



Leadership Emails

Leadership Emails

Today...Choose to Be Extraordinary!

April 17 - May 15, 2025

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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The First Ability of the Linchpin

Ability 1:

Providing a Unique Interface Between Members of an Organization

If there is one commonality we all share, it is the mission to positively influence patients to attain and maintain an optimal state of oral health. This we can all agree is a worthy mission, well worth the effort to create an extraordinary experience.

In order to help your practice become the Standard of Excellence in your community, it takes a unified effort and desire to want to be the best and deliver the best care. I know this sounds obvious, yet there are team members who do not fully embrace the essence of the objectives laid out before us.

It begins with our Owner-Doctor(s) to set the standard by casting the vision of why we exist and where we are headed, together, as a collaborative force for good.

This is expected.

What separates the “good” teams from the “great” teams is the presence of a team member (or multiple team members) who equally embrace the mission and fervently deploy daily efforts to bring the words to life: active participation!

Without the energy distilled down from Owner-Doctor(s) to the team, you become vulnerable to inconsistencies and half-hearted commitments to daily execution. It is the difference between being “involved” in the mission and being “vitaly engaged” in the mission.

I will share with you Seth Godin’s take on where a linchpin steps into a critical role within the framework of a team’s makeup...

“In great organizations, there’s a sense of mission. The tribe is racking up accomplishments, going somewhere. That mission doesn’t happen accidentally. A linchpin helps lead, and she connects people in the organization, actively and with finesse. This takes emotional labor, and it can’t be done by following the instructions in a manual.”

This speaks to DESIRE: a passionate commitment to being part of something greater than one person. The term J-O-B does not register with this special human being; it transcends one’s mere self-sustainability and rises to the level of focusing on the collective good for all.

Godin goes on to share his insight on the importance of your connection with those people in your community who you serve...

“The organization also includes its customers (patients...referral sources) and prospects. That means that if you are the person (you ALL are ‘the person’) who provides the bridge between the outside world and the company, you are in a critical position.”

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This brief message points to my favorite state of mind to be in, which is Agape Love: I want the best for all.

When you are focused on the mission, you avoid the need to create drama, walk away from moments of destructive gossip, and embrace a fearlessness that calls out and calls up people who are not contributing to the team dynamic in a healthy way.

All great organizations have someone who is willing to go head first into the fray, not because she has to, but because the mission far exceeds her own level of comfort.

As I sit here writing this message, so many extraordinary team members come to mind who fit the description of a linchpin. For all of you who embrace this commitment on a daily basis I say, "THANK YOU!"

For those of you who have been hesitant to take a bold step forward and unleash the true power of your unique gifts, I encourage you to choose to do so TODAY!

Connect with the mission, transcend the limits of self-preservation, and see that being part of a greater mission—not just a solo mission—is in fact the thing that can connect you to peace, protection, stability, and satisfaction in all aspects of life.

The choice is yours: who will you choose to be...today?

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The Second Ability of the Linchpin

Ability 2:
Delivering Unique Creativity

I am passionate when it comes to discussing the importance of clearly knowing and utilizing the unique gift God gave each of us. As my story goes, I didn't believe I had a gift; there was nothing special about me. It stemmed from an extreme lack of confidence and self-worth. I felt ordinary and average at best.

Ironically, it was in my darkest valley where I became aware of who I was as a man, as a human, as one of God's wonderful creations. My moment of "I've had enough!" led to the greatest clarity I'd ever had about myself and the value I had to offer to others in life.

This part of my story ties right into Seth Godin's second ability of a linchpin, which highlights our unique creativity.

"Three fairly simple words, very difficult to combine in a meaningful way. Let's go backwards:

Creativity is personal, original, unexpected, and useful.

Unique Creativity requires domain knowledge, a position of trust, and the generosity to actually contribute.

Unique implies that the creativity is focused and insightful.

Delivering Unique Creativity is hardest of all, because not only do you have to have insight, but you also need to be passionate enough to risk the rejection that delivering a solution can bring.

The resistance, our fear of standing out, rears its ugly head every time we're on the hook for this sort of work. So we avoid the work. The sparse list of people willing (and able) to do this sort of work makes it particularly valuable."

Individual words are insightful. The combination of significant words creates a powerful message. This is why I spend so much time with my word choice: words matter!

