



# Leadership Emails

# Leadership Emails

**Today...Choose to Be Extraordinary!**

**January 19 – February 9, 2023**

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Kevin's Leadership Emails are powerful explorations into personal development, both inside and outside of the practice.

Enjoy reviewing all this transformational, thought-provoking content.

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## More or Less

I received an insightful response to last week's message: Success vs. Excellence. It was a doctor highlighting how The Pursuit of Excellence focused more on elimination than addition. I want to share a portion of his response to set the stage for today's topic as we continue to settle into our individual approach of pursuing Excellence:

*"Kevin, another great message for those in the DST universe! Exactly the kind of material that has motivated me the last 50 years. I now find myself questioning what is Excellence for me. It seems that instead of trying to be more or better, I'm trying to be less, if that makes any sense. Anyway, it's way deeper than I can write about. Will save it for a conversation sometime. Good work my friend!"*

The doctor who sent me this message is humble and full of wisdom. I am going to take him up on his offer of conversation as I am certain he will share powerful thoughts, which I will add to this message series and take to heart for my own journey.

Moving into today's message, Ryan Hawk, author of *The Pursuit of Excellence...The Uncommon Behaviors of the World's Most Productive Achievers*, wraps up his introduction of the book with the following words:

*"As you read, you may encounter ideas that will invite you to question yourself and your beliefs. That's OK. It's part of the journey. You will also find specific actions to take, experiments to run, and tools to analyze what works best for you as you pursue your own brand of Excellence.*

*What should you continue to do?*

*What should you stop?*

*Productive achievers live lives full of experiments, and I want to both inspire you and equip you to do just that."*

I appreciate the author's approach to setting the stage for this journey as it is NOT necessarily about more...it very well could be less. Let me explain.

There are certain people who simply could offer more in their efforts. They are giving just enough effort to stay off the radar or are doing just enough to avoid difficult conversations about their performance. They are knowingly not giving their full attention, not offering their best energy, or not caring enough to emphasize the importance of performing at a level of Excellence. I would encourage people in this category to do more, plain and simple.

There are others who are doing too many things as they try to figure out where their best efforts can lead to positive outcomes. They may be confused, lacking clarity, unsure, or making life more complex than necessary, which leads them to underperforming. In this instance, focusing on less would be highly beneficial.

In some cases, people will have the proper focus and level of commitment, but simply need to stop adding and go deeper into each priority of life.

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Another category is for people who are performing at a high level, yet still want to expand upon their influence and outcomes. These people tend to take on more thinking it will lead to more, when in reality, taking on more likely will water down their current results.

It is important to take a step back, be honest with yourself, and assess whether addition or subtraction is best for you at the current stage of your journey.

As I actively participate in this journey with you, I know with certainty that I need to focus on less and go deeper into my pursuit of mastery and effectiveness with what has my attention.

There was a period of time in my life where it was always more, more, and more.

I realize I need to be less and focus on less so I may be my best for those I serve.

I am in the most advanced stage of experimentation I have ever been as I navigate the priorities I face as a father, husband, businessman, friend, son, coach/mentor, and man of faith. I also recognize the importance of experimenting with what I need personally in order to be my best for all who are in my life and know me within each of those categories I listed.

I equate less to simplification. Creating simplicity in the midst of complex situations is one of the most difficult tasks to take on, yet is so rewarding if given the proper effort and attention. It is easy to do more, and to do more on an average level. It is a challenge to do less with the intention of having a greater and grander outcome.

A significant revelation I had recently is that I have not been putting enough attention to what is distracting me of my attention. I am not sure why I never created this list before, like I have made lists of so many other key components to my journey. It was eye-opening what I was able to identify as major "time vampires."

This awakening was the result of a conversation I had with a friend of mine who was describing a personal situation he found himself in and asked for my opinion of how to navigate it. We came up with steps for him to take, which did end up solving his problem. He was grateful for my perspective.

What my friend did not realize was he helped me as much as I helped him. Through problem-solving for his situation, I noticed a gap in my thought process for my own life, which has led me to realize I need to eliminate two specific things that had my attention.

Less is leading to more. What a concept!

I did all I could to give my friend my best. In return, I was blessed with something of value. Serving others always leads to unintended benefits, from my experiences. Give your best, and the best will be returned to you in some fashion.

I encourage you to assess where you are at in your own journey. Determine where you are on the spectrum of adding more commitments, maintaining your current level of commitments, or lessening the load. Only you can determine what is best for you to be better for yourself and others.

*Today...Choose to Be Extraordinary!*

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## What Do They Say When You Are Not Around?

Starting next week, I will make the shift to incorporating video into my messages, as I want the opportunity to have all of you get a deeper sense of the passion I have: not only for the subject matter I'm presenting, but my commitment to help YOU get the MOST value for the time you are investing on this journey. The first video will begin by focusing on building your vision for the future...as what we do right NOW directly impacts what the future looks like.

Today however, I have a profound exercise for you that will open your eyes to how people speak about you to others. I have promoted a version of this exercise for over 20 years and was reminded of it by the author of *The Pursuit of Excellence* when he suggested a "self-audit." I have been all-in on this concept since I began (in 2001) what I consider my journey of self-awareness and self-discovery in the pursuit of being the best version of myself in all aspects of my life.

