



# Leadership Emails

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

**March 16 - April 13, 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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# Leadership Emails

## Focus

Good day everyone!

Today, we're focusing on...FOCUS!

There's immeasurable power in being able to direct it and use it to your advantage:

*"I dreamt this so clearly, so precisely, and so frequently that it has manifested itself into reality."*

- Conor McGregor

May your focus be the attentive usher for your desired realities!

*Today...Choose to Be Extraordinary!*



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## Field Manual for Excellence Focus

*"I dreamt this so clearly, so precisely, and so frequently that it has manifested itself into reality."*

- Conor McGregor

What has your attention when you're focused?

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What helps you stay focused?

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What has your attention when you're distracted?

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What helps you get refocused?

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Who in your life is a significant source of influence and accountability?

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## Compassion vs. Empathy

Today, I am pausing the recent collection of video messages to discuss “frequently asked questions.” Over the next few weeks I will be expanding upon three of the smartest, most insightful questions I have had people ask me during this journey of Excellence we are on.

Let’s dive right into “brilliant frequently asked question number one!”

What is the balance between Empathy and Compassion?

**This is a tremendously wise question to consider because I believe we all could have a clearer understanding of the differences between the two. These two words play heavily into our ability to focus and execute on our personal Excellence; too much of a focus on one or the other will hold us back from achieving our desired impact and influence. To establish an equal starting point for us, here are good definitions of each word...**

Empathy: the ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Compassion: to recognize the suffering of others and then take action to help.

**I came across a beautifully written distinction between the two words that will help many of you develop a stronger commitment towards one or another, and it just so happens to be by someone who is also in the healthcare field.**

*“Compassion is often confused with empathy, but they are not the same thing.*

*Empathy is the ability to ‘feel’ what someone else is feeling.*

*While it is essential to maintain healthy relationships, it is possible to have too much empathy, especially when working in healthcare.*

*How could we possibly tolerate the combined suffering of all of our patients? This would be a fast-track to burnout.*

*Empathy needs to be kept at bay to some degree, to minimize our own trauma.*

*Compassion, on the other hand, is the desire to relieve the suffering of others.*

*To be compassionate, we don’t need to feel the suffering of others, but we do need to recognize it.”*

**The one note I would add to this perspective is that the word “suffering” is not simply physical pain, but suffering of any magnitude based upon how a patient’s choices in life impact how they think, feel, and perform in all duties and functions on a daily basis.**

**If a patient has a problem, of course, let’s help them make a smart decision to fix the problem once and for all and get to a point of healthy maintenance.**

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If a patient has the opportunity to advance the look, feel, and/or function of their mouth and/or airway, this is our chance to bring light to that patient's future as we introduce them to the benefit of investing in all aspects of their health, not just the physical aspect of life.

I tend to speak on empathy more than compassion because I believe most of our community has inherent compassion for others, thus the choice to be in the healthcare field. However, most of those same compassionate people do not work their "empathy muscle" enough.

Regardless of where you are on the spectrum, I believe we all could benefit from focusing on the content of this message to find opportunities to strengthen each of these components in our approach with the human beings we choose to interact with on a daily basis...at work and in our private lives.

The final note I have for you is related to finding the balance between being supportive and being enabling. The last thing we want our efforts to result in is to actually support the continued destructive behavior that has led to someone being unhealthy...physically, mentally, emotionally, etc. If we cross this barrier, we now become part of the problem rather than being part of the solution.

I have had several discussions on this topic with people who have been so bold to ask for help on the matter. By no means do I have this all figured out, so I learn and evolve as much as those who ask!

Thank you for all your engagement, growing awareness and commitment to increasing your ability to be a light unto this world. I am honored to be on the journey with you!

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## Excellence: The Seven Abilities of the Linchpin

Today we continue the mini-series we started last week; expanding upon my three favorite “frequently asked questions” I have received since starting our journey into Excellence at the beginning of this year.

Without further ado, question two!

Is there a “list” of areas where focusing on Excellence can be most beneficial?

As I am sure you could imagine, the list is long and endless. So, I decided to focus on the brilliant writing of Seth Godin in his book, “Linchpin,” which I believe is one of the best books written for team members.

I have used Godin’s observations in “Linchpin” as inspiration for previous messages and presentations I have created. His insights has been incredibly meaningful to me personally, as they have fueled my mindfulness of commitments I wish to keep with everyone in my life: personally and professionally. In his book, Godin describes “The Seven Abilities of the Linchpin” as the foundation for living out the life of someone who brings a tremendous amount of light and value to the lives of others...in other words...EXCELLENCE!

When it comes to Excellence, I encourage you to identify areas that are listed below where your influence is felt the most and where you can have the most impact on others. We all have our own unique and special qualities, yet far too often we overlook them.

I would also review the list and identify an area or two you could add to your repertoire. The more ways you can be positively influential, the more valued you become because you would be viewed as a catalyst for good.

