



Blue-Collar Leadership®: 30 Leadership Nuggets

- 1. Leadership Nugget:** Who we are matters. We should give credit to others when things go right and take responsibility when things go wrong.

Why It Matters: We build trust and increase our influence with others when we have the personal integrity to take responsibility when things go wrong and the security to give credit when things go right.

What We Do: We look for opportunities to intentionally give others credit when things go right. We look for opportunities to take responsibility when things go wrong by asking, “How could I have prevented this from happening?”

What We Don’t Do: We don’t seek credit when things go right. We don’t look for others to blame when things go wrong.

Bad Example(s): We give credit to others publicly but seek credit for ourselves privately. We take the blame publicly but blame others privately.

Think About This: “No amount of personal competency can compensate for personal insecurity.”
~ Wayne Smith

Ask Yourself: What would cause me to take credit when things go right? What would cause me to blame others when things go wrong?

What Do You Think?

2. Leadership Nugget: When we believe in someone unconditionally, we believe in them because they have the potential be more and do more.

Why It Matters: We strengthen relationships and increase our influence when we unconditionally believe in the abilities of others. When we express belief in others, they are more likely to make an effort to live up to our expectations.

What We Do: We look for opportunities to encourage others when they doubt themselves or their abilities.

What We Don't Do: We don't make fun of those attempting new things. We don't give others a reason to themselves.

Bad Example(s): We express our belief in others publicly but question them and their abilities privately.

Think About This: "The dictionary defines belief as trust, faith, and confidence. However, that definition is selfish and requires judgment. I think we need to change the way we believe in people. We need to redefine the way we believe in people. We should redefine belief as encouragement, empowerment, and engagement. This definition is selfless and doesn't require judgment." ~ Joshua Encarnacion

Ask Yourself: When has someone believed in me when I didn't believe in myself? How did it make me feel? What's stopping me from being that person for someone else? Who could benefit from my belief in them?

What Do You Think?

3. Leadership Nugget: Growth doesn't just happen. We must become intentional and make it happen.

Why It Matters: This character trait increases our influence because we are communicating our desire to be more, learn more, give more, and to accomplish more. We are communicating we are not satisfied and no longer willing to remain average.

What We Do: We must focus on developing our weaknesses relative to our character (who we are) because these weaknesses will hold us back like an anchor. We must focus on developing our strengths relative to our competency (what we know: talent, abilities, skills, knowledge) because these strengths will launch us like a rocket.

What We Don't Do: We don't wait for others to develop us. We don't do only what is required by others. We don't turn down opportunities for growth and development. We don't make excuses for not growing.

Bad Example(s): We appear onboard about growth publicly while we privately talk bad about the process and those who are challenging us to grow.

Think About This: "You don't have to be sick to get better." ~ Michael Josephson

Ask Yourself: Am I only doing what is required? What would change if I always did more than required? How would I benefit? How can I get started? What's stopping me?

What Do You Think?

4. Leadership Nugget: Common sense is never enough. What is common sense isn't always common practice. Often, to do what is commonly understood, we must have uncommon sense.

Why It Matters: Uncommon sense increases our influence because doing what we and others know we should do demonstrates that we have self-discipline and can lead ourselves well.

What We Do: We set the example for others to follow. We actually start doing what we know we should be doing. We do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reason.

What We Don't Do: We don't believe others should behave a certain way without behaving that way ourselves. We don't believe others need to develop their character without developing our own.

Bad Example(s): We say we believe in something in front of others, but we beat around the bush and make excuses for why we haven't embraced it ourselves. Our development is personal, but it's not private.

Think About This: "Successful people do daily what unsuccessful people do occasionally." ~ John C. Maxwell

Ask Yourself: What do I do that wastes my time, energy, and money? Why do I do these things? What things could I start doing to climb to the next level and beyond? Why am I not doing these things already? How can I start?

What Do You Think?

5. Leadership Nugget: There is an “I” in team. Every team is made up of “I” individuals. Every person on a team is an “I” and has the potential to lead (influence) the team, positively or negatively.

