16. The Law of the Big Mo – Momentum is the Leader’s Best Friend

Principles of the Law:

All leaders face the challenge of creating change in an organization. Just as every sailor knows that you can’t steer a ship that isn’t moving forward, strong leaders understand that to change direction, you first have to create forward progress – and that takes the Law of the Big Mo.

Leaders always find a way to make things happen.

The two keys for creating momentum are preparation and motivation.

Only a leader can create momentum. Followers catch it. And managers are able to continue it once it has begun. But creating it requires someone who can motivate others, not someone who needs to be motivated.

Momentum really is a leader’s best friend. Sometimes it’s the only difference between losing and winning.

Momentum also makes a huge difference in organizations. When you have no momentum, even the simplest tasks can seem to be insurmountable problems. But when you have momentum on your side, the future looks bright, obstacles appear small, and trouble seems temporary.

The Truth About Momentum
1. Momentum makes leaders look better than they are.
2. Momentum helps followers perform better than they are.
3. Momentum is easier to steer than to start.
4. Momentum is the most powerful change agent.

The greatest and most difficult leadership challenge is sustaining momentum.

If your desire is to do great things with your organization, never overlook the power of momentum. It truly is the leader’s best friend. If you can develop it, you can do almost anything. That’s the power of the Big Mo.

Questions for Further Review:

1. How do you prepare your team for success?
2. How do motivate your team for success?
3. How is forward progress initiated in your organization?
4. How is forward progress maintained in your organization?

**Action Plan:**

A. Develop a plan to remove barriers to momentum in your organization.

B. Identify momentum supporters on your team. Develop a plan to continue their forward progress.

C. Identify momentum breakers on your team. Develop a plan to concentrate their efforts on forward progress.

D. Identify the areas for which you are satisfied with status quo.

E. Identify the areas where you need to create momentum to move forward.

**Evaluation:**

*Evaluate yourself on a score of 1 to 5 (1 is poor, 5 is great)*

______ I have created forward progress in my organization.

______ I increase the motivating factors in my organization.

______ TOTAL (Your leadership score for the Law of the Big Mo)
17. The Law of Priorities – Leaders Understand that Activity is Not Necessarily Accomplishment

Principles of the Law:

Leaders never grow to a point where they no longer need to prioritize. Leaders must always prioritize.

The Pareto Principle
If you focus your attention on the activities that rank in the top 20 percent in terms of importance, you will have an 80 percent return on your effort. For example, if you have ten employees, you should give 80 percent of your time and attention to your best two people.

The Three R’s
1. What is required?
2. What gives the greatest return?
3. What brings the greatest reward?

To be effective, leaders must order their lives according to these three questions.

Activity is not necessarily accomplishment. If we want to continue to be effective, we have to work according to the Law of Priorities.

Examine the life of any great leader, and you will see him putting priorities into action.

Great leaders identify the priorities for which they are passionate and reorder those priorities as appropriate.

Successful leaders live according to the Law of Priorities. They recognize that activity is not necessarily accomplishment. But the best leaders seem to be able to get the Law of Priorities to work for them by satisfying multiple priorities with each activity. This usually enables them to increase their focus while reducing their number of actions.

John Wooden never scouted other teams. His priority was to have his players reach their maximum potential. It was never his goal to win, rather his priority was to have his players play their best.

Are you spread out all over the place? Or are you focused on the few things that bring the highest reward? If you aren’t living by the Law of Priorities, you might be spinning your wheels.
**Questions for Further Review:**

1. Describe your method for prioritizing important tasks.

2. Identify the activities in the top 20% in terms of importance to you. How do you focus your attention on these activities?

3. Which activities and/or tasks are required in your position?

4. Which activities and/or tasks give the greatest return in your position?

5. Which activities and/or tasks bring the greatest reward in your position?

6. How does the way you prioritize your life depend on these questions?

**Action Plan:**

A. Keep a journal for one week. Record ALL of your personal and professional activities.

B. Identify the importance of your activities and the amount of time you spend on them.

C. If your attention is not focused on your top 20% most important activities, then continue to journal for another week.

D. Answer these questions:
   1. What is required?
   2. What gives the greatest return?
   3. What brings the greatest reward?

**Evaluation:**

*Evaluate yourself on a score of 1 to 5 (1 is poor, 5 is great)*

_____ I establish priorities and put them into action.

_____ I give my time and attention to the most important 20 percent of people & activities in my organization.

_____ TOTAL (Your leadership score for the Law of Priorities)
18. The Law of Sacrifice – A Leader Must Give Up to Go Up

Principles of the Law:

Successful leaders have to maintain an attitude of sacrifice in order to turn around an organization. They have to be willing to do what it takes.

When all else fails, make another sacrifice.

The Law of Sacrifice maintains that one sacrifice seldom brings success.

Most people will acknowledge that sacrifices are necessary fairly early in a leadership career. People give up many things in order to gain potential opportunities.

Sacrifice is a constant in leadership. It is an ongoing process, not a one-time payment.

Anytime you know that the step is right, don’t hesitate to make a sacrifice. Leadership means setting the example.

“When you become a leader, you lose the right to think about yourself.” Gerald Brooks

If leaders have to give up to go up, then they have to give up even more to stay up. As you rise in leadership, your responsibilities increase and your rights decrease.

Leadership success requires continual change, improvement, and sacrifice.

The Law of Sacrifice demands that the greater the leader, the more he must give up.

There is no success without sacrifice. The higher the level of leadership you want to reach, the greater the sacrifices you will have to make.

Questions for Further Review:

1. Why do you think leadership success requires continual change, improvement, and sacrifice?

2. Describe the first sacrifice you made as a leader.

3. Describe the greatest sacrifice you made as a leader.

4. Describe the most recent sacrifice you made as a leader.

5. Describe an instance in your career when the opportunity was not worth the sacrifice required.
Action Plan:

A. Develop a list of activities you are willing to sacrifice.

B. Develop a list of activities you are not willing to sacrifice.

C. Lists the steps and thought processes you consider before making a sacrifice.

Evaluation:

*Evaluate yourself on a score of 1 to 5 (1 is poor, 5 is great)*

_____ I don’t hesitate to make sacrifices to do the right thing.

_____ I understand that sacrifice is a constant in leadership.

_____ TOTAL (Your leadership score for the Law of Sacrifice)