*The Seven Abilities of the Linchpin*

*Linchpins do two things for the organization. They exert emotional labor and they make a map. Those contributions take many forms. Here is one way to think about the list of what makes you indispensable:*

- 1. Providing a unique interface between members of the organization.*
- 2. Delivering unique creativity.*
- 3. Managing a situation or organization of great complexity.*
- 4. Leading customers (patients).*
- 5. Inspiring staff (team members).*
- 6. Providing deep domain knowledge.*
- 7. Possessing a unique talent.*

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*If your organization wanted to replace you with someone far better at your job than you, what would they look for? I think it's unlikely that they'd seek out someone willing to work more hours, or someone with more industry experience, or someone who could score better on a standardized test.*

*No, the competitive advantage the marketplace demands is someone more human, connected and mature. Someone with passion and energy, capable of seeing things as they are and negotiating multiple priorities as she makes useful decisions without angst. Flexible in the face of change, resilient in the face of confusion.*

*All of these are choices, not talents, and all of them are available to you.*

**There's your list: seven areas, specific and broad enough, to facilitate you exploring your personal Excellence.**

**I encourage you to read this whole passage twice, and the last paragraph three times.**

**What draws your attention?**

**Where is the most obvious area for you to expand your level of Excellence?**

**If you want to share your response to these two closing questions, I would love to hear them!**

**My ultimate hope is that these ideas fuel you on your path of discovery and that you find more and more areas of opportunity to be a blessing to others!**

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## Expanding Excellence

Let's jump right in today and start excavating a third "frequently asked question" I have been asked on our journey into Excellence thus far.

How do you know your level of Excellence is actually expanding?

I can really appreciate those who have asked any version of this question, as I believe we all struggle with knowing what our true impact is and if our efforts are in fact leading towards the outcomes we hope for.

To develop an answer to the question, I am going to lean on the writings of George Leonard, author of the brilliant book, "Mastery." It is a valuable roadmap when one is in the pursuit of Excellence, and in the chapter titled, "The Master's Journey," he writes on the subjects of practice and change.

*"In the light, you can see that those upward surges on the mastery curve are by no means the only time anything significant or exciting is happening. Learning generally occurs in stages. A stage ends when the habitual system has been programmed to the new task, and the cognitive and effort systems have withdrawn. This means you can perform the task without making a special effort to think of its separate parts. At this point, there's an apparent spurt of learning. But this learning has been going on all along.*

*How do you best move toward mastery? To put it simply, you practice diligently, but you practice primarily for the sake of the practice itself. Rather than being frustrated while on the plateau, you learn to appreciate and enjoy it just as much as you do the upward surges."*

**Learn to LOVE the plateau...or the perceived plateau.**

If I may be so bold as to expand upon Leonard's brilliance, here is what I would add:

**When you put attention and effort towards expanding your abilities and influence, each step you take creates positive energy and momentum. Too many people crave INSTANT results, a craving which will forever behold them to being average, because greatness comes from longterm consistency in time, energy, effort, and adaptability. You can use this to your advantage if you have the mindset to endure during the times of the unknown or non-obvious advancements. That mindset being, "Practice primarily for the sake of the practice itself!"**

I am reminded of a quote that elegantly illuminates the rewards of such a diligence:

*"Endurance is not just the ability to bear a hard thing, but to turn it into glory."*

**Turn it into glory...that so clearly captures the heart of what it means to be Extraordinary!**

**It is important to trust the process you go through as you advance your internal systems and outward results. And please, know this: if you are here, reading and contemplating this right now, you are indeed on the path of expansion.**

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**To continue further down that path, it is your responsibility to create an internal environment that fuels you to endure as you make “The Shift.”**

**So.**

Why keep trying?

**That is the question I leave YOU with!**

**If you could use a reason “why” to boost your energy and hone your focus, reflect back on some of the video content I have shared recently. You could use all sorts of commentary or questions I have posed as your reason “why.”**

**Now, here is your chance to take the next step along your path of expansion. All it takes is finishing this prompt:**

I will keep trying because...

**Go ahead, fill in the rest of the story.**

**Of course, if you want to share, I'd love to hear what you have to say.**

**And remember, although it is important to put in the effort for all the right reasons, having a bit of “glory” as a result is a wonderful bonus to achieve along the way!**

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## Commitment

Good day everyone!

Join me as we journey into what it means to be “committed.”

It’s going to be enlightening as we discuss the definition and essence of this concept!

*“The world filters out the uncommitted.”*

- Andre Durand

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## Field Manual for Excellence Commitment

*"The world filters out the uncommitted."*

- Andre Durand

### **Involved**

Interested in something you're doing.

### **Committed**

Feeling dedication and loyalty to a cause, activity, or job; wholeheartedly dedicated.

*"True commitment is a vision about individual and group growth along with continuous improvement. The committed leader is dedicated to growing, stretching, and continuously improving...committed to becoming the best leader they can be and that the people they lead deserve. It's also a passion for the people and the team, pushing them to become the best they can be. However, we must never dare to ask the people we lead to become the best they can be, to strive toward continuous improvement, unless we're willing to grow and become the best we can be. This requires commitment, passion, and a vision on the part of the leader of where he or she and the group are headed."*

- James Hunter, author of "The Servant"

**On a scale of 1 - 10 (10 being the highest) how would you rank yourself when it comes to your COMMITMENT to be your BEST each and every day?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

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