Why It Matters: Our influence is not about us, but it starts with us. Choosing to become a high impact team player communicates we understand we are part of something bigger than ourselves. When we value our team, we build trust with our team.

What We Do: First, we lead ourselves well, so we are seen as a positive role model. Then, we intentionally look for ways to develop positive influence by helping our team members succeed.

What We Don’t Do: We don’t transfer our responsibilities. We don’t expect the team to carry our load. We don’t wait to be asked or told to do what we already know should be done.

Bad Example(s): We publicly offer support to our team and our leader, but we privately do and say things that undermine our team members and our leader.

Think About This: “The most valuable player is the one that makes the most players valuable.” ~ Peyton Manning

Ask Yourself: Beyond what is required of me, how do I add value to my team? If asked, would others say I am a positive or negative influence? How can I become a more valuable team member?

What Do You Think?

6. Leadership Nugget: Be better tomorrow. When we become more valuable, we will become more successful.

Why It Matters: When we choose to do the things that make us more valuable to the organization, more people in the organization will value us. Becoming more valuable increases our influence. A desire to be successful, may or may not increase our influence.

What We Do: We intentionally help and serve others in a way that causes them to realize our value to them or to the team. We help others become successful.

What We Don't Do: We don't let our ego and hunger for success diminish our value and create distrust with others.

Bad Example(s): Publicly we want to be seen as someone who motivates others to accomplish the mission for all the right reasons. Privately we want to manipulate others for all the wrong reasons.

Think About This: "It is the capacity to develop and improve themselves that distinguishes leaders from followers." ~ Bennis and Nanus

Ask Yourself: What will change if I truly become more valuable? To my team? To my leader? To my organization? To my family? What can I do intentionally to get better every day?

What Do You Think?

7. Leadership Nugget: The secret to our success is knowing we get paid by others, but we are working for ourselves.

Why It Matters: Word of mouth is the most powerful type of advertisement others provide us. The person paying us is always our #1 customer and those talking good or bad about us (advertising who we are and how we do what we do) are lifting us up or tearing us down.

What We Do: We do everything we can to generate positive word of mouth about ourselves. When people say positive things, our influence and value increases.

What We Don't Do: We don't do or say things that will lead to negative word of mouth. When people say negative things, our influence and value decreases.

Bad Example(s): When we think others are watching, we behave one way. When we think no one is watching, we behave another way.

Think About This: "Who we are sometimes, matters all the time." ~ Mack Story

Ask Yourself: What would I do differently if I truly believe I am working for myself? What would others see when they looked at me? How would I interact with others?

What Do You Think?

8. Leadership Nugget: Someone is always watching us. We are always teaching what we're modeling, regardless of what we're teaching.

Why It Matters: Modeling what we are teaching reveals high integrity to those who are watching and listening. High integrity increases our influence while low integrity decreases our influence.

What We Do: We think before we speak. We align our actions with our words.

What We Don't Do: We don't say one thing and do another. We don't expect others to behave in a ways that we don't.

Bad Example(s): When we teach others to lead themselves in a way that we aren't willing to lead ourselves, we are teaching one thing and modeling something else.

Think About This:

"Nothing is more confusing than people who give good advice, but set a bad example." ~ Norman Vincent Peale

"Nothing is more convincing than people who give good advice and set a good example." ~ John C. Maxwell

Ask Yourself: Do my actions always match my words? At work? At home?

What Do You Think?

9. Leadership Nugget: Our potential is unlimited. We should always be grateful, but never satisfied.

Why It Matters: These character traits increase our influence because they communicate to others that we appreciate and value being where we are while having a desire to be more and do more. This reveals that we are growth-oriented. Growing organizations value growing people.

What We Do: We express gratitude for what we have and what we do. We communicate our desire to grow and learn by trying new things and seeking new knowledge on purpose.

What We Don't Do: We don't moan and groan about where we are or what we're doing. We don't settle for remaining the same. We don't wait for others to develop us.

