

Six Secrets for Fulfilling Vision

Welcome to a new session of Guidestone University. Today, we are going to look at six secrets for fulfilling your vision.

Let me tell you a quick story. Years ago, when we first started working toward the simple leadership work that we're doing today through The Guidestone Group, we had a vision to launch an annual leadership event, an annual leadership summit, or a workshop-type conference.

For years, I worked on toward launching this annual leadership experience for leaders, and, like most of the things that we've done, we made a lot of progress at times. Then, there were also times I thought that this part of my vision would die. I thought that it was too expensive or that it was too much work.

Then there was a time when I was working with some leaders in our city, and one of them said, "Hey, I'd like for you to go to lunch with me." I sat down at lunch with one of our city leaders, and we started talking about how we could better support the business and organizations in our region. In passing, I kind of mentioned this passion that I had to provide this practical leadership event for leaders, and I asked for his feedback.

It was almost immediately, without hesitating, he said, "I've been wanting to do the same thing! In fact, tomorrow morning, I'm meeting with several other community leaders, and we're going to talk about how we can move this forward or how we can get something like this done."

So, the next morning, we go to the local diner; there are five other city and community leaders that were there, and we sit down, we start talking about all of our ideas and we draft this plan. Now, here's the crazy part of all the work that we did; the resulting plan that we ended up with included far more than just the annual conference or this annual experience that I'd envision for leaders. In fact, shortly after that, within just a couple of months, we launched a series of events that included a monthly leadership breakfast. It

was a thirty to forty-minute catered breakfast followed by a twenty-minute leadership presentation that had proven practices and ideas for eventual leaders.

The event was hosted the first Wednesday of every month; and we had hundreds and hundreds of local leaders from all over the metro area that came to be a part of this monthly breakfast.

We also launched the quarterly lunch experience. It was a two-hour working lunch where we introduced leaders to simple processes and systems that dramatically improve their leadership, their teams, their organizations.

Then we hosted an annual leadership summit — the annual leadership summit that we now host today. It was a full-day leadership experience which now has grown into two days. It focuses on the life, work, and leadership of the leader.

We're focusing on how to help leaders simplify their life, work and leadership so that they can live with passion again; so they can lead with purpose; so they can leave a legacy for the people that are going to come along behind them.

So, each of these events were highly practical experiences that provided leaders with simple, yet effective practices and processes in systems that can be implemented to their life, work and leadership right away.

As we prepared for that first event, we had planned for ten or twenty people to show up; thirty-five leaders showed up in that first breakfast event. It was one of the most encouraging experiences that I had experienced up to that time as we were working through the plans to launch these events. The experience that I had, that season of my life and my career, reminded me of **six secrets for fulfilling vision**.

Number one, leaders fulfill vision by serving other people. Now this is the counterintuitive part of leadership that I think we all understand, but it's worth mentioning - the most effective leaders are leaders who serve other people; not leaders who are so self-absorbed by their own self and by their own agenda. They understand that true success is when the successors become more successful than they are.

So, for the leader, true success is when the successors are more successful than you. Leaders fulfill vision by serving other people.

Our whole idea for creating this experience was to provide high value at the absolute lowest cost even, in fact, if we lost money or had to get sponsors to sponsor the event. So, our whole idea, our whole goal, was to provide high value at a low cost so that we can resource, help, and serve leaders in our region.

Number two, the second secret for fulfilling vision is there's no hurry needed. The moments of waiting felt like I would never accomplish this part of our vision. Those moments of waiting are what life and work is all about. John Eldredge said, "Life is not a problem to be solved but it's an adventure to be lived." Rather than trying to figure out how to manipulate situations, and how to strategize and problem-solve around situations, we need to embrace the adventure—that is our life, our work, our leadership, our team and our organization today. There's no need to get in to hurry. Let things happen, because if you're taking a step each and every day toward the vision, it will happen.

Number three: keep sharing it with the right people. There are going to be many people who will listen to your vision. Some people will like it, a few people will support it, and very few people are going to help you make that vision become a reality — and that's okay. But, you're only going to connect with them if you keep telling your story and you keep sharing the vision. The world needs your message. The world needs your passion. The world needs your leadership, and your life matters and your work matters. So, keep sharing it with the right people.

Number four: be prepared for it to take off. Now, if I'm honest, I wasn't fully prepared for my vision to take-off as quickly as it did, and, really that's okay, because we're never going to be a hundred percent prepared or hundred percent ready for our vision when it really happens; that's the adventure of leading change.

Everything is an experiment, so, while we're never going to know when it's going to happen, we need to expect it when we least expect it. Does that make sense? So, while there are a lot of unknowns, if we're taking steps toward the vision every day, then we are to expect it to happen. Be prepared for it to take-off.

Number five: stop and celebrate along the way. When we launched that first breakfast event, to have two or three times the number of anticipated attendees show up and have a great time and see high value in it, it was a huge win for us. I mean, as long as you have enough food for, right? Well, that was a huge win for us. After the last

person left, all of us that have been involved in organizing the event sat down for about thirty minutes. We talked about the event, and about how fulfilled an area of vision and passion for us. Much of the conversation was focused on celebrating that successful experience. So, number five, stop and celebrate along the way.

And then **number six** - this is very, very important - **realize that vision is never accomplished, only fulfilled.** If your vision is big enough, you will never be able to fully accomplish it, but you can fulfill it every day. Make a habit every day of taking one step, no matter how small, toward your vision.

So, these are the six secrets for fulfilling vision.

Now here's what I want you to do...

Action Step

Answer this question: **What are you going to do today to take a step toward the vision?** Whether it's the vision of your organization, the vision for a project that you're launching or that you're working on, or if it's a vision for something in your home or extracurricular thing that you're working on in a community. Whatever it is, take a few minutes right now, and answer this question; what are you going to do today to take a step toward your vision?

So, write that down and we'll see you in the next session of Guidestone University.