

Greetings LMI *Total Leader* Subscribers,

Welcome to our Total Leader Newsletter. Every quarter, the LMI home office and global team will contribute in depth leadership articles and ideas that can be implemented in your teams and organizations. We understand that your time is precious. Therefore, we will make sure that each newsletter provides the maximum amount of value to you in the most concise way possible.

If there are any leadership topics you would like to hear more on, email us at info@lmi-inc.com. We would love to hear from you!

Leadership Is Essential!

By Randy Slechta

We are now a few weeks into the New Year. Studies show a big majority of people set goals or resolutions at the start of the year. Research also shows that most people have given up on their goals before the end of January.

How can you beat the odds and make this year your best ever? Of course there is no shortage of advice on how to realize your goals. But most of this well-meaning encouragement doesn't actually help you with the real challenges. Working with millions of leaders over the last six decades, we have learned what truly works to help people achieve their goals. I will lay out these key principles over the next few articles.

The first key is *focus*.

You see, one of the biggest challenges people have in working towards their dreams is distraction. Changing your trajectory and achieving something awesome requires incredible focus - you won't become ultra successful part time. The real problem is that it is very easy in today's world to become distracted. There are so many

different "shiny objects" competing for our attention it's extremely easy to lose our focus.

Focus is all about making a choice. There is a saying, "*You can have anything you want in life, but you can't have everything.*" In other words, you can achieve almost anything you want, but you have to be willing to not achieve other things. You have to choose the success you want. Most people won't make this choice, so they end up pursuing many things – and achieving none.

Martin Meadows said, "*This is the hard truth about focus that you must accept: you must make sacrifices in order to develop a powerful focus, and the more you're willing to sacrifice, the more focused and effective you'll be.*" So if you can't have everything, the key is to accomplish the dream you want most, one that will make the biggest difference in your life.

Steve Jobs said, "*People think focus means saying yes to the thing you've got to focus on. But that's not what it means at all. It means saying no to the hundred other good ideas that there are. You have to pick carefully.*"

Choosing isn't just about what you say yes to, it is even more about what you are saying no to. When you make a choice it can't just be – *This is what I am pursuing.* It also has to be – *This is the only thing I am pursuing right now.* Too many people choose a goal, but then they let other goals distract them. Having too many goals is one of the biggest obstacles to great success. Michael Porter said, "*The essence of strategy is choosing what not to do.*"

So to achieve focus and great success, it is time to make a choice. I want you to choose one business dream and one personal dream. These two dreams will be your entire focus until they are achieved. Take time to go through your dreams and carefully decide which two dreams you want to pursue right now. It doesn't mean you are giving up on your other dreams, it just means they aren't your priority and focus right now. Sometime in the future, you may make some other dream your primary goal. In fact, by choosing two dreams you are adding motivation and urgency to those dreams. Because your other dreams have to wait, you will be even more motivated to accomplish your two dreams as soon as possible! Focus is an absolute key to motivation.

Be sure to make your choices with a lot of thought and reflection. Pick dreams that are truly important to you. Don't pick dreams that you think you're *supposed* to achieve, or dreams that *others* want you to pursue. You will know you have picked the right dreams when you feel an awesome sense of freedom and

an exhilaration and excitement to pursue your cherished dreams. There is unbelievable freedom, clarity, purpose, and passion in knowing your chosen path forward.

Please use the next weekend to reflect on your dream lists and make your choice on which dreams you will commit to. Remember, focus is a critical factor for success. Orrison Swett Marden, one of the fathers of the personal improvement discipline, said, "**Every great man has become great, every successful man has succeeded, in proportion as he has confined his powers to one particular channel.**"

Your success will be determined by your focus. Great focus = great success. Put the power of focus to work for you right now. A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. 2024 really starts the moment you commit and focus!

Randy Slechta is CEO of multiple personal and organizational development companies doing business in over 90 countries



Engagement

By Jonah Erbe

The calendar simply switching from 2023 to 2024 is not enough to magically motivate us to achieve goals that will uproot our way of thinking, behavior, and life.

For us to truly make a long-term change, we should not simply focus on the end goals we desire to achieve. We must focus on the habits we want to form that will naturally progress us towards the goals we want to achieve.

For us to truly implement these long-term habits, we must first define the internal motivations that will inspire us every day to do what must be done to develop these new habits.

Is it our children?

Our spouse?

A greater purpose?

Simply changing our calendar from 2023 to 2024 and writing some big, scary goals down on a piece of paper is not enough to make us achieve goals. At some point, we

actually have to do something we will most likely never want to do until we start doing it.

We can download all the apps, set up all the tracking, create all the accountability, set all the goals, and yet still achieve nothing if we do nothing.

So:

1. Define the motivators
2. Clarify the habits
3. Set the goals
4. Do something!

Now you may be asking, what should I do first? Well, I would encourage you to start with a firm foundational statement that will allow you to filter all of your life's decisions: a personal mission statement.

If you know me, you know I love coffee. I absolutely love that first sip feeling in the morning to get the day going. Even better than the first sip is the process of making a fresh pot in the morning. The process of pouring the hot water over some fresh coffee grounds is one that always makes me feel awake and ready to take on the day.

Awhile back, I had a realization: a coffee filter is a lot like a personal mission statement and purpose.

As I was making my coffee, I watched as the hot water poured over the grounds and dripped the coffee that I would then consume through the filter. As I watched this normal, everyday moment occur, I thought about my mission statement and my purpose.

A personal mission statement is a filter through which all of our decisions can be clearly made. If a decision does not pass the filter test, it is not done and is thrown out like the coffee grounds. If a decision passes through the filter and aligns with the mission statement and purpose, it is then consumed and acted upon.

If I were to not use a filter and just pour hot water over some grounds, I can guarantee you I would end up drinking the worst cup of coffee I have ever had. It would not taste good, it would not make me want to start the day, and I would most likely become sick.

However, when filtering the coffee through the filter, only the best is left to consume. What I end up drinking is that which will get me energized and focused. The same goes for all of our decisions.

If we blindly make decisions with no filter (mission statement in writing or purpose), then our lives will begin to look like a pot of coffee with no filter, full of grounds that leave us empty, sick, and wanting more. When we put every decision through the filter of our mission statement and purpose, our life is full of energy, good choices, and motivation to achieve our goals.

If you have never taken the time to write out your personal mission statement to guide your life's decisions, I cannot recommend it highly enough. Don't let another day go by without your filter in place.

Do you need help formulating a mission statement, filtering decisions through a mission statement, or achieving the goals that your mission statement supports? If so, reply to this email and let us know. We would love to assist you on your journey.

Jonah Erbe
President of LMI

Developing Leaders and Organizations to Their Full Potential