



Monday Morning Leadership
8 Mentoring Sessions You Can't Afford to Miss

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Author's Bio: David Cottrell is an authority on leadership. He has written more than 20 books on the subject and has helped hundreds of thousands of people learn to be better managers and leaders through his thought-provoking presentations.

His books are easy to read and provide situations that business people can easily relate to in learning to be better leaders and managers—they are trusted leadership training tools for organizations throughout the world.

Author's big thought: This book is a story with lessons that can be immediately applied to life. It is about a manager and his mentor. Monday Morning Leadership offers unique encouragement and direction to help become a better manager, employee and person.

Prologue

Things weren't going well for Jeff. For several years he had been a relatively successful manager for a Fortune 500 company but now he was in a slump. He was working harder than he ever had, but he was going nowhere. He barely saw his kids. His marriage was suffering. His health was not the best. He was struggling in every part of his life.

At work, his team was also feeling the effects of his slump. People were upset. Business was slow – real slow – and the pressure on them to improve performance was rapidly hitting the “unbearable” level. To be honest, he was ready to give up because his doubts about his leadership abilities were overwhelming the confidence he once had.

He was at a loss.

He was at the point where he needed to talk to someone – someone who would listen and offer suggestions without judging him.

Tony was the type of person Jeff aspired to be – wise, respected, confident and a highly sought-after speaker and mentor. But right now Jeff was a long way from becoming the person he wanted to be.

After debating whether or not to call Tony, Jeff finally decided that he had nothing to lose. His life was careening out of control and something needed to change.

After explaining some of the problems he was encountering, Tony agreed to work with Jeff only if he would commit to two things:

1. Tony said that he was not interested in helping Jeff solve his problems. Tony was interested in helping Jeff become a better person and leader and that would require spending some significant time together. If Jeff would commit to meeting with Tony every Monday for eight weeks, Tony would be glad to help.
2. Tony also asked Jeff to commit to teach others the lessons and experiences that he would be sharing with Jeff. Tony said none of Jeff's problems were unique and that others could learn from Tony's experiences.

As it turned out, those eight meetings – Jeff's "Monday Mornings with Tony" – were the best meetings Jeff attended in his life. The thought of "gracefully bowing out of sessions" never again crossed his mind.

The First Monday - Drivers and Passengers

Tony arrived late for the first Monday, blaming his tardiness on the rain. After several minutes of catching up, Tony said it was time to get down to business.

Tony began by setting some ground rules for to follow in order to make the best use of their meetings.

- Start and finish on time
- Tell the truth
- Try something different

Jeff's Issues

- Business was getting tougher. Most of his team was still intact, but some of the performance issues he once ignored were now affecting his division's performance in a big way – and by "big" he meant they were becoming threats to his job.
- He was working hard – long hours – but the business indicators were telling him things were pretty bad. He wasn't very happy and the people on his team weren't happy. Their results reflected their frustrations.

Tony's Advice

- When it comes to leading people, there are few problems that are unique. Anyone with experience has had to face the same issues, the same frustrations. Furthermore, Jeff was facing

some challenges and seeking an outsider's advice was a good move. Everyone needs people who will help us look at situations from a different perspective.

- If Jeff wanted to be extraordinary, the first thing he had to do was stop being ordinary. Wanting to be liked and just one of the guys is natural. But as a leader, Jeff's team should like and respect him for the right reasons.
- If Jeff's team likes him because he is fair, consistent, empathetic or a positive person – that's great. But if they like him because he provides them with free dinners and drinks, what has he gained? Jeff was setting himself up for failure somewhere along the way. If Jeff's goals were to get everyone to like him, he would avoid making tough decisions because of his fear of upsetting his "friends."
- Transitioning from employee to manager or manager to leader requires that making different decisions. Those transitions can sometimes create challenges in every other area of life as well.
- Car passengers are free to do a lot of things the driver can't do. As a driver, Jeff's focus needed to be on the road and not on the distractions. As a driver, Jeff no longer has the right to 'mess around' – like listening to loud music – even though it seems okay to do that as a passenger.
- The same principle applies for managers, like Jeff, to become a leader. He can no longer be a passenger; he must become the driver. Even though responsibilities increase when you become a manager, you lose some of the rights or freedoms you may have enjoyed in the past.
- To be successful as a leader, managers don't have the right to join employee 'pity parties' and talk about upper management. They lose the right to blame others for a problem in their department as a manager and leader. As manager, he is the person responsible for everything that happens in his department, and that can be pretty hard to swallow.
- Managers even lose the right to some of their time because they are responsible for other people's time as well as their own.
- The opposite of accepting responsibility is to find someone or something to blame for the issues you're facing. Of course, there is always someone or something to blame, but a real leader spends his time fixing the problem instead of finding someone to blame.
- What happens when you place blame is that you focus on the past. When you accept responsibility, you focus on this time forward – on the future. Until you accept total responsibility – no matter what – you won't be able to put plans in place to accomplish your goals.
- You have control over how you react to situations. If you eliminate blame – don't even have the word in your vocabulary – then you can make some positive changes.
- Tony handed Jeff a blue spiral notebook with the words "Monday Mornings with Tony" handwritten across the cover. He instructed Jeff to keep track of what was discussed. When you write things down, you commit to doing them.

