

9 Questions to Unlock Your Leadership

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How would you assess your personal momentum as a leader? Do you sense your life and leadership moving forward in a positive and productive way? If not, do you have a sense of what's holding you back? Feeling stuck as a leader is never a good feeling, but there is always a reason, and a way out.

In this post, I'm not referring to the momentum of your business or organization, but your personal momentum. Yes, the two are always connected, but momentum starts with you. To level the playing field, it's rare that you or any leader will completely escape that sense of being personally "stuck" at some time or another.

This issue is whether or not it's short-term or long-term in nature. If it's temporary and brief at that, it's not a big deal. If it continues, however, the outcomes are not only discouraging, they will eventually impact the organization.

Answering the question of personal leadership momentum has become even more complicated because of the impacts of COVID-19. What once was clear is not so easy to read and interpret.

9 questions to assess and unlock your leadership:

1) Is your influence increasing or decreasing?

The truth about your influence as a leader is that it's either increasing or decreasing; it never remains the same. However, it's easy to be fooled because the church is so highly relational that it tends to move slowly, and therefore, your influence can appear to be holding steady. It's not. It's either increasing or decreasing.

Here are a few practical examples of how you can know:

- People increasingly want to be part of what you are part of.
- People seek out your advice; they want to know what you think.
- When you ask people to help, serve or be on your team, they say yes.
- Your level of responsibility increases.
- More people trust you and follow your leadership.

2) Are you clear about what you're trying to accomplish?

Is your direction clear? Are your goals written and measurable? If you are not crystal clear about where you want to go, the busyness of ministry will leave you running in circles. When you meet with your teams, are you all in agreement with what you are

attempting to accomplish? This question is more organizational, but it helps you gain clarity about knowing what you want to achieve.

Without directional clarity and defined outcomes, it's easy to get stuck in your own leadership ability because you can't tell if you are making progress.

3) Are you able to conquer distractions and focus?

The ability to concentrate and focus has increasingly become a significant problem for leaders. With the increasing pull of demands on you and your leadership, plus the speed of technology, all the options on social media, and the best new apps, it's easy to be distracted for hours a day. What are some ways you can simplify your approach and stay as focused as possible?

4) What is God saying to you?

One of the best ways to gain confidence and break out of a stuck place in your leadership is to know what God wants. Listening to God and discerning how He wants you to lead is the first step to accessing His power. What is your best discernment of God's voice in your life right now?

5) How are you growing and changing?

Yesterday on a flight back to Atlanta, a friend and I talked about our personal growth plans. We talked about how we are growing and changing personally and as leaders. As you think about this question, the goal is not to produce a long list; in fact, it is often one thing at a time. What's the one thing that would help you become a better leader in this season?

6) Are your most important relationships strong and healthy?

One of the great fallouts of 2020 are the common relational tensions that have elevated to major conflict that is difficult to resolve. I hope you are doing well in this area and that you're good with your close friends, family, and team members at work.

It's important to remember that your leadership will never unlock and move forward if your life is not so good with those closest to you. You can work smart and hard, but your leadership will suffer if your key relationships are not healthy. Start there for a personal breakthrough.

7) Are you handling stress and pressure well?

Stress and pressure are a normal part of life and leadership, but problems arise when they are too high for a sustained period. Start by identifying whether the source of your pressure and stress is primarily internal or external.

Internal = expectations you place on yourself.

External = expectations others (the organization) places on you.

The reason it's so important to know the difference is because each one requires a very different solution. Maintaining healthy stress and pressure levels helps you cultivate margin, which in turn helps you develop personal leadership momentum.

8) Is there pain, brokenness, or sin in your life?

Being "stuck" often has little to do with intelligence, competence, or resources.

- There may be pain that is not healed in your life.
- There may be brokenness that is not resolved.
- Perhaps there is sin that you are ignoring.

Similar to your key relationships, pain or sin can shut down progress or momentum in your life as a leader. A great first step is to talk with a trusted friend. Don't carry it alone. Healing and freedom are possible for you.

9) What do you desire your leadership legacy to be?

This is a great "north star" tool to help you unlock the potential of your leadership. Dream about what you would like to see God do in you and through you many years from now, maybe decades from now. What would you prayerfully desire as your leadership legacy?

If it's difficult to imagine that far, imagine ten years from now. The picture you paint in your mind and heart for the future, shaped by the Holy Spirit through prayer, is one of the best ways to experience a personal breakthrough as a leader.

The dream of your leadership legacy creates momentum the moment you take action.