

# “The Catalyst Leader”

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I think of Billy, who founded an innovative media company a few years back. They produce amazing work but have been bogged down in low morale resulting from a lack of compassionate and capable leadership. Though Billy’s excitement for the work is contagious, his organization battles high turnover rates.

I grow further convinced that we need to nurture leaders who will not just lead now but also lead well

Ambition must be grounded in wisdom. Inspiration must be pursued with integrity. Dreams must be built with boundaries. And passions need the steady hand of principles to guide them.

Today’s influencers recognize their callings and are passionate for God. They are competent and courageous, authentic and principled, hopeful about the future and unafraid to collaborate with others. Because they’ve chosen integrity over immediacy, they’re accomplishing both and setting an example for the rest of us.

Interestingly, our research showed that 82 percent of Christians

Today agree “the nation is facing a crisis of leadership because there are not enough good leaders right now.”

Meeting. I learned that the right thing said in the wrong way is the wrong thing.

Without knowledge of one’s calling, leading well is impossible.

Leaders who make the biggest impact also have the strongest sense of calling

Our sense of calling should be like an unfolding epic adventure.

In our study, only 3 percent said that “purpose” was their defining leadership quality. That number fell to a measly 1 percent for those ages 18 to 39.

“Instead of wondering what your next vacation is, maybe you should set up a life you don’t need to escape from”-Seth Godin

If so, take the advice of Rick Warren, who encourages people to focus on being faithful in the place and time they are. Let God be responsible for the rest. “Be faithful where you are,” he says. “God is responsible for how big your influence gets.”

A brisk pace forward can escalate into a full-speed-ahead run that barrels over people.

Don’t allow your ambitions to blind you to the team’s needs, the organization’s health, or the well-being of your family.

Create accountability in your leadership style and a system that will force you to make quick adjustments when you lose your way, and give team members permission to speak freely and challenge you.

Most organizations need an authentic leader, not a perfect one.

Perhaps the ultimate freedom is the freedom to be one’s self. – Daniel Pink

If we don't learn to be content with who God has made us and called us to be, then we will never reach our potential as influencers.

As pastor and author Mark Batterson says, authenticity is the new authority in leadership.

We firmly believe in what Abraham Lincoln said long ago: "Whatever you are, be a good one."

Every great organization has a few areas where their standards are so high it's annoying. This is a good thing. Set standards that scare you, and work to achieve them.

We have simply died to our egos for the sake of the creative process.

Courage is not the absence of fear but rather the commitment to overcome it.

Fear can be a speed bump, but it should never be a stop sign.

Here are some helpful tips for building a culture of courage in your organization:

- ◆ Set scary standards
- ◆ Allow for failure
- ◆ Reward innovation
- ◆ Pursue the right opportunities
- ◆ Learn to delegate

William Wallace so aptly reminds, "Men don't follow titles. They follow courage."

Catalyst Core Values

- A high standard of excellence
- Work hard, play hard
- A culture of family
- Passion for Jesus
- Approachable, real, and comfortable with who we are
- A heart for leaders

Three elements of principles leadership

### **Element #1: Humility**

President Calvin Coolidge once said, "No man ever listened himself out of a job."

Seven Signs You're "Too Big for Your Britches"

1. You feel like you need an entourage everywhere you go.
2. You're unreachable, using systems and handlers to shield you from others.
3. The only people you make time for are those who can do something for you.
4. You speak and offer advice far more than you ask questions and take notes.
5. You quit laughing, especially at yourself.
6. You feel certain jobs are beneath you and would be offended if someone asked you to perform those tasks.
7. You feel no one's work ever meets your approval—except your own.

Dave Balter, founder and chief executive of the social marketing company BzzAgent, says that leaders must have humility or be destroyed by hubris.

### **Element #2: Discipline**

Our tendency as human beings is to favor the quick over the slow, the cheap over the expensive, and the easy over the difficult.

