



Think, Dream, and Do

Are you ready to open yourself to all the possibilities of the universe? Here are eight secrets to leadership and life.

By Michelle LaBrosse



The leaders with the most inspiring visions know how to bring a little magic into every day. Use these tips to make your own magic:

1. Find your focus. It's hard to have an "ah-ha" moment when you're answering 200 e-mails a day, surrounded by information overload. Take time to get away. There's a reason Thoreau went to Walden Pond. There was "too much noise" in his regular life to answer the existential questions he wanted to ponder. No matter what your questions are, give yourself the space and time to answer them.

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2. Do what you love. This phrase often scares people. They think they have to translate their passion for movies into a Hollywood career. You don't need to go that far. Just make time for the things you love. Whether it's fly-fishing, yodeling, or hiking, what makes your heart sing? Whatever it is, make it a regular part of your life. Don't relegate joy to a few times a year.

3. Build on your strengths. Many of us spend our days focusing on our weaknesses instead of developing our strengths. Think about how you spend your working day. How could you make it more aligned with where you really rock? It's a great feeling to build a muscle. Build yours.

4. Giggle again, the way you did as a kid. If there's a giggler on your team, encourage that spirit. Laugh-

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ter isn't just contagious; it's hopeful and uplifting. Get your giggle in gear, and watch situations around you change.

5. Put everything in perspective. When you look at what causes most people stress, it's almost always the things they can't change. So, when you feel your blood pressure rising, ask yourself what you can change to make the situation more positive. Don't waste your energy on things you can't control.

6. Have a mood changer ready to go. What things can change your mood? For some people, it's a quick walk or run to burn off some steam. For others, it's a favorite CD or song. One woman keeps an iTunes mix on her computer. Whenever she needs a mood change, she fires up her "Happy Mix," steps away from the computer, stretches, dances a little, sings off-key, and finds that after seven minutes, she has a grin on her face.

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7. Have a few cool "to do's." Nothing's more of a bummer than a long list of "to do's" that are all drudgery. What about your cool to-do's—some of those things you've been wanting to do but never have? Ride in a hot-air balloon? Visit the Grand Canyon? Dreams are always to-dos; don't forget to put them on

your list, too.

8. Live an attitude of gratitude. When you look at people who are the happiest, it's not those who seemingly have "everything." It's those who recognize what they do have and are grateful for it. Gratitude is powerful because we all like to be thanked and to feel we're contributing to the world around us. When you appreciate others and live in an "attitude of gratitude," you create energy that makes other people feel good about life.

So, don't forget to cultivate a little magic in your world. *Carpe diem!* ■

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Boost Your Organization's Happiness Quotient

These resources (www.snpo.org/members) will help you, your staff, and your board find deep emotional satisfaction in the work you love to do:

- **Regular People, Spectacular Results** (Vol. 23, No. 4)
- **Use Employee Ownership to Motivate People & Gain Revenue** (Vol. 22, No. 4)
- **Overcome Organizational Indifference** (Vol. 24, No. 2)
- **Never Enough Time** (Vol. 26, No. 5)
- **How to Reduce Employee Stress** (Vol. 24, No. 3)
- **Creating a Values-Based Road Map** (Vol. 23, No. 2)