

## Leadership Commandment 1: [Make What Matters Really Matter](#)

*Importance is not something you assign – it's something you demonstrate through actions and behaviors. To be a truly effective leader for your people and your organization, you need to remember and apply the first commandment of leadership: [Make What Matters Really Matter](#)*

“Leaders are guardians of importance.” Four simple – but not necessarily easy to answer – questions.

- What's important here?
- Do those things really matter?
- How do you know those things matter?
- How do your people know what matters?

Yes, leaders are guardians of importance. YOU are that guardian! You must ensure that what matters to the organization also matters to each member of your team. Here are a few strategies that should help:

- **Make sure they know.** Don't assume employees inherently grasp what's important in your workplace. Why would they? Why should they? After all, they view the job through their eyes, not yours. In order to be sure that team members know what matters, you need to communicate.
- **Keep it in the spotlight.** Things that are important get ongoing attention. They're continually discussed, written about, featured, tracked, measured, and repeated.
- **Hold everyone accountable.** What in our adult life, that's truly important, has no associated accountabilities or consequences? The answer is nothing. And when it comes to our jobs, there are behavior and performance expectations which are important to meet.
- **Inspect what you expect.** Stay aware of what's happening in your organization by wandering around, observing, and visiting with employees. Just as certain excuses are unacceptable from team members, here's one that's unacceptable from the leader: “I had no idea that was happening.”
- **Model what matters.** As a leader, you have a strong influence on the thoughts and behaviors of your employees – perhaps much stronger than you think. And one of your many leadership responsibilities is to model the behavior you expect from others. Fact is, you must earn the right to expect things from your people by doing those same things yourself.

### Take Away...to Remember

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