

THREE KEYS TO BECOMING A STRONGER LEADER OR TEAM MEMBER

January 28, 2020 Steve Parr

A chain is no stronger than its weakest link. No doubt you have heard that analogy in the past. Every member of a team brings unique levels of experience, ability, intellect, and passion to the group. The ultimate aim is to have a team with no weak links. Ideally, everyone is growing or at least being “coached up.” Obviously, in a worst case scenario, a team member who is so weak that the team is being hindered or restricted must be removed.

You are not that weak link, are you? You are growing personally, aren't you? You are inspiring the other members to grow also, right? Here are three things that you and each team member should do to keep each link of the chain strong.

1. Each team member should have a mentor. A mentor is someone who has greater experience, stronger ability, excellent intellect, and exceptional passion who is willing to give some of their time to help others to be more effective at what they do. The mentor should have experience in the same field of responsibility, a track record of success, and a willingness to pass on his or her wisdom to others. Who is your mentor?

2. Each team member should have a personal growth plan. Growth can happen by osmosis sometimes, but it is not ordinary and less likely as you rise to higher levels of leadership. Growth comes as you read, experiment, pilot new methods and strategies, fail, collaborate, listen to others, subscribe to podcasts, attend seminars and conferences, pursue degrees, “bend the ears” of other skilled leaders, submit to accountability, and self-evaluate. That is not an exhaustive list but simply examples of actions a leader or team member can take to grow. What is your plan?

3. Get out of your comfort zone. I personally am not a fan of stress, but I have learned that if I am not stressed I am not really growing. Some reading this already think that number two is not possible for them because it will put stress on their schedule. Welcome to leadership! I am not speaking here of unnecessary stress but of strategic stress. You must be stretched to grow, and you will rarely find it comfortable. It may finally become comfortable with time and experience, or it may not. I continually find myself in uncomfortable situations because I expose myself to situations that test me and make me stronger. How are you getting out of your comfort zone?

Timothy is a great biblical example of this process. You see clearly in the narrative of the book of Acts and in the personal letters of 1 & 2 Timothy that the apostle Paul was a valued mentor. You will find Paul urging him to grow both spiritually and in his skills. Here are two examples.

6 Therefore I remind you [Timothy] to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (NKJV)
1 Tim. 1:6-7

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (KJV) 2 Tim.2:15.

Timothy certainly lived outside of his comfort zone as he pastored the church in Ephesus. It was apparently a difficult assignment and Paul had to urge him not to bail out. [1 Tim. 1:3] Paul further reminded Timothy that “God has not given you (Timothy) a spirit of fear” [2 Tim. 1:7] and that though he was a younger leader he should “let no one look down on your youth” [1 Tim. 4:12]. Timothy lived and led outside of his comfort zone. How about you?

Don't be the weakest link on your team. Don't be a weak link at all. Commit to continue your growth and like Timothy, you will be on your way to maximizing your leadership!