Bad Example(s): When we complain about our current circumstances, resist change, and blame others for our lack of opportunities, we are limiting ourselves and reducing our influence.

Think About This: "Nothing is given to man on earth except a potential and the material on which to actualize it. The potential is a superlative machine: his consciousness; but it is a machine without a spark plug, a machine of which his own will has to be the spark plug, the self-starter and the driver; he has to discover how to use it and he has to keep it in constant action. The material is the whole of the universe, with no limits set to the knowledge he can acquire and to the enjoyment of life he can achieve. But everything he needs or desires has to be learned, discovered and produced by him—by his own choice, by his own effort, by his own mind." ~ Ayn Rand

Ask Yourself: Is my lack of awareness holding me back? How would I know?

What Do You Think?

10. Leadership Nugget: We should focus on the mirror. The face we see least is our own. We don't know what we need to know about ourselves.

Why It Matters: The solution to nearly every problem we will ever face can be found simply by looking in the mirror. Different people will experience the same problem differently because of who they are on the inside, not because of what's happening on the outside.

What We Do: We change what needs to change instead of what is easy to change. We take responsibility for ourselves and our circumstances. When we take responsibility, our influence increases.

What We Don't Do: We don't transfer responsibility. We don't blame others for our problems or our circumstances. When we blame others, our influence decreases.

Bad Example(s): When things go wrong or we're not happy with our circumstances, instead of looking in the mirror at ourselves, we look out the window for others to blame.

Think About This: "Self-mastery is the hardest job you will ever tackle. If you do not conquer self, you will be conquered by self. You may see at the same time both your best friend and your worst enemy, by simply stepping in front of the mirror." ~ Napoleon Hill

Ask Yourself: How am I responsible for my problems? How am I responsible for my circumstances? What can I do to improve my situation?

What Do You Think?

11. Leadership Nugget: What happens to us is important, but our response to what happens to us is most important.

Why It Matters: When something happens, we have the power to pause and choose our response. When we respond positively and proactively, we increase our influence. When we respond negatively and reactively, we decrease our influence.

What We Do: We intentionally pause and consider how our response will impact our influence and how it will impact our future. Then, we choose a response that offers the greatest benefit.

What We Don't Do: We don't choose our response based on our emotions and feelings. We don't respond before we have determined a response that will make the situation better, not worse.

Bad Example(s): Something happens and we become reactive, sad, mad, or frustrated. We forget to pause and simply react immediately. When we do this, we are likely to respond in anger which decreases our influence, damages relationships, and worsens our circumstances.

Think About This: "The same thing can happen to two different people, yet they respond in two completely different ways. One positive. One negative. What's the difference? Their values and the story they tell themselves about what happened, how it will affect them, and what they should do about it." ~ Mack Story

Ask Yourself: Are my responses naturally reactive (negative) or proactive (positive)? How will better responses benefit me? How has my past responses impacted my influence?

What Do You Think?

12. Leadership Nugget: Our future is in us now. If we don't choose our future, someone else will.

Why It Matters: Our future is defined and refined by the choices we do or don't make every day. When we avoid making a choice, we have made a choice to be acted upon. When we make good choices, our life gets better. When we make bad choices, our life gets worse.

What We Do: We determine who we are and where we are. We determine who we want to become and where we want to go which reveals our success gap. To close the gap, before making a choice we ask ourselves, "Will what I'm about to do move me in the right direction?" If the answer is yes and we do it, the gap narrows. If the answer is no and we do it, the gap widens.

What We Don't Do: We don't make choices without considering their impact on our future. We don't allow others to determine our future. We don't make choices that will widen our success gap.

Bad Example(s): Doing only what is required of us which means we are allowing others to plan and shape our future. What do they likely have planned for us? Most often, it's not much.

Think About This: "We are anxious to improve our circumstances but unwilling to improve ourselves. We therefore remain bound." ~ James Allen

Ask Yourself: What future do I want to create? Am I taking intentional steps to turn my vision into my reality? What's stopping me?

