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Leadership For Deep Results: A New Look At Your Career

by Brent Filson

I've challenged all leaders I have worked with during the past two decades to achieve "more results faster continually."

They can get on track to start achieving such results not by working harder and longer but by slowing down and using Leadership Talks on a daily basis.

However, I also tell them that getting on the more-results-faster-continually track is not an end but a beginning. They must then begin focusing not just on the quantity and speed of results but the kind of results they aim to achieve.

There are roughly two kinds of results, standard results and deep results. Most leaders understand standard results but fail to come to grips with deep results. In fact, these leaders go through their entire careers getting the former, but they don't have a clue about the latter. Of course, standard results are necessary. But in the long run, they are far less important than deep results.

We know what standard results are. They are the results we must get in our jobs, such as: speed, productivity, operations efficiencies, sales closes, sales leads, sales to new customers, failure prevention, health and safety advancements, quality, training, quality control, logistics efficiencies, marketing targets, new revenue streams, sales erosion, price calibrations, cost reductions, demand flow activities and technologies, inventory turns, cycle time reductions, materials and parts management, etc.

Whereas achieving standard results enables us to do a better job and have a better career, deep results are different. Deep results are about being better leaders and human beings.

Of course, being a better leader will have a positive impact on your job and your career. But there is something else involved: Being a better leader means being a better person. Who we are as a leader and who we are as a person should be the same thing. If they're not, we diminish both our leadership and the person we are.

Look at it this way: Standard results are about "doing"; deep results are about "being". Our most important achievements as leaders are not just what we achieve but who we become in that achieving.

For instance, if we don't get standard results in our job, we fail in that job or at least in that particular aspect of the job.

But in the realm of deep results, such failure might lead to success if in that failure, we find a better way to lead, a way to be better.

Here are some ways deep results differ from standard results.

--Deep results emerge over longer periods of time.

--Deep results encompass wider circles outside your job, usually impacting your family, friends, and relatives.

--Deep results are often not conventionally successful results. They can come in the guise of failure.

--Deep results can't be quantified. They're usually a quality of living or being.

--Deep results are often not immediately apparent. Usually, you become aware of them after they appear and sometimes long after they appear.

--Deep results are formed in your inner life and the choices you make over the things you control, your opinions, aspirations, and desires.

--Deep results shape, and are shaped by, character.

How does one go about getting deep results? There are many paths up this mountain. But one path is straight and steep and clear. That is the path of the Leadership Imperative.

I WILL LEAD PEOPLE IN SUCH A WAY THAT WE TOGETHER NOT ONLY ACHIEVE THE RESULTS WE NEED BUT THEY ALSO BECOME BETTER AS LEADERS AND AS PEOPLE.

The Imperative has two parts: one is results-accomplishments and the other is self betterment.

You are never more powerful as a leader as when, in getting results, you are helping others be better than they are -- even better than thought they could be. Guided by the Leadership Imperative, you'll find yourself realizing deep results.

Deep results are not a measurement or a direction. They are not a central purpose. They are a process of being. They are not something achieved. They are an achieving � taking place not at a special place in a special time but at every place at all times.

You are deep results before you know that you are. Though deep results are easy, though often they do not come easily.

The task that we shoulder reveals our heart to the world. Deep results show our soul to the world.

Examples of deep results:

--With the disasters of the Franco-Prussia War tumbling down upon Paris, a remarkable event took place, the word of which spread like wildfire through the city. The great author Victor Hugo, exiled for 19 years, had come back to Paris. Traveling through German lines, through the war-ravaged countryside, he had come into the city on virtually the last train. He had come to share the sufferings with the Parisians in their darkest hour when his arriving meant virtual imprisonment in the city. Throngs gathered at the station to applaud him. One man shouted over the crowd, "If defeat brings us Victor Hugo, we couldn't be better rewarded!" � deep results.

--Doug Collins, member of the '72 U.S. Olympic team that ultimately lost the gold medal on a disputed call to the Soviet Union, describes the dramatic moments at the end of the game. We're losing by one. The Soviets have the ball. The clock's running out. I hide behind the center, bait a guy into throwing a pass, knock it loose and grab it. A Russian goes under me as I'm going up for the lay-up. I'm KO'd for a second. The coaches run to me. John Bach, one of the assistants, says, 'We gotta get somebody to shoot the fouls." But coach Hank Iba says, 'If Doug can walk, he'll shoot.' That electrified me. The coach believed in me. I can't even remember feeling any pressure. Three dribbles, spin the ball, toss it in, same as in my backyard. I hit 'em both and got the lead. I didn't know what I was made of until then." �deep results.

--Herb Rammrath, a General Electric client of mine in the late 1980s, told me this. "I was a young Naval officer reporting with many other new sailors aboard an aircraft carrier. The captain met us in a formation on the flight deck. He shook my hand and went down the line greeting many other sailors. I didn't think anything of it until several weeks later when he passed by me in a passageway. He said, �Hi, Herb!' I never forgot that. He remembered my name despite the fact that he had met scores of new sailors that day. It's made a tremendous impact on me till this day." �deep results.

--Seeing abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison dragged with a rope down a Boston Street, Wendell Phillips became so outraged that he joined the abolitionist movement and became one of its most effective activists. �deep results.

Many people go through their careers ignorant of deep results. But when you view your career as a whole, don't you think that the ultimate yardstick of your life should be deep results?

Deep results are not about getting but giving, not about doing but becoming, not about material accumulation but about self-enrichment and the enrichment of human relationships. From now on, when thinking about getting results in your jobs and your career, think too of the deep results you should achieve.