The Second Monday - Keep the Main Thing the Main Thing

Jeff drove into Tony's driveway at 8:20. He learned something about responsibility last week since he made some different decisions that allowed him to be there on time.

Jeff's Issue

- Jeff explained that the rats won the race again last week. He had so many things coming at him from so many different directions, it was hard for him to get anything done and done well.
- Jeff has fifteen people reporting to him. His department also has two open positions. Jeff's boss, Karen, is demanding – and that's putting it mildly. The team seems to get less and less accomplished. As soon as they put out one fire another pops up.

Tony's Advice

Tony advised that Jeff's job was not crisis management. There are some basic questions that require answers at this point:

- Why do you have two open positions?
 - Why did these team members leave?
 - Why do you think everyone on your team knows they're supposed to be doing if they're not doing it?
 - What are your priorities?
- They must 'keep the main thing the main thing'. The 'main thing' was the purpose or priority. If everyone on the team knows the main thing, it helps everyone focus on what is important.
 - The main thing is really three things:
 - Equip employees with the tools to be successful
 - Provide outstanding service to customers
 - Make a profit
 - When you depend on another's perceptions to match your expectations, you're setting yourself up for disappointment. Ask some questions...you may be surprised by your team members' answers.
 - Try to understand why people choose to leave a manager's team. It's a natural tendency (but not an accurate perception) to blame pay, benefits, upper management, salary administration, and other factors for someone's resignation. People normally don't leave because of those reasons. People leave because their manager is not meeting their needs. People quit people before they quit companies.
 - For managers to be successful and provide employees with the necessary tools for them to be successful, manager and boss must work together – no matter what.
 - Managers need to take the time to manage their boss the same way they manage their subordinates. Both manager and boss should find out specifically what they each need from each other. They need to understand what they can do to help each other accomplish their main things.

The Third Monday - Escape from Management Land

Jeff's Update and Issues

- Jeff spent a lot of time on the three questions he left with last week. Much of his frustration had been not knowing what the problem was – much less what to do to fix it. Jeff thought he had made some real progress this week.
- First, he handled the resignation issue head-on. He talked to a few people on his team. And while they were reluctant to speak for their former teammates at first, one person provided some interesting information.
- Jeff met with each of them individually, and since they no longer work for him, there was no reason for them not to tell the truth. Both seemed surprised he was interested enough to go see them and they opened up – more than he expected.
- He was shocked by what he heard. They didn't come right out and say it, but it became clear that they didn't leave the company; they left Jeff, their manager. It came down to three things:
 1. Hire good employees - The problem was his good employees were being asked to do more and more, while others were asked to do less and less.
 2. Coach every member of the team to become better -Jeff hadn't provided adequate feedback and direction to either of these employees.
 3. De-hire the people who aren't carrying their share of the load. There were performance issues he had ignored and those issues had an effect on the rest of the team.
- At least Jeff knew there were things he could do to avoid losing more good employees. He had a meeting with his team. He prepared a paper for each team member to complete. On the paper was one sentence: 'The main thing in our department is..'. Each person was asked to fill in the blank.
- No one knew what the main thing was. Everyone had an answer, but there was no consistency. This exercise showed Jeff that instead of clearly defined goals and expectations, he had mass confusion about their most important mission as a team.
- Jeff also had a good meeting with his boss, Karen. She appreciated him taking the initiative to meet with her.
- Jeff showed up in a better mood because he realized that there are things that he controls that have contributed to his frustrations and the team's frustrations. Now he knew that there is something that can be done within his control.

