



Session 1.6 | 4 Ways to Make a Positive Impact

In the last session we looked at the 3 Practices for Every Great Team.

In this session, we're continuing with our discussion about Connection, one of the 3 essential attributes of the leader worth following, and we're going to look at 4 Ways to Make a Positive Impact with your team.

Take a moment right now to download the Worksheet for this session so you can follow along.

Let me tell you a quick story...

Our daughter, Madison and I we've had a standing breakfast date every Saturday morning. In fact, just this past weekend we went to this rustic restaurant that I like for breakfast, she doesn't like it as much. Typically, I let her choose, but I told her last Saturday that I was choosing the place and I was going to my favorite place. We've been doing this for more than 10 years. It's become one of the most favorite parts of my week. We've learned so much about each other and from each other during these special weekly moments.

On one particular Saturday morning, years ago, we walked into this restaurant and walked slowly up to the counter looking at the menu board. The manager was standing behind the counter waiting for us and immediately said, Can I help you?

I asked her, Just one moment, as I was waiting for Madison to make up her mind about what she wanted.

Moments later the manager said again, Can I help you? her voice raised slightly, almost pleading at us.

I looked around to see if we're holding anybody up, but no one else was standing in line. In fact, the restaurant was almost empty. She was still talking to us.

The phone began ringing in the back and the manager calls back to somebody, Will somebody answer that?! Then there was two rings, three. Then she said again, borderline yelling, Will somebody answer the phone?!

Madison paused for just a couple more minutes crew members were shuffling around cleaning floors, doors, air conditioning vents, we passed by a couple of them coming in the door who were cleaning the trash cans. It seemed like it was cleaning day.

The manager was still standing there, was shifting around, then she made one last emphatic attempt to coax me into ordering – I'm ready to take your order, she said.

We ordered, sat down, and began talking about the day ahead of us. Several minutes later the manager brought our food to the table. She offered us condiments and asked if we needed anything else.

On her way back to the kitchen, she hurriedly called out instructions to the crew members who were busily cleaning in various parts of the restaurant.

Madison apparently noticed. She leaned over to me and said quietly, Dad, she is mean to those people. She should be nicer to them – they're working hard.

Her observation reminded me of the exchange that we had few minutes earlier at the counter. Then I began watching the manager's interactions with the employees. She wasn't mad, it didn't seem mean to them. She was simply in a hurry and appeared too busy to slow down long enough to notice that her team was working hard and they were making good progress.

John Wesley once said, Though I am always in haste, I am never in a hurry. Because I don't take on more than I can accomplish in calmness of spirit.

Our experience in this fast food restaurant on this otherwise uneventful Saturday morning reminded me that a hurried life does not leave much room to encourage, serve, and celebrate people.

If you are going to help people, they must know that you care. If your team is going to grow and improve, you must have regular, purposeful positive interactions with them.

That weekend I wrote down 4 ways to positively impact your team, and if you do them, your team won't just think you're awesome, they'll know you're awesome!

It's important to note here again:

1. Trust

Many believe that trust is the byproduct of trustworthiness. We've talked about this in the earlier session, meaning – if someone is trustworthy, they can earn your trust.

I've wondered – do we talk ourselves into this perspective because we are too lazy to do the hard work of real trust?

Trust really is a choice.

If you are suspicious, you'll find yourself operating as we've talked about before from a win-lose perspective. You will assess every situation wondering if you or your organization are winning or losing.

When you choose to view a team member through a lens of suspicion rather than trust, usually everyone around you knows it. They see it in your communication, in your actions, and in your decisions.

Nothing productive ever comes from interactions based on suspicion. Your team members deserve your trust.

If you want to know if the vision is clear, ask your people. Most leaders would be shocked by what they hear.

Give your people the benefit of the doubt. Yes, some will occasionally abuse your trust. But more often than not, they will value and reciprocate the trust.

2. Serve

When young people aspire to be a great leader, serving is rarely the first thing that comes to their mind. In fact, most will list vision, passion, systems, goals, success, processes, success, authenticity, and achievements. All of these things. They will be components of good leadership and healthy organizations long before they would ever consider service.

Yet the best leaders are servant leaders, who willingly placing the needs of those they lead ahead of their own needs, desires, and ambition because it's true – great leaders serve.

Be more interested in the success of others than your own. The truth is, mentoring, coaching, and supporting others as they pursue their dream is the best investment that you can make in your ultimate success. So serve them.

3. Care

Relationship development is not something that can be simply checked off the to-do list. It can't be outsourced, and it's certainly not an exercise in convenience.

There are no shortcuts in relationships because people trump everything else.

Does your team know that you care?

4. Encourage

It's the one thing you can do every day for every person you interact with, especially your team members.

If you've been mentored, then you already understand the enormous value of the mentoring relationship. Your life and work were profoundly impacted by this leader. So pass it on to someone else.

Madison and I finished breakfast that Saturday morning and as I walked toward the door of the restaurant, I noticed that Madison wasn't right behind me. I turned back toward the table and saw her circling the table, straightening the chairs, and intently wiping the last few crumbs from the top of the table.

Moments later outside, as we climbed into the truck, she said, That manager was not nice to the workers because she had a lot of things to do. That's why I straightened up the chairs and cleaned the table for her. Maybe now she will have a little more time to be nicer.

Many leaders could learn a lot from an 8-year-old. Does your team know that you care?

We just looked at the 4 Ways to Make a Positive Impact with Your Team - Trust, Serve, Care, and Encourage.

If you haven't already, take just a moment right now to download the Worksheet on this page and complete the action steps for this session.

Next Session

In the next session, we are going to look at the third essential attribute of a Leader Worth Following. It is the attribute that most leaders struggle with.

Remember, you don't have to get them perfect, you just need to take the next best step for you.

I'll see you in the next session.

Fast Action Steps

1. In what ways could you greater serve the people that you lead?
2. Who will you encourage today and how will you do it?