



Leadership Moment

(Excerpt from Rhett Laubach's new leadership book , *Leaders in Gear*. Learn more about it at www.LeadersInGear.com.)

Persuasion

Big MO: *A big challenge must have a big purpose.*

Leaders in Gear are called to ask others to give more, do more and be more; to rise to the challenge. Your team's performance is directly influenced by your ability to develop, frame and sell the purpose behind the challenge. Why should they give their all for the team? What are the underlying ideas driving everyone's actions? These questions must be answered and answered in very specific ways.

- 1. Make it personal to them.** The purpose must either be entirely or partially for their benefit. If you are struggling with this one, use their language, their stories and their outcome. Frame the outcome of the challenge in terms of their rewards, benefits, etc.
- 2. Make it simple.** Some of the biggest decisions we make in life are based on the simplest of truths. Simplicity is especially important if you are communicating to a large group. It is very difficult to effectively relay complicated information to more than a few people at a time.
- 3. Make it urgent.** Your team is going to be more equipped to give a ton of energy today if it helps them serve a need, solve a problem or accomplish a goal they have today, not miles down the road.
- 4. Be Authentic.** This point speaks to both your content and delivery. Just because a challenge is big and important doesn't mean the delivery mechanism has to be flashy. Conversely, authentic doesn't mean unscripted or unpracticed. Important messages demand your time, but remember to communicate the range of raw emotions everyone will experience while struggling to rise to the challenge.

A very specific area where you might be struggling with your persuasion is fundraising. Understanding how to effectively ask for money can lead to a better understanding of how to persuade people to give other items of value – time, attention, resources, etc. Let's say you agree to give twenty-five cents to a friend so they can buy a soda. What can the dynamics of that simple transaction teach us about effective fundraising?

1. He asked. Seems simple, but how much money has your organization lost simply because you haven't asked for it? How many other things have you wanted from someone that you don't have today because you haven't mustered the courage or taken the time to personally ask.

2. He asked for exactly twenty-five cents. You don't want to limit what people could possibly give, but it helped your transaction tremendously when he said he only needed a quarter. An unclear amount expectation can be a big wall. This also translates to other areas of persuasion. For example, if you are trying to persuade people to volunteer for an event, don't just ask for volunteers. Make a list of tasks and have people sign up for specific duties. I am more likely to be persuaded to help out if I know ahead of time what I will be asked to do.

3. He is a friend. Your relationship with your buddy applied the grease that made the transaction run quicker, smoother and with very little friction. My friend and fellow speaker Phil Boyte has shared the following phrase in schools across America for years, "It's hard to hate someone when you know their story." For this discussion we can say, "It is difficult to say no to someone when they are a friend."

4. He had a very specific need. You knew exactly where your money would go. He was going to buy a Coke with it. You need to be concrete, visual and simple with why you or your organization need someone's money, time, attention or resources.

5. You could relate with his need. Your friend was thirsty - a place you have been many times. This personal connection made it easier for you to empathize with him and made it more likely for you to give. You need to find a way to let your potential givers empathize with your cause. What are your shared life or work experiences?

6. You had the quarter on you and could hand it to him. This is about logistics. Dealing with what your potential givers can give is important, but just as important is where, how and when.

7. You trusted he would use the \$.25 to actually buy a Coke. Why should your target market trust you? How have you built this trust? How will you continue to foster trust?

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