What Do You Think?

13. Leadership Nugget: Courage is contagious. Courage allows average people to achieve exceptional results.

Why It Matters: This character trait increases our influence because it takes courage to do the right things at the right time for the right reasons while those around us are trying to get us to do the wrong things for the wrong reasons.

What We Do: We seek the truth when it's hard or unpopular. We change what needs to be changed, not what is easy to change. We model the values we believe in even when others do not. We learn and grow knowing it will expose our weaknesses. We choose to be proactive when we feel like being reactive.

What We Don't Do: We don't give in when the going gets tough. We don't compromise on our values when others pressure us to do so. We don't keep relationships that are toxic. We don't accept influence from those not aligned with our values and mission.

Bad Example(s): Demonstrating courage for the wrong reasons. When we use our influence to lead others down the wrong path, they end up making decisions that will negatively impact their lives, personally and professionally. Courage to negatively influence others is a weakness, not a strength.

Think About This: "While one person hesitates because he feels inferior, another person is making mistakes and becoming superior." ~ Henry C. Link

Ask Yourself: What would change if I had more courage? Where in my life is a lack of courage holding me back? Do I truly have the courage to stand alone when necessary? What does my behavior reveal?

What Do You Think?

14. Leadership Nugget: We attract those who are like us. Those who like us the most are also the most like us.

Why It Matters: We become the average of the five people we voluntarily hang around the most. It's true. We start talking like they talk, acting like they act, dressing like they dress, eating what they eat, drinking what they drink, doing what they do, and most importantly, we begin to think like they think and believe what they believe. We are likely to also get the results they get.

What We Do: We intentionally develop our character in an effort to attract others with higher level character. We end relationships with people who are not living like we want to be living. We have the courage to stand alone until we are capable of attracting people with better character into our life.

What We Don't Do: We don't associate with people who are not positively influencing us. We don't allow others to decide where we are going. We don't lower our standards to remain friends with those who aren't going where we're going.

Bad Example(s): Choosing to stay in bad relationships, personally and/or professionally, for any reason. If we are choosing to let others negatively impact our lives, it's our fault, not their fault.

Think About This: "One of the most expensive things you could ever do is pay attention to the wrong people." ~ Henry Cloud

Ask Yourself: What is the true character of the five people I voluntarily associate with? How am I being influenced by them? Positively? Negatively? Where are they truly headed? Forward? Backward? Are they stuck?

What Do You Think?

15. Leadership Nugget: Character counts. Who we are on the inside determines what others see, feel, and experience on the outside.

Why It Matters: When it comes to character, it's not about what we know. It's about who we are. People are most often hired for what they know, but they are most often fired for who they are. Our character will either launch us or limit us. Character is personal, but it's not private.

What We Do: We intentionally make choices that reveal highly developed character. We make and keep commitments. We do what we said we would do when we said we would do it how we said we would do it because we said we would do it. We ensure our motive, agenda, and behavior are aligned with positive, character-based principles. We say and do things that build trust.

What We Don't Do: We don't lie. We don't make and break commitments. We don't talk about others behind their backs. We don't fail to stand for what's right. We don't hang around negative people. We don't do or say things that create distrust.

Bad Example(s): Blaming others for our behavior when things don't go our way. Speaking to others in anger. Pretending to know when we don't know. Allowing our pride and ego to prevent us from doing the right thing.

Think About This: "Our reputations do not come from how we talk about ourselves. Our reputations come from how others talk about us." ~ Simon Sinek

Ask Yourself: Do I ever blame others for my behavior? Do others control me, or do I control me? Who is responsible for my behavior? What does my behavior communicate to others?

What Do You Think?

16. Leadership Nugget: We have far more than we need to succeed on the outside because it's provided for us. The question is, do we have what we need to succeed on the inside?

Why It Matters: We can't climb to the top of the mountain with base camp character. Our character will either maximize or minimize our success.