Tony's advice

- One of the 'main things' for a leader to eliminate is confusion. It can paralyze a team. Something that may have contributed to the confusion on Jeff's team was a trap many managers fall into. This is the trap iwhich Tony calls 'management land', where things are not always as they seem.
- In management land, simple things often become complex and people easily lose perspective. In management land, people are rewarded for saying only the things managers want to hear. Egos are big and it's difficult to discover the truth. Management land can be described as

confusing, frustrating and sometimes comical to those on the outside. “You have to escape from management land and get in touch with your people.”

- On most teams there are three types of employees. Some are superstars – people who have the experience, knowledge and desire to be the very best at their jobs. Others are middle stars – they may not have the experience to be a superstar yet. Or maybe they are former superstars who for some reason lost their motivations to be the best. And there are those Tony calls falling stars. Those are the ones who are doing as little as they can get away with.
- A typical team has about 30% superstars, 50% middle stars and 20% falling stars. If you keep piling more work on your superstars – then one shouldn’t expect them to continue to be superstars.
- Many managers actually reward their falling stars by giving them less work while acknowledging them with decent performance reviews!
- Your job is to lower the bottom by adjusting for and accommodating the lowest performing employees. You should be raising the top by recognizing and rewarding superstar behaviors!
- Tony asked Jeff to write the name of each team member in his spiral notebook and then categorize them as superstars, middle stars or fallings stars. He asked him to retrieve every person’s most recent performance review. Then, put their most recent performance review score next to their name. Next, pull their personnel file. and note each improvement over the past six months.

The Fourth Monday - The “Do Right” Rule

Jeff’s Update and Issue

- Jeff felt like he took some quantum leaps backward since last week. He found that he had been really inconsistent in how he evaluated his employees. Some of his falling stars actually had better performance reviews than his superstars. He also checked the personnel files. There were no letters of recognition and only one performance improvement documented over the past six months and it was on a superstar.
- The bottom line was that Jeff lumped everyone into the middle as far as recognition and performance improvement.
- He continued with his team discussion on identifying the main thing, and they did make some progress in that area. Human resources was working on finding some candidates to interview as they try to fill those two open positions on his team.
- Jeff had a major issue on his team, and it involved one of his superstars, Todd. This employee had been with the company for four years. He was really good at his job and had a good relationship with all the members of his team. He was dependable, consistent and knowledgeable. But, three weeks ago Jeff discovered that this employee had been drinking on the job.
- Using alcohol during work hours was against company policy and the team’s code of behavior. Jeff wrote him a warning letter stating that the next violation would lead to termination. Then, last Friday, Jeff saw Todd drinking again. To Jeff’s knowledge no one on his team knew about his problem.

Tony's Advice

- A manager's job is to raise the top for long-term, sustained success, not for short-term convenience. Short-term results are easy. He can threaten people, pay them more, or just give them what they want, and get short-term results.
- Achieving long-term results is much more difficult. It requires establishing a code of behavior that must be followed. It requires providing accurate feedback. It requires delivering the consequences – both positive and negative – based on decisions that employees make. All of these require courage to do the right thing.
- People can be superstars in one area and falling stars in another area. Do what is right even when no one is watching!
- Sometimes it's difficult to know what is 'right' when you're in the middle of a crisis. The best decisions are normally made before you're in a crisis. You can think more clearly and evaluate alternatives better.
- A pilot once told me that every conceivable problem that could happen while he was flying a plane had been simulated, documented, and placed in a contingency manual in the cockpit. That manual documents everything that can go wrong and what actions to take if there is a problem.
- Pilots don't make decisions when they are in a crisis – they implement plans that were made before the crisis.
- In business, from time to time we see lights flashing, indicating we have a problem. When that happens, some managers will throw a rug over the light so they can't see it flashing, they ignore it.
- The only way to fix the problem is to go directly to what's causing the light to flash and fix the problem. Like the pilot, an action plan should have been decided upon long before the crisis developed.
- Living the 'do right rule' is tough because it requires discipline, commitment and courage.
- Many times the manager is the last to know about a problem on the team. What the manager sees is normally a very small part of the whole.
- EVERYTHING counts when it comes to leadership. If a leader thinks ignoring the problem doesn't matter, they are wrong – a leader is always leading, even when they are ignoring a problem. A team doesn't really care if the company has an ethics department or compliance officer. What matters to the team is what the leader does. Everything a leader does matters because their team is watching...and depending on them to do the right thing.
- Ignoring issues puts a leader or manager's integrity at risk. And if you lose your integrity, you won't be able to develop or maintain trust, the very basis for relationships. A manager must guard their integrity as if it's their most precious leadership possession because that is what it is.

