - 2. Then follow up with, "What do I **really** want?"
 - 3. The second question exposes the deeper values hiding beneath immediate desires, because lurking in the shadows of what we think we want is what we value.

III. An exercise to help you define what you value most from Stephen Covey: *imagine yourself at your funeral and write down what you want to hear others say about you.*

- A. Your personal definition of success should be based on the kind of person you hope others remember you as.
- B. Clearly defining your values creates a personal standard that should guide your behavior and decisions as a leader.
 - 1. When leaders knowingly violate those values, it should be viewed as a failure that needs to be **realigned**.
 - 2. As a leader your behaviors affect more than just you, so you cannot simply say that intentionally stepping outside of your values was a mistake that doesn't matter.

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IV. **Great leaders never attempt to lead themselves by themselves.**

A. As committed as we are to doing the right thing, nobody becomes the best they can be by themselves. We need people who are willing to tell us the truth.

1. As leaders gain authority, honest feedback becomes less automatic, so they must **seek it out**.

2. When we invite feedback, we benefit. When we resist it, we pay for it.

B. **Reward** people when they give feedback so they will want to keep giving it.

C. Don't get defensive, receive it and **do something with it**. How leaders receive feedback teaches everyone around them how feedback should be received.

V. You have a relationship with the people you lead, but it's not the same relationship they have with you.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION OR TEAM DISCUSSION

1. Where is the tension between what you value most and what you want now showing up in your leadership?
2. Is there a recent decision you made that may have been driven more by appetite than by your core values?
3. If someone observed your leadership this month, what values would they conclude are most important to you?
4. Who has permission to tell you the truth when you need to hear it?
5. When was the last time you changed because of feedback instead of defending yourself against it?

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