What We Do: We intentionally develop our character to maximize our influence and leverage our competency (skills, knowledge, abilities).

What We Don't Do: We don't say and do things that will minimize our influence with other people, especially those of high character. We don't expect what we have not earned.

Bad Example(s): Remaining a part of the problem by looking outward and casting blame at others when things aren't going our way instead of looking inward and becoming a part of the solution to ensure things do go our way.

Think About This: "A sign of wisdom and maturity is when you come to terms with the realization that your decisions cause your rewards and consequences. You are responsible for your life, and your ultimate success depends on the choices you make." ~ Denis Waitley

Ask Yourself: How do I deal with things that don't go my way? Do I embrace change or resist change? What choices do I need to make to become more successful?

What Do You Think?

17. Leadership Nugget: Leaders have followers who want to follow them. Bosses have workers who have to follow them. The difference between a leader and a boss is their values.

Why It Matters: Leadership is influence. We all have influence, at work and at home. Therefore, we are all leaders.

What We Do: We value authentic, character-based influence based on a foundation of motivation and inspiration. We respect everyone at every level. We value building meaningful relationships that increase our influence. We look in the mirror and work to improve our leadership ability daily.

What We Don't Do: We don't value or seek authority or control over others. We don't seek a position of authority so others will "have to" follow us. We don't disrespect others. We don't think we are better than others.

Bad Example(s): Low impact leaders make people feel used, dumb, powerless, guilty, small, alone, weak, defeated, and tired. Instead of serving their team, they believe their team is there to serve them.

Think About This: "A leader is someone who has followers. If there are no followers, there is no leader. A person may have subordinates, workers, admirers, associates, co-workers, friends, and people who report to him or her, a person may have authority over other people, a person may hold an elective office, and a person may influence a large number of people, but that does not make that person a leader if there are no followers. A follower is someone that has chosen a leader." ~ Jimmy Collins

Ask Yourself: Do I like having authority? What does my answer reveal about me? Is it hard for me to get those who don't report to me to follow me? What does this reveal about my influence?

What Do You Think?

18. Leadership Nugget: Leadership positions are overrated. If we can't lead without a leadership position, we won't lead with one.

Why It Matters: We will always have more options and greater success when we learn to lead without a leadership position. High impact leaders don't need a position of authority to make things happen. They just need a team. Our value is multiplied when we can lead without a position.

What We Do: We learn to lead up, down, left, and right without a leadership position. We learn to influence people because of who we are and what we know. We make things happen.

What We Don't Do: We don't wait to be given a leadership position before we choose to learn how to lead. We don't rest on our position or authority or the lack of it. We don't make excuses.

Bad Example(s): Waiting to be given a leadership position before beginning to read and study about leadership. Leaders who think they don't need to learn because they already have a leadership position. Those without a leadership position think they don't need to learn because no one reports to them. Therefore, few people actually read and study leadership.

Think About This: "Saying 'a position makes someone a leader' is like saying 'giving someone a whistle makes them a coach.'" ~ Gary Arblaster

Ask Yourself: What character traits do I have that increase my influence with others? What character traits do I have that decrease my influence with others? What do I need to change?

What Do You Think?

19. Leadership Nugget: Followers choose leaders. All great leaders were first great followers.

Why It Matters: We are all following (being influenced by others), and we are all leading (influencing others). Our ability to follow others well is an indicator of our ability to lead others well. If we don't follow well, we won't lead well. When high impact leaders are looking for others to develop and promote, they seek out the high impact followers.

What We Do: We follow well by supporting our leaders and our team members. We intentionally grow and develop ourselves in an effort to be better followers and better leaders. When we do, we make our leaders better and our team better.

What We Don't Do: We don't follow blindly as if we can't think for ourselves. We don't do only what's required. We don't wait for others to solve our problems. We don't avoid responsibility.

Bad Example(s): Pointing out problems to leaders before thinking about and identifying a solution alone or with others. Believing our development is the responsibility of our leaders.