What I appreciate most about Godin's message is his addition of the word "delivering," which is active and full of energy. It is not enough to simply be aware of your gift. I believe it is our responsibility to offer it to others and allow our light to shine brightly!

The second word Godin's uses that is key to the message is "passionate." To be a positive influence in a meaningful way to another person requires you to exude:

- Passion
- Excitement
- Energy
- Enthusiasm

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Are you passionate, excited, energetic and enthusiastic about your positive influence?

If you want to move someone to make a meaningful decision in life, whether that be about healthcare, finances, or an “ordinary” daily choice, there has to be a catalyst to draw one’s attention to a better way...a better choice...a SMART choice, if I may!

What about you is “*personal, original, unexpected, and useful?*”

How are you being generous with your knowledge and position of trust?

In what ways are you delivering your “*unique creativity?*”

The first step is to be aware of your gift. If you are not aware yet, that’s okay! It took me until the age of thirty-eight to finally figure it out; we’re all on our own timeline.

The next step is to find a way to match it to your professional acumen. Finding opportunities to match your uniqueness with your professional role is where the magic happens.

Finally, the last piece is to put it all in motion in order to create an opportunity for someone to benefit from your passionate approach to serving others.

This message would really, REALLY come to life by turning into a team-building activity...

It could be your guide for helping everyone on your team develop a keen awareness of what each other’s unique gifts are, while also identifying how to match each uniqueness in a more influential way.

I believe my Unique Creativity (gift) is to help others expand their belief and self-confidence to new levels where they can achieve more and experience more true JOY IN LIFE!

I can only hope all these messages help bring those things to you.

I want the best for each of you!

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The Third Ability of the Linchpin

Ability 3:
Managing a Situation or Organization of Great Complexity

There is tremendous value in building a team of people who are comfortable and confident in taking calculated risks in an effort to advance the mission on a daily basis. It is nearly impossible to build an extraordinary organization when you rely on one person to navigate all of the situations that arise throughout a given day.

I recall a significant moment in unleashing the power of my team when I made it crystal clear how much I believed in each of them and encouraged them to make decisions, the tough decisions, and not wait on me in order to keep everything moving forward.

I promised everyone there was nothing they would do that I could not undo.

Were mistakes made?

Absolutely!

Were any of the mistakes made to the degree it would devastate the business?

Absolutely not!

The performance of each of my team members exploded from that moment on. It was wonderful to watch each person blossom in their newfound level of confidence...and all it took was me to give them permission to fail, which resulted in an unprecedented number of victories!

Seth Godin eloquently describes this important characteristic of a linchpin.

“When the situation gets too complex, it’s impossible to follow the manual, because there is no manual.

That’s why linchpins are so valuable during times of great complexity (which is most of the time). Linchpins make their own maps, and thus allow the organization to navigate more quickly than it ever could if it had to wait for the paralyzed crowd to figure out what to do next.”

It is important for our doctors and those in formal leadership positions (as you all know, I believe you ALL are leaders in your own rights!) to make it clear you are giving your team members the power to make decisions throughout the day knowing they may fail to make the best choice. In fact, it is important to remind everyone of this on a regular basis.

It is in the moments of decentralized decision-making where true innovation comes to life.

I want this message to encourage you to GO FOR IT!

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If you are already comfortable in making “game-time” decisions throughout the day...keep on going!

If you are hesitant, but close to taking this first step, then begin by taking your solution to someone who can help you confirm your choice. Use this moment as the next step in getting yourself prepared to make the next choice, following your gut and intuition combined with your situational awareness.

For those of you where this seems far off in the distance, seek out someone who is comfortable making decisions in complex situations and ask them to help you move closer to having the confidence to try it for the first time.

This message applies to your personal life in an equally important way. Raising two children humbles me on a daily basis as there are no maps...there are no manuals...it is all about trusting your gut and intuition to make the best choices in every given moment you find yourself in.

Pause.

Reflect.

Decide.

Act.

Bring on all the complex situations life has to offer...let's be ready to captain the ship and navigate the waters!

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The Fourth Ability of the Linchpin

Ability 4:
Leading Patients (Customers)

YOU ARE A LEADER!

You are a leader in your personal life.

You are a leader in your professional life.

You are a leader at all times, whether you realize it or not.