Here is that excerpt from the book:

*"What do your friends say about you when you're not around?"*

*How would they describe you in one sentence to others?*

*Ask them.*

*Learn.*

*And then work to make that one-sentence description what you want it to be."*

I have always been fascinated by the responses over the years. Of course, I anticipate complimentary comments based upon who I ask. What is interesting and eye-opening is to read the descriptive words each person chooses to focus on.

As I have in the past, I reached out to a few of my closest friends and asked if they would oblige me by sending a one-sentence summary of how they would describe me to others.

Here is one example that means the world to me:

*"Kevin, I would say you are a deeply introspective family man who lives a life of integrity, courage, and love, in service of others."*

I have read this sentence at least a dozen times since receiving it; just hours before I sat down to write this message. I am not sure I could sum up my current mission in life better than this person did. Here is why these words mean so much to me...

1. My family is more important to me than anything. It is important for others to know this about me so my choices in life can make more sense when I say "no" to opportunities I am given because of my commitment to prioritize my family.

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2. I put an extreme amount of effort into encouraging others to spend time in self-reflection, as I do the same in my personal pursuit of being my best self, so to have the word “introspective” used as a descriptor of me was validation I am on the right course!
3. I do all I can to stay true to my principles while living by example. I falter often, but sure do hope I follow through on my mission more than I don't. It is the reason I am so transparent and tell the truth. I want everyone to know where they stand with me at all times.
4. Raising two young children in today's world is no small feat. There is so much working against a parent, and many times, it seems like a miracle just to make it through the day. With my daughter being in kindergarten this year, I am doing all I can to live life with courage while leading with love (in Greek, that highest form of love: “agape” love) for all, which ties into my desire to be of service to others. I want my daughter to see her Dad living out the core principles our family is committed to. I want her to witness the good I strive to create in everything I do. I want Addison to be a beacon of light unto this world. And so far, based on much feedback from others, she is already shining brightly. Very brightly.

Will you join me in this exercise?

It's as simple as reaching out to a friend, family member or teammate and saying:

*“I'm trying an exercise where I ask the people closest to me to describe me in one sentence. Would you be open to doing that for me?”*

I hope you take me up on my encouragement to partake in this insightful endeavor. I would love to read comments from those of you who ask for and receive responses.

I would love to share the experience with you.

It is important to form some basis for you to draw inspiration from and gauge how you are doing in your pursuit. By no means is asking this question the only action you can take. It is one of countless exercises you could do to bring focus and awareness to your current state of being.

If any of you would like to answer this same question for me and send a response, I sure would love it, as I value all perspectives!

Beginning next week, we are going to take the next step in going deeper into the journey of Excellence, gaining purer clarity and a guide that is easy to follow throughout the remainder of this series together.

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## Building the Vision

Good day everyone!

Welcome to my first video message of the year...the first of many yet to come :)

Today, we continue our yearlong journey into Excellence: giving our most and being our best.

Enjoy building YOUR vision and achieving YOUR Excellence!

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## Field Manual for Excellence Building the Vision

*"Gentlemen, we are going to relentlessly chase perfection, knowing full well we will not catch it, because nothing is perfect. But we are going to relentlessly chase it, because in the process we will catch Excellence."*

- Vince Lombardi

Take a moment to define what EXCELLENCE means to you.

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Who is a shining example of living a life of EXCELLENCE?

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What qualities and/or characteristics does this person possess that inspired you to identify their pursuit of EXCELLENCE?

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What aspects of your life do you believe you are consistently executing at a level of EXCELLENCE?

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## Identifying Passion and Purpose

Good day everyone!

Today, we begin with wisdom from the ever-inspiring author and psychiatrist Viktor Frankl:

*"Life is never made unbearable by circumstances, but only by a lack of meaning and purpose."*

How powerful are Frankl's words considering his own circumstances? WOW.

Please join me as we continue our collective journey into Excellence by identifying our personal passions and purposes.

Watch the video. Download your Field Manual. And enjoy the process!

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# Leadership Emails

## Field Manual for Excellence Identifying Passion and Purpose

*“Life is never made unbearable by circumstances, but only by a lack of meaning and purpose.”*

- Viktor Frankl

**In what aspect(s) of life are you seeking purpose or meaning?**

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**In what aspects of life do you find yourself turning back to a “safe and comfortable” place, rather than putting in the effort to strive for a higher level of excellence?**

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**In what aspects of life do you find yourself waiting and wondering when “success” will find you, rather than embracing the struggle as you endure in the pursuit of excellence?**

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**What excuses are you using to pacify yourself and detour your arrival at excellence?**

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Where do you draw motivation from on a consistent basis?

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Currently, what do you believe seems to be “impossible” to achieve?

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What obstacles and/or excuses exist that are holding you back from meeting your next marker in pursuit of the “impossible?”

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What would help you push through the obstacles and/or eliminate the excuses to endure the journey and get closer to your objective of attaining excellence?

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