

Rock Solid

4 Ways To Test Your Leadership

BLOG

January 2014 – It was Tuesday. Pattie was calendared to spend the day with the grandkids.

Up early. *Check*. Grab some breakfast. *Check*. Hop in the car. *Check*.

So far, so good.

Start the engine. *Nothing*. Try again. *Nothing*. Once more. *Nothing*.

With the clock ticking (and rush hour traffic mounting), we opted to swap cars. Easier said than done. All the items packed into one car the night before had to be transferred to the other car. This included 1 folding table, 15 folding chairs, and a bunch of Trader Joe bags full of “stuff”. With the precision of an Indy 500 pit crew, we unloaded and reloaded. It was quite a scene. (Note: Pattie and I often compliment ourselves about the considerable entertainment value that we add to our neighborhood!).

Time to divide and conquer. She barreled down the street and I waited for AAA. Twenty-six minutes later the mobile repairman rolled up the driveway, popped the hood, hooked up the battery tester, and unceremoniously pronounced the verdict of a dead battery.

As the serviceman headed out, I was reminded about how helpful an accurate diagnosis is. Within minutes, I knew exactly what my problem was and what I needed to do to fix it.

Don't you wish that assessing your leadership was that easy?

So how do you know that you are being effective as a leader? How do you know that you are “leading with your life”? Are there any diagnostics that you can plug in to render a reading of whether or not you are leading from the core of who you are—or simply from the fact that you occupy the top box on the org chart or that you have a diploma on the credenza that establishes that back in the day you were once numbered with the summa cum laude of your graduating class?

Admittedly, such measurements are more subjective than objective, but for a moment allow me shove a few TESTS onto center stage for your consideration.

- **Test #1: An undeniable mark.** If polled, what would the people in your charge say is the most distinguishable mark of your leadership? Would they say that they see an evident, unmistakable presence of God in how you go about your role as leader? Because of the fullness and intimacy of your relationship with Christ, when others seek your counsel, do they find something beyond day-old platitudes, something that resounds with hope and wisdom and truth?
- **Test #2: An observable integrity.** When the curtain is pulled back, especially in times of

challenge, do people see a person of consistency? Is there alignment between how you live your life and how you call others to live theirs? If Willie Degel set up a 'restaurant stakeout' on your life, would the surveillance cameras reveal a life worth imitating?

- **Test #3: An acknowledged stewardship.** When it's all said and done, do you embrace your leadership role as a stewardship to be faithfully discharged or as an entitlement to be selfishly exploited? Propped up on the various platforms of recognition, far too many leaders lose their bearings and fall victim to an ever-expanding ego. Who do you have in your life to whom you have granted full permission to remind you that your leadership position is not owned by you, but entrusted to you?
- **Test #4: An uncompromising focus.** What's more important to you—your *position* in the organization or your *influence* in the organization? There's a Grand Canyon-sized difference between the two. Do you desire the corner office more than you desire to have impact in the lives of others? The trappings and temptations of leadership can subtly steal your true focus, leaving you with lots of profile but little influence.

So what do you think? How do you measure up? What's your reading on the 'leadership tester'?

And in the middle of testing your leadership impact, be sure to thank God for the spheres of influence into which He has placed you. It's a sacred space.

So steward well.

Which *TEST* do you need to work on the most in 2014?

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