The difference is whether you are actively participating in being a leader (awareness and intention) or you are passively participating in being a leader (forced) because your role requires you to do so.

The market has shifted significantly over the last several decades. It used to be admirable to show up to work every day, do a solid job, stay with the same organization for your entire career, and you were valued immensely.

In today's professional world, more is being demanded. It is why I focused so much time and energy on creating connected experiences for team members and consumers.

Connectedness.

There are too many options nowadays to avoid focusing on creating genuine relationships with the consumers you serve and the people you choose to be together with as a team.

This is why I proclaim the importance of recognizing you are always leading, regardless of the formal role you play within your practice.

Seth Godin has a profound supporting message...

"As markets fragment and audiences spread, consumers (patients) are seeking connection more than ever.

The new (business) model is interactive, fluid, and decentralized. It means that every person who interacts with a consumer (patient) is doing marketing as leadership."

Be fully present with each person you interact with throughout the day.

Actively listen with intention to understand.

Constantly develop your ability to meet people where they are at, not where you want them to be.

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Acknowledge the other person's reality so you can establish trust and belief that you can be of service.

Act decisively with confidence!

The above is a framework for you to customize when it comes to designing your own approach to being connected and displaying leadership qualities with others.

Where is there an opportunity for you to advance your connectedness with others?

Where is there an opportunity for you to be a more impactful leader?

The opportunity to be a catalyst for good is endless. The key is to be aware of your ability to have a positive influence on others at every turn.

Your influence is mighty...if you decide to allow it to shine!

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The Fifth Ability of the Linchpin

Ability 5:
Inspiring Team (Staff)

A consistent topic of conversation I have with our doctors and formal leadership team members revolves around how to inspire and/or motivate the team.

Living in the connected world of technology and having everything we want at our fingertips has led to a world of uninspired people. Everything is sensationalized to the point where very little moves the needle of emotions. This is a problem when developing a team of people when you have a high standard of excellence.

Let's explore the definitions of Inspire and Motivate.

Inspire:

"To fill someone with the urge or ability to do or feel something, especially to do something creative."

It is extremely difficult to be a "one-man band" when it comes to inspiring others. There is only so much bandwidth inside of one human to constantly be channeling efforts to help others "feel something" to a level where they want to create something of value in their work product.

This is why a linchpin is so valuable, because they share the burden of keeping team members tapped into their passion and creativity.

Motivate:

"Stimulate someone's interest in or enthusiasm for doing something."

Motivation is the most difficult of the two. The difference between a motivated person and an unmotivated person cannot be more vast.

Those who are motivated simply thrive off of encouragement and acknowledgment.

Those who are unmotivated are almost impossible to move from this state of mind. Specific to healthcare, I believe it is important to move on from team members who have no self-motivation. If you cannot be motivated to help people get further along their pathway to optimal health, then I do not know what will create a spark for you.

Motivation is rooted deeply in one's soul. The experiences you had in your younger years will move you closer to or farther away from having motivation for anything in life. Because of this reality, your ability to alter the motivational level of any one particular person is an extremely difficult task.

Seth Godin has an interesting observation he shares...

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"Understanding that your job is to MAKE SOMETHING HAPPEN changes what you do all day. If you can only cajole, not force, if you can only lead, not push, then you make different choices."

Piggybacking off the last message I sent you all, which focused specifically on leadership, I would like to offer my favorite quote on defining the art of being a leader. President Eisenhower defined leadership in a profound way...

"Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it."

I created this message with the intention to challenge you to assess the level of commitment each of your team members have when it comes to self-motivation. I would take a "less talented" person who is motivated over someone who has all the talent in the world but lacks motivation to grow and expand their influence.

Once you root out the uninspired, you can then focus your efforts on keeping the level of inspiration high!

You want a team of people who want to MAKE SOMETHING HAPPEN! As Godin states...that is EVERYONE'S job!

Are you Motivated?

Are you Inspiring?

Do you make others better when they observe you making decisions and taking action?

Are others better off for having you in their presence?

These are important questions to ask yourself so you can identify opportunities to tap into the potential that lies within you.

If too much time is spent trying to motivate others, then the most important people in the equation (patients) are not getting their needs met at the level necessary to be the best provider of services you offer.

Fervently seek out people who need no motivation.

Lean on each other to offer inspiration to spread the burden of maintaining your edge to be the best!

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