Think About This: "An inexperienced worker may not realize that a leader will leave a follower a lot of opportunities to express himself. A worker will shirk the responsibility and wait for instructions. A follower, on the other hand, will grab the opportunity and run with it." ~ Jimmy Collins

Ask Yourself: How well do I follow? What can I do to improve? How well do I lead? What can I do to improve?

What Do You Think?

20. Leadership Nugget: We learn when we're listening, not when we're speaking. Seek first to understand, then to be understood.

Why It Matters: One of the best ways to grow our influence with others is to first allow them to influence us. We do this by listening with the intent to understand, not reply.

What We Do: We let others go first. We express a desire to first understand the other's viewpoint. We acknowledge the feelings and emotions behind their words.

What We Don't Do: We don't dominate the conversation. We don't say what we have to say quickly without a desire to understand the other's perspective. We don't listen without listening.

Bad Example(s): Attempting to get others to understand us before we have demonstrated that we completely and fully understand them.

Think About This: "You can win more friends with your ears than with your mouth. People who feel like they're being listened to feel accepted and appreciated. They feel like they're being taken seriously and what they say really matters." ~ Harvey Mackay

Ask Yourself: How well do I listen? What can I do to become a better listener? What relationships will improve if I choose to listen better?

What Do You Think?

21. Leadership Nugget: We should think of ourselves less. There's a fine line between arrogance and confidence. It's called humility. Be humble, so you don't stumble.

Why It Matters: Humility is a character trait that reveals strength, not weakness. Our level of humility reveals our level of security. Secure people are humble. Humble people want to serve others. Insecure people are prideful and ego driven. Prideful people want to be served by others.

What We Do: We have a "we" attitude. We look for ways to help and serve our leaders and our team members. We let others go before we do. We make success about the team. We give credit.

What We Don't Do: We don't have a "me first" attitude. We don't expect our leaders or our team members to serve us. We don't go first. We don't make it about us. We don't want credit.

Bad Example(s): Taking credit for someone else's idea. Taking credit for someone else's work. Placing our own needs above the needs of our team. Acting like we have all the answers or the only answers.

Think About This: "People with humility don't think less of themselves. They just think about themselves less." ~ Ken Blanchard

Ask Yourself: Would I rather follow an arrogant person or a confident person? Which would have more authentic influence? What do my leader and my team members see and feel when they're around me? Am I arrogant? Am I confident? Am I both at different times?

What Do You Think?

22. Leadership Nugget: If we want to climb to the next level and beyond, we should ask for more responsibility. The quickest way to increase our influence is to get results.

Why It Matters: When we accept more responsibility, we will gain more influence with those who are responsible for moving the organization forward.

What We Do: We share our ideas openly and ask to implement them. We look for opportunities to accept and take more responsibility. We gain experience from the additional responsibility. We become more valuable because of the experience.

What We Don't Do: We don't avoid responsibility. We don't look for ways to do less. We don't keep quiet when we have an idea because we're afraid we'll be asked to implement it. We don't say, "I'm just here to get a check." or "I'm just here to do my 8 and hit the gate."

Bad Example(s): Standing on the sidelines when things go wrong. Blaming others for not providing information we could have asked for. Blaming others for doing what we should have prevented them from doing. Letting others "learn the hard way" when we could have shown them an easier or better way.

Think About This: "Total responsibility for failure is a difficult thing to accept, and taking ownership when things go wrong requires extraordinary humility and courage." ~ Jocko Willink, U.S. Navy Seal Commander

Ask Yourself: What can I do to accept more responsibility at work? At home? How and where will my influence increase when I do?

What Do You Think?

23. Leadership Nugget: Helping others succeed ensures our success.

Why It Matters: Success is about me. Significance is about we. The most valuable people are not only successful. They are also significant because they have helped others become successful.

What We Do: We share knowledge. We help others stand out and get noticed for their contributions, knowledge, skills, and abilities. We teach others to do what we do. We have an abundance mindset and know there is plenty of everything for everyone.