The Fifth Monday - Hire Tough

Jeff's Update and Issue

- Last week, Jeff left his meeting with Tony and went straight to Kim in human resources to discuss the Todd issue. Jeff and Kim decided there was no choice – Jeff had to terminate Todd for drinking on the job.
- Jeff and Kim began to 'role-play' the discussion Jeff was about to have with Todd. The role-play helped Jeff feel more prepared and confident. Jeff also asked Kim to witness the termination session.
- Kim's advice to Jeff before the session was that they needed to do everything they could do to maintain Todd's self-respect and dignity, while being firm and fair with him.
- When Todd walked in the room, he obviously knew something was up. He was stunned that Jeff would terminate him for something 'as minor as this.' He also accused Jeff of not having any compassion because he was going through some personal problems. Todd then went on to say that the team wouldn't survive without him because he was more of a leader of the team than Jeff was.
- Jeff and Kim had anticipated this reaction and explained the majority of people who are fired feel the same way: It's someone else's fault, 'management has no heart,' and there are extenuating circumstances. Todd had chosen to fire himself; they were only implementing his decision.
- After the session, it was time for his weekly team meeting. It turned out Jeff was not the only person aware of the problem. His team was watching and his integrity was being challenged.
- The rest of the meeting went well. They finalized what the main things were for them to accomplish. Here are the three main things they came up with:
 - Treat each person on the team with dignity and respect
 - Deliver outstanding service to their customers
 - Provide profits to the company
- Jeff learned that he should have gone to Kim earlier about the Todd issue and without hesitation. She identified 20 candidates for Jeff to interview for his three open positions.

Tony's advice

- People are the most important resource in any company. People make the company.
- Customers judge a company on the people they deal with.
- The most important asset in your company is having the RIGHT PEOPLE on your team. If you have the right people on your team you have a great chance to be successful.
- The greatest liability in your company could be having the WRONG PEOPLE on your team. There is nothing any competitor can do to hurt your team as much as having the wrong person on the team.
- The most important thing you do as a leader is to hire the right people. You cannot have a strong and effective team with weak and ineffective people.

- Your job is to hire tough-make it a privilege for someone to earn his or her way on your team. If you hire tough, it will be a whole lot easier to manage the RIGHT PEOPLE.
- The decision a manager has to make is to *hire tough and manage easy*, or hire easy and manage tough.
- When you begin the process of interviewing and hiring, understand up front that you are probably not a great interviewer. You don't use your interviewing skills very often.
- The first mistake some people make in interviewing is lack of preparation. You shouldn't begin preparing for the interview when the candidate is in the lobby. Every question should be prepared in advance so you spend your time listening and evaluating instead of trying to figure out what questions you want to ask next.
- Another problem with interviewing is you're always emotionally involved. You will be better off by taking your time and getting the right person. I suggest you ask Kim or someone in HR to help – they're not faced with the same emotions you have about these openings.
- The Three Rules of Three in hiring are: interview the least three qualified candidates for every position; interview the candidates three times; and have three people evaluate the candidates.
- After the initial interviews, narrow the field down to your best nine candidates. Schedule interviews with those nine candidates at times that are different than their original interview time. In other words, if your initial interview was in the morning with one person, interview them the next time in the afternoon or evening. You'll be working with them all day, so why not see what they are like at different times of the day?
- You may want to allow one of your superstars to be involved as well.
- If there is any question whether a person is qualified or not, pass on them and keep searching for the right person. Never lower your standards just to fill a position. You'll pay for it later.

The Sixth Monday - Do Less or Work Faster

Jeff's Update & Issue

- Jeff had made some real progress. He and Kim interviewed all 20 candidates for the open positions. They narrowed the 20 down to nine possible candidates. Jeff is taking the hiring process much more seriously. It has been a time consuming process.
- Jeff explained to Tony that even though he had made a lot of progress during their sessions, it seems my time continues to be consumed by things outside my control. He admitted it is frustrating because he would like to spend more time with his team...and his family.

