

10 Things that Immediately Happen when Real Leadership Shows Up

“There are no bad teams, only bad leaders.”—Jocko Willink

What does the environment around you look like?

Is it obvious to you and everyone else what you stand for?

Is your benchmark for success clear and understood by all?

Do you, as the leader, clearly reflect your vision and standards to such a degree that reading them is unnecessary?

Are you consistent in good times and bad times?

Are you a master of the basics and technical stuff, or have you lost touch?

When you experience failure, do you confront the future or wallow in the past?

No Bad Teams

There are no bad teams, just bad leaders.

Leadership is what determines how successful you and those around you are. If there is minimal success, there is minimal leadership.

There are very few real leaders:

- Who genuinely stand for something and brightly reflect those standards
- Who are willing to put everything on the line for what they believe in

· Who create change and *lead*

Leadership is not born, it's made. If you're not excited about your current circumstances and success, you have complete power right now to make radical transformations.

Until you do, nothing will change.

Here's what abruptly happens when you take ownership of your life and situation:

1. Inject a winning standard of performance before you start winning

"How would your life change if you made decisions TODAY as if you were already the person you want to become TOMORROW? We tend to live up to our own feelings of ourselves (for better or for worse). If we plan to become something else, what better way to do so than to step into that skin now?" — Richie Norton

It doesn't matter what your current circumstances are. Winners act like winners before they start winning.

Your mindset is what you grow into. Mental creation always precedes physical creation. Who you are in your head is who you eventually become.

Who are you in your head right now?

The first thing that happens when you step up as a leader is that you and everyone around you begin looking *toward* success. You start craving it, and believing it's possible. In turn, your behavior starts changing.

It all starts with you.

It doesn't matter where you are in your organization. As Robin Sharma explains, *real leadership requires no formal title.*

2. Constancy among chaos and success

“Consistent effort is a consistent challenge.”—Bill Walsh

Most people can't handle failure or success. They're on a behavioral roller-coaster depending entirely on external circumstances. When things aren't going well, they're overwhelmed or depressed. When things are going well, they're overconfident and lazy.

However, when you show up as a leader, your mindset and behavior remain constant regardless of success or defeat.

You are marching forward to the beat of your own drum. Everything outside of you is noise. You're compelled forward by intrinsic vision and values. Your consistency reflects your conversion to your cause.

3. Clear point of reference is established to keep you consistent

When you decide to lead, you provide a clear standard of excellence. Your standard of excellence becomes your point of reference, keeping you honest and consistent in all circumstances.

It ensures you don't have too many bad days in a row. Or get derailed by haters. Or get overconfident when successful.

Your point of reference is what you really *believe* in. It's *why* you do it.

When you're struggling and failing, you look to your point of reference. When you're crushing it, you look to your point of reference.

What's your point of reference?

4. Clear performance metrics are established to keep you accountable

“Where performance is measured, performance improves. Where performance is measured and reported, the rate of improvement accelerates.” — Thomas S. Monson

What does success look like for you, behaviorally? What is your actual job? What do you need to *do*?

How do you determine if you’re failing or succeeding?

There should be clear metrics to measure yourself against. However, simply knowing what you should be doing isn’t enough. Clear accountability needs to be put in place.

That accountability, if possible, should be to an actual person, not just a spreadsheet. When you are required to report your progress — especially to someone you respect — your performance will improve.

5. As the leader, you reflect the standard of excellence and recognize you are the ultimate bottleneck

When you don’t show up as a leader, everything falls apart.

You are the example of what optimal performance looks like. You become the living and breathing standard of excellence for others to emulate. You reflect your mission and values.

One thing is absolutely certain, your performance will be mimicked by those following you — whether good or bad. Thus, you are the ultimate bottleneck. Your failure to get to the next level hinders everyone relying on you. You can’t take people beyond where you currently are, personally and professionally.

Hence, Darren Hardy, author of *The Compound Effect*, has said, *“Never take advice from someone you wouldn’t trade places with.”*

Who you follow determines where you get in life. If your leader isn't moving forward, you're not moving forward, because your results are a reflection of your leader's results.

