



Session 2.7 | Leading From the Middle More Effectively Part 1

In the last session, we looked at what to do when your organization doesn't invest in people and I showed you how to get your professional development proposal approved every time.

In this session, we are going to talk about what to do to intentionally develop your leadership skills.

What can I do to intentionally develop my leadership skills?

There are several tools and tips for developing your own leadership skills. And while this is not a challenge you're going to solve overnight, you can make great progress quickly if you will follow these simple tips.

Fast Action Step #1 - Invest in You

You can't give away something you don't first possess. You know the importance of investing in your development. It's why you are here.

Yet, you spend so much time pouring into other people that it's tough to take time to invest in you. We are all so busy, distracted, and overwhelmed with busyness, that investing time to strengthen our leadership capability often takes a back seat.

Maybe you're thinking, after investing thousands of dollars in your own leader development and seeing little or no progress, why bother investing any more time and energy? I have no idea what I am supposed to do with all the information, resources, or the knowledge that I have accumulated.

Maybe your biggest challenge is quantifying in a measurable way the impact of these investments are making in your life, your work, or in your organization. Because you want to invest in a program in which the results would be sustainable and can be put into practice right away.

Then, when you do invest in leadership or team development for your team members, there are so many companies out there looking for good people. Your team members often jump ship to another company when a "carrot" is dangled in front of them. Even when you build a strong, team-centered environment, at times it's still not enough.

Let's look back at 2 tools...

1. Intentional or Accidental. Every single one of us should be asking the question in nearly every area of our life, work, and leadership, "Am I being Intentional or am I being Accidental?"

This doesn't mean that we need to over think or try to be a perfectionist at everything. It simply means that we need to make sure that things are not happening by accident but that there's an intention or passion to our life, work, and leadership.

For all the reasons we just listed, being intentional starts with SELF - developing your own leadership skills. It won't happen by accident. You will have to intentionally invest in yourself.

When it feels like you're wasting all kinds of time and resources investing thousands of dollars in leadership development and seeing little or no progress, you will have to intentionally continue to invest in your development.

When you're struggling to quantify in a measurable way the impact that these investments are making, you'll need to be very intentional about continuing to move forward, especially when you've poured hundreds of hours into developing people, then seemingly, without notice, they jump ship to another company.

You are going to have to be very intentional about continuing to develop people. It won't happen by accident.

As you make progress with your SELF, with your own leadership development, the by-product is energy and motivation to be more intentional with FAMILY.

As you're more intentional with family, the by-product is energy and motivation to be more intentional with your TEAM, and then with your ORGANIZATION, and then in the COMMUNITY where you live, serve, and work.

2. Awareness

It's so important for us, as leaders, to first of all, understand our natural tendencies to be able then to evaluate the behavior patterns which are an outgrowth of our natural tendencies.

These behavior patterns are demonstrated in our actions which the world around us sees. How are these actions or how our behavior patterns affecting our influence or impact?

What are the resulting consequences? These consequences are contributing to the current reality that you or I experience at our own personal lives, and our own work experience. How are the consequences impacting the reality in our relationships, in our productivity, or in our energy for our work?

With a little planning, you can make significant progress and growth in your leadership skills in just a short period of time.

In the Simple Leadership Compass course, we provide several tools to help you overcome Time & Focus challenges to invest in yourself without sacrificing your job or home life. For more information about the Simple Leadership Compass course, you can click the link in this session.

Fast Action Step #2 - Simplify

Remember, every decision that you make either simplifies or complicates. And the majority of decisions leaders are making are adding more complexity - more chaos - while those they lead are desperately searching for a leader to confront the chaos and the complexity.

The principle of the SIMPLE EFFECT is to make a few fundamental decisions, a few foundational decisions, which confront the chaos in life and work and then simplify thousands of future decisions. In the Simple Leadership Master-class, we teach these foundational decisions and tools to help you work through your own leadership development and how these tools and decisions can bring dramatic improvements to your life and to your work.

If you would like more information about the Simple Leadership Master-class, you can use the link in this session.

Here's the secret...

The secret to focus is simplicity. Simplicity is the pathway to focus on – and for those you lead to stay focused on– exactly what you should be working on even though you live, work, and lead in a world of distraction.

If you're on information overload - stop loading in information. If you're consuming so much information that you don't have enough time to apply it, then stop.

A couple of years ago, I was talking with one of my friends who runs a business. He was talking about his plans for the New Year and how his plan was to read a book a week during the New Year. I couldn't help but think about all of the things that he's going to put into his mind. While that's a noble cause and that's a noble thing to do, I'm sure there's a lot of information that you're going to take on. When we're consuming that much information, it's almost impossible to apply that amount of information to our life, work, and leadership.

It simply does not happen by accident.

Improvement and transformation is the byproduct of applying information to our life and to our work, applying the learning to our life and to our work.

Start making decisions which simplify rather than complicate your life, work, and leadership. Start running decisions through the filter of this tool - will this decision simplify or complicate? When you do, your decisions will improve. Your relationships will improve. You'll be more fulfilled in your work. Your productivity will improve.

Then, let me show you another tool that will help you develop your leadership skills. In fact, if you don't get anything else out of this fast track, this is what I want you to hear from me.

Fast Action Tip #3 - 4C tool - Clarity, Courage, Commitment, Confidence

Here is what they mean. In fact, this is a great tool for you to use with your team members before you lead an important meeting, before you head off in a new direction, to communicate to them that these are the 4 C's. These are the 4 things that you want for them.

1. Clarity to accelerate results for them. Many times people are stuck on our teams or we're stuck. And what we need is Clarity in order to accelerate results.
2. Courage to act, on what you know, and what you are going to learn. There are things that we already know that we need to have the courage to step up and to act on those things. And there are things that we are going to learn along the way and the courage to act on those is important as well.
3. Commitment to stick with it long enough to get to real momentum.
4. Confidence to know you're headed in the right direction. You'll no longer have to wonder, "Is this a good use of my time? Am I getting the return on my investment?" You'll have a system, a structure in place which makes those determinations in advance. And you can move forward with more confidence than ever before.

In this session, we began looking at what you can do to intentionally develop your leadership skills. We looked at 3 Fast Action Tips...

1. Invest in You
2. Simplify
3. The 4C's tool

Next Session

In the next session, we are going to look at 2 more Fast Action Tips to help you to intentionally develop leadership skills.

Remember, you don't have to get it perfect. You just need to take the next step.

I'll see you in the next session.

Fast Action Steps

1. Which of the 4 C's do you struggle with the most?
2. What will you do today to start growing in that area?