

Intentional Leadership

Nothing meaningful ever happens by accident

Leadership Behavior: Leaders Make It Better

On May 29, 1953, mountaineer Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay became the first climbers to reach the summit of Mount Everest. The journey took a total of seven weeks to travel from their basecamp to the top of the world at 29,028 ft. For those brief 15 minutes, Hillary and Norgay were standing higher than anyone on earth and higher than anyone had ever been.

After the record breaking ascend, Hillary was asked what it was like to stand on the summit of Everest. He responded, "I had a feeling of great satisfaction."

One thing is certain...when you find yourself standing on top of the world, you know you didn't get there by accident. For Hillary, his ascent was the culmination of years of hard work and intentional leadership.

Nothing meaningful ever happens by accident.

Successful leadership is intentional leadership

Intentional - done on purpose

THE INTENTIONAL LEADER DOES SIX THINGS:

1. THE INTENTIONAL LEADER DEFINES WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT

Success in any endeavor requires understanding what is truly important. If you fail to define and do what is important you'll never accomplish anything important.

"You'll never do what you do not define." - Craig Groeschel

3 Key Areas To Define Importance:

- A Clear And Compelling Mission And Vision (Where You're Going)
 - For Hillary it was being the first to reach the summit of Everest
 - For Grace World it is building a strong healthy church living in true revival
- A Good, Executable Plan (How You'll Get There)
 - For Hillary there was training, a support system, a route, camps, supplies
 - For Grace World it is A.C.T.S.
 - A good plan you work consistently is better than the best plan you don't stick to

- A Burning White Hot Why (Why This Matters)
 - For Hillary it was the ambition to be the first
 - For Grace World it is our deeply held conviction that every family needs a strong, healthy church

There are a million things you can do, only a few worth doing. Therefore do what is important.

2. THE INTENTIONAL LEADER DOESN'T SURRENDER THE IMPORTANT FOR THE URGENT

We've all fallen prey to this trap. We allow the proverbial squeaky wheel to pull us off mission to address something that is urgent but not important.

Stephen Covey (*7 Habits of Highly Effective People*) popularized the Urgent/Important Matrix:

	Urgent	Not Urgent								
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Highly effective leaders are intentional about spending the majority of their time in Quadrant II.

3. THE INTENTIONAL LEADER TAKES THE TIME TO REFLECT

We get what we inspect, not what we expect.

What are your goals? How do you measure them? How will you know when you achieve them? If your goal is to lose 25 lbs you're going to have to be willing to step on the scale on a regular basis. If your goal is to set aside \$1,000 dollars this month, you'll have to look at the account.

This isn't evaluation for the sake of evaluation. This is taking the time to reflect on your progress to ensure you are meeting your expectations.

An effective habit of evaluation is daily, weekly, monthly and annually set aside time to go over your goals, responsibilities and priorities. Look at your calendar, and how you spend your time. Where were you most effective? Where did you underperform? What do you need to change to be more intentional moving forward?

4. THE INTENTIONAL LEADER TAKES NOTHING FOR GRANTED

Assumptions will get a leader in trouble. Every leader and organization functions with several assumptions. We assume our systems are in place. We assume our leaders know their responsibilities and will perform their tasks accordingly. We assume we will grow. We assume someone will take care of it.

“We don’t rise to the level of our goals, we fall to the level of our systems.” - James Clear

Systems require intentional leadership to develop and deploy. They don’t happen overnight and they don’t produce results immediately. However, over time, the right systems, done consistently, will create momentum.

5. THE INTENTIONAL LEADER ASKS BOLD QUESTIONS

John Maxwell wrote in the *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, “You don’t know, what you don’t know.” Great leaders understand they don’t have all the answers. Therefore, they become great question askers. They are habitual learners. They are always asking the big, bold questions and challenging the status quo.

As a leader, you will feel the pressure to be the answer man/woman. Unshackle yourself from that burden. Your role is to solve problems and solving problems begins with asking the right questions.

6. THE INTENTIONAL LEADER FINISHES EACH DAY WITH A SENSE OF SATISFACTION

Unfortunately, I know all too well how frustrating and disappointing it can be to finish a day and not be able to give one specific win for the day. This is always the result of allowing other’s priorities to take precedent over my own personal priorities for the day. Their urgent needs detoured me from my MVPs. This is the ultimate consequence of unintentional leadership.

Arriving at the end of your day with a sense of satisfaction doesn’t happen on accident. It requires hard work and intentional leadership.

So what are you going to do?

- Craft a clear and compelling mission that is built upon values
- Ensure your goals and tasks are pointed at that mission
- Create systems that are tied to your mission and drives toward your goals
- Take time to reflect on a regular basis
- Boldly question the status quo and look for ways to be more effective
- Lay your head to bed at night knowing what you did today mattered

Ultimately, you are going to be intentional and do things on purpose.

Questions

1. Do you feel that the majority of your time is spent on things with a clear purpose? Why or why not?

2. Do you have a mission statement for yourself? Do you have a clear job description and understand how your responsibilities are tied to the mission and vision of the organization? Do you know your own personal values? What are your goals for this year? If things are fuzzy or unclear, make time to address them.
3. Make a list of all the things you do in a week. Place them in their appropriate places in the four quadrants. How much of your time and energy is spent in that all important second quadrant? What needs to be deleted? What needs to be delegated?
4. What systems or habits in your life do you need to develop or refine?