Talent doesn't win. Hard work, determination, and character wins. If you root your talent and ability in those things, then you have a powerful combination. Erwin McManus

A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work.-Colin Powell

### **Element #3: Integrity**

Who you are becoming is way more important than what you are doing.

A catalyst leader is rooted in something more than raw ambition.

As Newark, New Jersey, mayor Cory Booker says, leaders need "hope unhinged."

A true leader must have an insane desire to leave "here" because we must move "there."

Twenty Points on Leading Twentysomethings We gather thousands of young leaders on an annual basis, and most of our Catalyst staff members are under the age of thirty. So here are twenty ways we have learned to better lead the next generation:

1. Give them freedom with their schedules. I'll admit, giving young leaders freedom with their schedules is tough for me. But it creates buy in and loyalty.
2. Provide them projects, not a career. Careers are just not the same anymore. Young leaders desire options, just like free agents.
3. Create a family environment. Work, family, and social life are all intertwined for the younger generation, so make sure the work environment is experiential and family oriented. Everything is connected.
4. Cause is important. Tie in compassion and justice to the "normal." Causes and opportunities to give back are important.
5. Embrace social media. Social media is here to stay, and young leaders know how to use it.
6. Accept that they are tech savvy. For this generation, technology is the norm. They grew up using Xboxes, iPhones, laptops, and iPads. If you want a response, text first, then call. Or send a direct message on Twitter or a Facebook private message.
7. Lead each person uniquely. Don't create standards or rules that apply to everyone. Customize your approach to each young leader. (I'll admit, this one is difficult!)
8. Make authenticity and honesty the standard for your corporate culture. Twentysomethings tend to be cynical and don't trust someone just because they are in charge.
9. Understand they are not interested in climbing the corporate ladder. Today's young leaders are more concerned about making a difference and leaving their mark.
10. Give them opportunities early with major responsibility. They don't want to wait their turn. They want to make a difference now and will find an outlet for influence and responsibility somewhere else if you don't give it to them. Empower them early and often.
11. Accept that they want the larger win, not the personal small gain. Young leaders in general have an abundance mentality instead of scarcity mentality.
12. Meet their desire for partnering and collaboration. Twentysomethings are not interested in drawing lines. Collaboration is the new currency, along with generosity.
13. Realize they're not about working for a personality. This generation isn't interested in laboring long hours to build a temporal kingdom for one person. But they will work their guts out for a cause and vision bigger than themselves.

14. Provide opportunities for mentoring, learning, and discipleship. Many older leaders think twentysomethings aren't interested in generational wisdom transfer. This is not true at all. Younger leaders are hungry for mentoring and discipleship, so build it into your organizational environment.
15. Coach them and encourage them. Young leaders want to gain wisdom through experience. Come alongside them; don't just tell them what to do.
16. Create opportunities for quality time, individually and corporately. Twentysomethings want to be led by example, not just by words.
17. Hold them accountable. This generation wants to be held accountable by those who are living out an authentic life. Measure them and give them constant feedback.
18. Grasp that the sky is the limit in their minds. Older leaders need to understand that younger leaders have a much broader and global perspective, which makes wowing them much more difficult.
19. Recognize their values, not just their strengths. It's not just about their skills. Don't use them without truly knowing them.
20. Provide a system that creates stability. Give younger leaders clear expectations with the freedom to succeed, and provide stability on the emotional, financial, and organizational side.

To imagine things other than they are is the essence of hope. It is also the stuff of revolution-Leonard Sweet

You don't have to blow out someone else's candle to make yours shine brighter.

The next best thing to being wise oneself is to live in a circle of those who are-CS Lewis

As power shifts to individuals, leadership itself must shift with it—from coercive or motivational leadership that uses sticks or carrots to extract performance and allegiance out of people to inspirational leadership that inspires commitment and innovation and hope in people.

Sadly, few leaders today are tapping the great well of wisdom found in a mentor. According to our research, only 16 percent firmly assert that they interact regularly with an older mentor who helps them navigate professional issues.