



Your Five Key Daily Decisions

If you're a leader or hope to be one, you need to assess the choices you make in five vital areas every day.

By Dave Anderson

Your daily decisions, more than outside conditions, determine how far you go and how fast you get there. While you're faced with numerous decisions every day, let's look at five of the most important. The quality of these decisions will greatly impact the quality of your life, both at work and away. Choose well!

1. Your character choices. Each day you get to make character choices: Will you tell the whole truth? Persist in the face of difficulties? Seek out and listen to feedback? Admit your mistakes? Show appreciation? Make the right choices, and you'll be a leader that lasts. Bend your character to fit the situation, and these decisions will eventually break you.

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2. Where you spend your time. Each day you decide whether to engage in the essential or immerse yourself in the trivial. You choose how quickly you return to your priorities when circumstances temporarily pull you away from them. Make the right decisions consistent-

ly, and you'll work smarter, accomplish more in less time, and stay focused on what's most important.

3. With whom you spend your time. You decide, every day, how to allocate your time amongst those who call you their leader. If you try to please everyone rather than give your best to the best, you'll be more of a diplomat than a leader. While you can't ignore the weak people on your team, you have to question why you let them remain so that they continue to drain your time and passion. Focus on your best people, and you'll gain momentum and accelerate growth. Weaken the strong in an effort to strengthen the weak, and you'll create a safe house for underachievers.

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4. Your attitude. Every day you decide how to respond to what happens around you. You choose to reply with dignity or rashness, in a manner that elevates or diminishes your standing with your team, in a way that creates or breaks momentum. When you make poor attitude choices, three things are likely to

disappear: momentum, morale, and respect for you as a leader. Make the right attitude choices, and everyone around you feels better about you and their job.

5. Your level of discipline. You can't be consistent in the other four areas without discipline. Anyone can do the right things occasionally, whether it's saying "no" to low-return activities or to the second piece of apple pie. The hallmark of the world class leader is the ability to consistently follow the diligent daily disciplines essential to con-

tinual growth. Because discipline is a choice, it can be developed, right along with the other four daily decision factors. Character choices, where you spend your time and with whom you spend it, attitude, and discipline would make a great checklist for daily reflection before you leave work each day.

Evaluate how well you do in each sector, and decide what adjustments must be made to make tomorrow more effective than today. These five decisions are also effective criteria to use when evaluating and coaching others. By making people aware of the power these five deci-

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Decide what adjustments must be made to make tomorrow more effective than today.

sions have each day, you can accelerate their growth and their contribution to the organization. ■

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