Tony's Advice

- A manager may be blaming his personal time management problem on things outside his control.
- A manager's time is his responsibility. If he isn't able to do the important things, only he can solve that problem. A team depends on their manager to be there for them, and that includes solving personal problems.

- One of the major sources of stress, anxiety, and unhappiness comes from feeling like out of control. A manager needs to figure out ways to take control of his time so that he can take control of his life.
 - No one has two three hours a day they could save by doing one thing better. However, many people find an hour or two a day they could use better by doing a few things differently.
 - If you want to make better use of your time, you need to be looking for the small increments of time...a minute here, five minutes there, etc. Add them all up and you'll create more time to use.
 - People often overwork themselves by making bad time management decisions. The bottom line is that most people can't solve their time problem by working harder. Doing the wrong thing harder doesn't help. What we need to do is find ways to shorten tasks, eliminate some steps, combine some tasks, and work easier while getting things done.
 - No one can save time...we all have the same amount, and we can't carry any time over to the next day. So since we can't save time, we have to make better decisions on how we spend our time.
 - There are two ways to spend time better. You can do less or you can do things faster. Those are our only choices. Of course there are some things we could eliminate and just say no to.
 - The first thing you need to figure out is where your time is currently going. If you want to make improvements, you've got to know what to improve. To find the answer, track your time for two weeks so you can make some educated decisions about what to improve.
 - We spend our time doing the main things or doing the wrong things...and we spend our time doing things right or doing things wrong.
 - Jeff identified the main things in his department. Now he needed to classify his activities – are you doing those main things and how well are you doing them?
 - Most executives have three areas where they can make changes that will lead to major time improvements: prioritizing, organizing, interruptions, and meetings.
1. Prioritizing and organizing:
 - The Pareto Principle states that 80% of your results will come from 20% of your activities. The Pareto Principle definitely applies to time management. It's your responsibility to yourself and your team to know where your highest payoff activities are and eliminate as many as you can of the ones that yield few results.
 - Every time management guru will tell you to touch paper only once.
 - Set aside some uninterrupted planning time every day.
 - Conduct an audit on every report that hits your in-box.
 - Is the report really necessary? If not, eliminate it. If you only need a line item off a report, ask the originator of the report to eliminate the report and send you the line item.
 - Clean your desk. A cluttered desk makes you look disorganized and contributes to the shuffling and reshuffling game.
 - Control your email deliveries. Work your email deliveries into your personal schedule so that emails don't control your day.

- Batch activities – do like activities together – so that you are not starting and stopping all the time. Do your voice mails at once. Return all phone calls at one time. Write memos or letters at one sitting. Eliminate as many transitions from one activity to another as possible.
 - Go to lunch at 11 a.m. or 1 p.m. to avoid the rush.
2. Another key area of time management is interruptions.
- Keep track of who is interrupting you and why they are interrupting you. Even if you can't eliminate the interruption – you can keep it short.
 - Arrange your furniture so that your desk does not face the flow of traffic.
 - Schedule one-on-one sessions with your staff and boss so that you can get as much as possible accomplished at one time. Gather everything you need to talk about and take care of it at one sitting rather than interrupting each other the minute something comes up.
 - Ask your team, 'What do I do that wastes your time and hinders your performance?'
3. The biggest time waster is meetings. If everyone is prepared on-time and focused – most meetings can be accomplished in half the time the meeting is currently taking. Make your meetings productive, but short.
- Don't fall in the 'perpetually scheduled meeting' syndrome. Make sure every meeting is absolutely necessary.
 - Always begin a meeting by covering the most important items first.
 - When people show up late, don't recap what you've covered.
 - Start and end your meetings on time.

The Seventh Monday - Buckets and Dippers

Jeff's Update and Issue

- Last week was a much better week for Jeff. He and Kim completed the interviewing and made job offers to the best three candidates. Two of them accepted and start in a couple of weeks.
- Since Tony had told him to 'hire tough and never lower your standards', Jeff asked Kim to begin the process of finding the right person for their last open position. Jeff is really excited about the two new team members.
- Jeff also tried several of the time management tips. He kept a log of where he was spending his time and discovered he was spending a lot of time on things that weren't important. He also found that one particular person in his office interrupted him at least six time a day. He showed her his log of how many times they were talking to each other in a day, and she couldn't believe she called him that often.
- He also cut the weekly team meeting time in half. They started with their most important items and finished them all. They accomplished in 30 minutes what normally took 90. They at least doubled their productivity in those 30 minutes. Jeff felt like he was in more control of his time.