What We Don't Do: We don't hoard knowledge or resources. We don't hold team members back. We don't have a scarcity mindset believing there is only so much of everything, so we must get our share before someone else gets it.

Bad Example(s): Using others to get ahead without regard for their success. Attempting to make others look bad, so we can look good. Withholding information that could help others in order to make ourselves look more knowledgeable and more informed.

Think About This: "Selfishness and significance are completely incompatible." ~ John C. Maxwell

Ask Yourself: What happens to someone's influence when they hoard knowledge? Am I more likely to share knowledge or hoard knowledge? How will my decision impact my influence? Will hoarding knowledge cause others to speak positively or negatively about me?

What Do You Think?

24. Leadership Nugget: We should be the first to help. When we help first, we always maximize our influence, not only with everyone we are helping, but also with everyone who is watching.

Why It Matters: Everyone remembers the first to help; few remember the second.

What We Do: Look for opportunities to help others. Act immediately. Help others in small ways because with people the little things are the big things.

What We Don't Do: Don't avoid helping others. Don't expect something in return. Don't wait to see if someone else will help.

Bad Example(s): Waiting and hoping someone else will help first, so you don't have to. Helping publicly and complaining about it privately. Denying someone's need for assistance because "It's not my job."

Think About This: "Helping others when they least expect it makes you stand out from the crowd. Look for ways to stand out." ~ Mack Story

Ask Yourself: When I see someone who needs help, how often am I the first to help? When I need help, do I notice who helped me first? How do I feel about them? Does their influence increase or decrease?

What Do You Think?

25. Leadership Nugget: As Wayne Dyer stated, “It’s never crowded along the extra mile.” We should over deliver by doing more than expected.

Why It Matters: Doing more than expected increases our influence. Doing less than expected decreases our influence. If we are willing to do more than we are paid to do, eventually we will be paid to do more than we do.

What We Do: We intentionally look for ways to go above and beyond. We do more with a good attitude. We do more because we want to not because we have to. We strive to be exceptional.

What We Don’t Do: We don’t do only what we have to do. We don’t do less than expected. We don’t wait to be told to do more.

Bad Example(s): Having to be told to do more when it’s obvious that we could have and should have done more. Having others finish what we started. Doing less than expected. Moaning and groaning about what we do.

Think About This: “Never mistake efforts and intentions for results.” ~ Dick Vermeil

Ask Yourself: When someone does more than I expect, does their influence increase with me? Where, when, and how can I do more than expected?

What Do You Think?

26. Leadership Nugget: We should do things sooner than expected.

Why It Matters: Doing things sooner than expected increases our influence. Doing things later than expected decreases our influence. It's been said, "The wise do at once what the fool does at last."

What We Do: We intentionally look for opportunities to finish early. We have the discipline to finish early even if it means we'll get more to do because doing more than expected also increases our influence.

What We Don't Do: We don't finish late. We don't take longer than promised. We don't make promises or commitments we can't keep.

Bad Example(s): Waiting until the last minute to complete an assignment or project. Committing to finishing on time, but being late. Making excuses on the backend to cover our lack of commitment on the frontend.

Think About This: "Success is not the result of making money. Earning money is the result of success — and success is in direct proportion to our service." ~ Earl Nightingale

Ask Yourself: How do I feel when someone does something sooner than I expect? As a result, do they have more or less influence? Where, when, and how can I do things sooner than expected?

What Do You Think?

27. Leadership Nugget: We should do things better than expected.

Why It Matters: Doing things better than expected increases our influence. Doing things worse than expected decreases our influence. When we pay more attention to the details and exceed expectations, people pay more attention to us. Shiny objects get noticed...so do shiny people.

What We Do: We look for ways to do a better job than expected. We look for ways to improve the process by increasing production, reducing costs, and improving safety and quality. We intentionally look for ways to get better without being asked or required.

What We Don't Do: We don't do things worse than expected. We don't do things only as expected. We don't measure ourselves against others expectations but rather against our abilities.