Consequently, as the leader, you should be insanely determined to become the best you possibly can. The better you become the more clearly you can help others get where they need to go, because you've been there yourself.

The essence of true leadership is pure ownership. You're no longer doing it for yourself, but so you can take those you leader further.

6. A radical and permanent change in the environment and culture

"Man is not the creature of circumstances, circumstances are the creatures of men. We are free agents, and man is more powerful than matter." — Benjamin Disraeli

Most people work from the outside in. They focus on the external environment, and thus, would take people out of the slums in hopes to improve their lives.

Conversely, as a true leader, you works from the inside out. You focus on the person, and thus, take the slums *out of the people* and empower them to *take themselves* out of the slum — so they can improve their own lives.

Most people focus on behavior. True leadership focuses on human nature.

As a leader, you know a person's environment and behaviors are merely a reflection of them. If you change the person, they'll change their own environment to match their new values and identity.

As you show up as a leader, and establish and exemplify a new standard of excellence, your environment immediately changes to match your internal reality. You create an environment that reinforces what you're trying to accomplish, making your success automatic.

7. A focus on values, principles, and philosophies over specific behaviors

In the book, [Tribal Leadership](#), Dave Logan and John King distinguish organizations based on their tribal *culture*.

Most cultures focus on specific behaviors and practical applications. However, according to Logan's and King's extensive research, the most innovative organizations are not guided by behaviors, but rather, by values and principles.

When you're doing what's never been done before, there is no map or instruction book. Thus, you're guided by ideals, and your behavior adjusts to meet the unique contexts you find yourself in.

And that's the difference.

When you really show up as a leader, you instinctively place an enormous emphasis on teaching and learning. The human capital around you is *everything*. The better your people become — as people, not employees or “followers” — the more successful and impactful you will all be.

8. Any perception of independence is replaced with connection and extension

Most people focus on individual behaviors, and thus view themselves as independent entities.

However, when you become a leader, you recognize the inter-connected-ness of everyone you lead. Each and every person is an extension of each other. Each person lifts where they stand and fulfills their specific duty. Without each member, it all falls apart.

[Independence is a broken concept](#), and has no place in real leadership. Being interdependent is where you want to be.

9. An obsessive focus on the nuts and bolts (the fundamentals) creates an expectation of ensuing success

“Just as the yin-yang symbol possesses a kernel of light in the dark, and of dark in the light, creative leaps are grounded in a technical foundation.” — Josh Waitzkin

It’s all about the fundamentals. The better you get at the basics, the more confident you will be.

Like happiness, you don’t pursue success directly. Instead, you focus on perfecting your performance, and as famous coach Bill Walsh says, *“The score takes care of itself.”*

You don’t have to worry about the outcome when you master the nuts and bolts. Success takes care of itself. You just do work that’s so good it can’t be ignored. You focus on becoming a true professional in every sense of the word. Success becomes an organic and natural consequence of something much more important — who you are.

10. Embrace failure as the path to victory

“If I fail more than you do, I win.” — Seth Godin

Failure is the path to your greatest success. And you will fail. You will fail hard if you really want to succeed.

It will sometimes be hard to pick yourself back up. And in your deepest despair, you’ll confront your future as the leader you are, rather than wallowing in the past like so many do.

The past is over. It’s behind you. You are in *this moment*. And this moment is what’s going to make you.

Picking yourself up and continuing *after* big failures is the most important aspect of your personal development as a leader. Your personal confidence will be strengthened and solidified. You will begin to believe you can achieve anything.

Here are Bill Walsh's 10 rules for failure:

- Expect defeat and on't be surprised when it happens.
- Force yourself to stop looking back on the past.
- Allow yourself some time to recover and mourn your loss. But not too long.
- Tell yourself you are going to stand and fight again. You're actually far closer to your destination than you can imagine.
- Prepare yourself for the *next* encounter. Your next battle. One game at a time.
- Don't ask "why me"?
- Don't expect sympathy from others.
- Don't complain.
- Don't keep accepting condolences from others.
- Don't blame others.

Conclusion

The moment you're ready to become a leader, you will experience these changes almost immediately in your life.

You are a magnet, and your environment directly responds to your inner world.

Are you ready to become a leader?