Tony's advice

- Tony suggested that Jeff approach two of his departed stars about the open position. He already knew that they were superstars and would fit in with the team. Jeff might have to swallow his pride when he asked them to come back, but it was a good idea.
- Jeff was making progress in the three things discussed in his conversations with his former employees.
- Next Tony focused on how Jeff could coach every member of the team to become better. This involved recognition of, and communication to, everyone on the team.
- Here are two facts you should never forget, regardless of your title or position:
 - Your scorecard as a leader is the result of your team. You are needed; you are important. But you get paid for what your subordinates do, not necessarily what you do.
 - You need your team more than your team needs you. You need each other, but cumulatively, the people on a team accomplish much more than any individual.
- A manager or leader's job is to help each team member become better at the job they have chosen. They have entrusted a portion of their life to you, and it's your job to help them grow, personally and professionally. So you need to do everything you can do to help them become the very best!
- Every person has a bucket of motivation. That bucket can be filled to overflowing, or it can be empty and desperately need filling. Sometimes the buckets have leaks...and those buckets lose motivation as fast as you can try to motivate.
- Every person also has a dipper. In fact some people have those great big, long dippers that they enjoy putting into other people's buckets. Their dippers represent cynicism, negativism, confusion, stress, doubt, fear, anxiety, and any other thing that can drain someone's desire and motivation.
- As a leader, your job is to keep everyone's bucket filled. You are the Chief Bucket-Filler, and the best way to fill buckets is with excellent communication. In fact, there are four things you have to do if you're going to keep your team members' motivation buckets full.
 1. First, a full bucket requires knowing what the main things that are important to doing a good job. A leader with focus and direction fills buckets. A leader who creates confusion and inconsistency has a dipper that drains people's buckets.
 2. To keep buckets filled, you need to provide the bucket holders with feedback on how they're doing.
 - People need to know how they're doing all the time, not just at performance review time. But here's a warning: you can have great intentions to fill buckets and yet be draining buckets if you don't follow the rules of effective feedback.
 - Be sincere.
 - To fill buckets, your feedback has to be specific.
 - Feedback must be timely.
 - Feedback must be aligned with the receiver's value system.

3. Keep your team members' buckets filled is to let them know you care about them and the job they do. Find those bucket fillers that work best with your team, then use them to fill their buckets often.
 - Here are a dozen of ways to show your team members you care about them:
 - I. Involve people in major decisions.
 - II. Memorize facts about the bucket holder and their family.
 - III. Make coffee for your team.
 - IV. Send thank you notes to team members at home.
 - V. Send bucket holders a Thanksgiving card.
 - VI. Ask your superstars – if they're interested – to become mentors for middle stars or falling stars.
 - VII. Keep a camera close by to record significant bucket-filling events.
 - VIII. Plant a tree on company property in honor of your team.
 - IX. Create a library of books, tapes, and magazines, and keep it current as well stocked so team members can fill their own buckets.
 - X. Create a 'wall of fame' with pictures of your team members and their families.
 - XI. Follow the platinum bucket-filling rule: Treat people the way they wish to be treated.
 - XII. Spend time with all your team members.
4. The fourth and final bucket-filling requirement is for the team to know how well it's doing as a team. The more buckets you fill, the more your bucket is filled.

The Eighth Week - Enter the Learning Zone

Jeff's Update and Issue

- Jeni, one of the superstars who left, decided to come back to the company. Jeff explained the changes he was making in how he leads the team. He thought that she may have called several of her friends to see if he was really doing what he had outlined in their conversation – and to find out if it was making a difference.
- According to Jeff, the new hires were doing great. They were full of enthusiasm.
- He shared Tony's analogy of the bucket and the dipper with the team. Then, they brainstormed some of our own rules for bucket-filling and what to do when someone gets their dipper in your bucket.

Tony's Advice

- Focus on what you can do to achieve the goals you have for yourself.
- A forceful enemy to your potential is your comfort zone. When Jeff first came to Tony's home eight weeks ago, without knowing it, he described what it was like to be in the comfort zone. And then things changed at work, and the comfort zone was no longer comfortable. He didn't know what to do or where to go.