Bad Example(s): Always meeting expectations. Never exceeding expectations. Doing only what you are paid to do even when you have the time and ability to do it better.

Think About This: "It is the practice of the majority of men to perform no more service than they feel they are being paid to perform. Fully 80% of all whom I have analyzed were suffering on account of this great mistake. You need have no fear of competition from the man who says, 'I'm not paid to do that, therefore I'll not do it.' He will never be a dangerous competitor for your job." ~ Napoleon Hill

Ask Yourself: Who has more influence with me, someone who does things better than expected or worse than expected? Why? Do I consistently do things better than expected?

What Do You Think?

28. Leadership Nugget: We should stretch ourselves intentionally because all of our growth happens beyond our comfort zone.

Why It Matters: Others will only stretch us when doing so will help them accomplish their mission. However, we most often must stretch ourselves in order to accomplish our mission.

What We Do: We support change. We embrace change. We initiate change. We lead change. We embrace challenge. We look for challenge. We seek new opportunities.

What We Don't Do: We don't wait for others to stretch us. We don't resist change. We don't turn down opportunities because we're afraid or uncomfortable.

Bad Example(s): Remaining the same in a changing world. Only learning and doing what is required to do the job. Waiting for others to challenge us, grow us, and develop us. Working hard on our jobs, but not working at all on ourselves.

Think About This: "If you work hard on your job, you can make a living. But, if you work hard on yourself, you can make a fortune." ~ Jim Rohn

Ask Yourself: What am I currently doing, beyond what is required, to stretch myself to the next level and beyond? If I don't do it, who will? What would change if I go to the next level? What's stopping me?

What Do You Think?

29. Leadership Nugget: We should develop ourselves intentionally and consistently. If we won't invest in developing ourselves, why should anyone else?

Why It Matters: Developing ourselves increases our influence. If we don't choose to develop ourselves, we should be prepared to be left behind by those who do.

What We Do: We raise our own bar by focusing on educational, motivational, and inspirational content. In the area of personal growth and development, we read books, listen to audio books, or watch videos. We should also volunteer for new jobs and new training to gain new experience.

What We Don't Do: We don't wait for others to grow and develop us. We don't remain the same in a changing world. We don't rest on what we accomplished in the past to take us to where we want to be in the future.

Bad Example(s): Making excuses when we can't get ahead. Making excuses when others pass us by. Blaming others for our circumstances, lack of opportunity, or lack of growth. Wasting time away from work that could be invested in developing and preparing ourselves for the future.

Think About This: "Accidental growth versus intentional growth is about as effective as accidental exercise compared to intentional exercise...not even close. And the results...not even close." ~ Mack Story

Ask Yourself: Where am I? Who am I? Where do I want to be? Who do I want to become? How do I close the gap between where I am and where I want to be? What's stopping me?

What Do You Think?

30. Leadership Nugget: We must bet on ourselves. If we won't bet on ourselves, why should anyone else?

Why It Matters: People who believe in themselves have more influence than those who don't. A better tomorrow won't just happen. We must be intentional and make it happen. Living intentionally leads to amazing results. Living accidentally leads to depressing disappointments.

What We Do: We take educated risks. We take chances not because we are foolish but because we have prepared for the next level. We believe in ourselves and our abilities. We make things happen. We move forward on purpose for a purpose.

What We Don't Do: We don't take risks for the sake of taking risks. We don't gamble and take random chances. We don't attempt to move forward without preparing in advance.

Bad Example(s): Failing to pay the price to get to the next level. Failing to make the sacrifices that will take us to the next level. Being undisciplined and flowing with the current instead of charting our own course.

Think About This: "To grow, you must be willing to let your present and your future be totally unlike your past. Your history is not your destiny." ~ Alan Cohen

Ask Yourself: Do I truly believe in myself? What would others say? Why? What does my behavior reveal? Am I already intentionally traveling down a path I designed, or am I traveling down the path of chance and random opportunity?

What Do You Think?