- To be the very best, you cannot allow yourself to become complacent in your comfort zone. You need to be reaching for improvement. To fulfill your potential, you need to move out of your comfort zone and into ‘the learning zone.’
- There are three rooms in the learning zone. The first is the reading room. You learn more by reading more. If you decided to read one book a month on management or leadership. During the next year, you’d have read 12 books. Do you think you’d know more about management and leadership if you read 12 books a year on the subject?
- The question is not do you have the time or money. The question is do you have the DISCIPLINE to set aside time every day to read.
- The second room in the learning zone is the listening room. The principle reasons executives fail are arrogance, out-of-control egos, and lack of sensitivity. They forget to take the time to listen to their people. Soon they become insensitive to the needs and desires of the individuals on the team. Arrogance, out-of-control egos, and insensitivity are part of the management land trap.
 - First, you tend to listen better when you attend outside seminars and conferences. Any time you gather new information, you can make better decisions.
 - Second, you can also learn to listen better by making better use of your time while in you’re in your car. Listening to a motivational or inspirational audiotape would have a greater influence on you then listening to talk radio or music.
- The third room in the learning zone is the giving room. You cannot succeed without giving back. The more you teach, the more accountable you become to what you’re teaching. Teaching is good for you!
- It’s easy to agree that we need to become life-long learners. But the facts are that nothing is going to change unless you set specific goals for improvement.
- Goals can become the strongest force for self-motivation – they are your track to run your course. Yet less than five percent of all people set specific goals, and fewer than five percent will write their goals down on paper.
- There are four main reasons why people fail to set goals.
 1. First, people fail to set goals because they don’t know the importance of goal setting.
 2. Second, most people don’t know how to set goals. Write down what actions you are going to take the next week. Writing clarifies the goal and commits you to it.
 3. Third, sometimes people don’t set goals because they are afraid of failure. If you have no goals, you’re not risking failure. Failure is a prelude to success. To become more successful, we have to fail more often...but don’t take this to an extreme. Setting goals that will help us become more successful even if we fail to accomplish the goal.
 4. Fourth, goals require people to leave their comfort zone.

Tony’s final thought for Jeff was this: Stay positive!

- Jeff’s Leadership Commitments
 - I am responsible for my actions and my team’s performance, no matter what the circumstances.
 - I keep the main thing the main thing.
 - I have a positive relationship with my boss.

- I escape from management land and stay I tune with my people.
 - I recognize and reward superstar activity.
 - I address problems in a pro-active manner.
 - I do what's right even when no one is watching
 - I realize that everything I do counts toward my leadership score.
 - I hire tough.
 - I am an excellent time manager.
 - I fill other's buckets.
- After this week's session Jeff added two more:
 - I live in the learning zone
 - I am a positive role model for others.

The Cornerstone Principles of Leadership -Values Principles

- The Principles of Integrity – Results improve in proportion to the level of trust earned by the leader.
- The Principle of Responsibility – Results improve when leaders and their followers are held accountable for their actions.
- The Principle of Commitment – Results improve to the extent that the leader hires and develops talented people.
- The Principle of Vision – Results improve when leaders establish a crystal-clear vision with a convincing reason to embrace the vision.

Synergy Principles

- The Principle of Communication – Results improve when followers understand their role and are rewarded for their accomplishments.
- The Principle of Conflict Resolution – Results improve when the leader removes obstacles inhibiting followers.
- The Principle of Optimism – Results improve in proportion to the self-esteem and attitude of the leader.
- The Principle of Change Management – Results improve to the extent the leader embraces change and makes change positive.

Investment Principles

- The Principle of Empowerment – Results improve as followers are allowed to accept responsibility for their actions.
- The Principle of Courage – Results improve in proportion to the leader's ability to confront issues affecting his followers.
- The Principle of Example –Results improve when the leader is a positive role model.

- The Principle of Preparation – Results improve to the extent that leaders develop themselves and their followers.

Recommendation: This is a practical guide book for managers of teams with sound leadership principles.

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About the reviewer: Frumi Rachel Barr, MBA, PhD

Many CEO's find themselves asking "What now?" to sensitive situations that only an experienced former CEO can understand. Frumi is brought in to solve problems and often remains to work with you, as your confidante and secret weapon. She has an uncanny knack of getting to the heart of your corporate climate and maximizing your team's performance, profitability and sustainability.

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