

## THE BIG IDEAS

### **EntreLeadership**

Defined.

### **You Are the Problem**

And the solution.

### **Manage Activities**

Not results.

### **Let's Pull Together**

Amazing power of synergy.

### **Fight the Enemies**

Of unity.

### **How's Your Passion?**

It's time to care deeply!

### **It's Vision Time**

All the time.

### **Never Go All In**

Slow and steady wins the race.

### **Decisions Are Liberating**

Make them.

### **An Overnight Success**

After fifteen years.

*"So our playbook has truly become "everything you want to know about building and running a business but didn't know who to ask.""*

~ Dave Ramsey

# EntreLeadership

20 Years of Practical Business Wisdom from the Trenches

BY DAVE RAMSEY · HOWARD BOOKS © 2011 · 320 PAGES

"What you are about to read is not a business and leadership book that is theory. This is not a book with formulas based on research. This is a book with principles that were discovered by experience. If you look closely at these pages, you will see they are dotted with lots of blood, gallons of sweat, and many tears. This is the personal playbook of an ultra-successful EntreLeader. You are about to learn from me and my team of leaders what we have learned by DOING IT."

~ Dave Ramsey from *EntreLeadership*

Dave Ramsey is awesome.

I just love his no-nonsense, straight-to-the-point approach. His words pack a wise punch.

We already profiled another one of his great books, [The Total Money Makeover](#), and I'm excited to have some fun taking a quick peek at a few of my favorite Big Ideas from this equally great book: *EntreLeadership*, where he shares his best "practical business wisdom" he's learned "from the trenches."

If you run a business, I HIGHLY recommend you read this book. And, if you're just interested in developing your EntreLeader abilities, I have no doubt you'll love it as well!

For now, let's jump right in!

We'll start by defining "EntreLeadership":

## ENTRELEADER DEFINED

"A leader, according to Webster's Dictionary, is "someone who rules, guides, and inspires others." The dictionary says an entrepreneur is "someone who organizes, operates, and assumes risk for a venture." The root of the word "entrepreneur" is a French word, "entreprendre," meaning "one who takes a risk." So for our purposes *EntreLeadership* is defined as "the process of leading to cause a venture to grow and prosper."

Love it.

So, *EntreLeadership* = "the process of leading to cause a venture to grow and prosper."

Got it.

What's an EntreLeader look like?

Glad you asked.

Here's how Ramsey puts it: "So growing leaders was too refined and calm for me, but growing entrepreneurs was too wild and chaotic for me. So I decided we needed to grow a combination of the two... and thus the EntreLeader was born. I want EntreLeaders who can be

- Passionately serving
- Mavericks who have integrity

*"Goals are visions and dreams with work clothes on."*

~ Dave Ramsey

- Disciplined risk takers
- Courageous while humble
- Motivated visionaries
- Driven while loyal
- Influential learners"

I like it.

Now, with EntreLeadership and the EntreLeader articulated, it's time to learn an important lesson:

## YOU ARE THE PROBLEM. AND THE SOLUTION.

"So the problem with my company then and now is me. The problem with your company is not the economy, it is not the lack of opportunity, it is not your team. The problem is you. That is the bad news. The good news is, if you're the problem, you're also the solution. You're the one person you can change the easiest. You can decide to grow. Grow your abilities, your character, your education, and your capacity. You can decide who you want to be and get about the business of becoming that person."

Good news and bad news.

Bad news first.

You're the problem with your company (and your life).

Good news.

You're also the solution.

Fact is, you will ALWAYS be your company's greatest asset (and/or liability).

The exciting thing is that the \*one\* thing we have the most control over is our own behavior. As Ramsey tells us, we can grow our abilities, our character, our education and our capacity.

So...

Who do *you* want to be?

Is now a good time to go about the business of becoming that person?

(Good answer. :)

P.S. You know how much I love the "#1 thing I can do" game. So, let's play it (again).

What's the #1 thing you could START doing that, if you did it consistently, would have the greatest positive impact in your life?

Get on that.

And, what's the #1 thing you could STOP doing that, if you stopped doing it, would have the greatest positive impact in your life?

Time to rock it.

## MANAGE ACTIVITIES

"As a young entrepreneur, before I became an EntreLeader, I often tried to manage results. I would do things like try to get sales revenues up or try to get team morale up or get profits up. I finally realized that results are generated by activities. If I manage my activities then the results I want occur."

*"I think there is something more important than believing: Action! The world is full of dreamers, there aren't enough who will move ahead and begin to take concrete steps to actualize their vision."*

~ W. Clement Stone

This is fantastic.

We can manage our lives (and our businesses) by *results* or by *activities*.

We're conditioned to focus on the results we want to achieve and focus all our energy on that side of things. But, of course, the reality is that those results will only come to fruition if we consistently perform specific activities. As Ramsey advises, if we focus on managing the activities, the results will take care of themselves.

That's one of the reasons I'm such a big fan of what I call "blissiplines"—the fundamental habits that we need to engage in to operate at our highest capacity most consistently.

As per the prior Big Idea—YOU are your biggest asset.

And, if you want that asset to grow, you need to invest in it. The best way to do that?

To honor the activities/practices that you KNOW help keep you plugged in and shining.

For me, practices/blissiplines include **meditation** (haven't missed a day of 30+ minutes of meditation in nearly 4 years and won't miss a day for the rest of my life), **exercise** (haven't missed a day in 60+ days and I'm gonna see how long I take that streak as well!), **nutrition** (I don't eat junk and focus on nutrient-dense foods), **gratitude**, (I reflect throughout the day on all the amazing things I appreciate in my life), and a number of other creative stuff.

How about *you*?

What activities do you need to manage in your life at the most fundamental level?

Get on that and watch the results come into place on their own accord.

## LET'S PULL TOGETHER

"One of the largest, strongest horses in the world is the Belgian draft horse. Competitions are held to see which horse can pull the most, and one Belgian can pull eight thousand pounds. The weird thing is if you put two Belgian horses in the harness who are strangers to each other, together they can pull twenty to twenty-four thousand pounds. Two can pull not twice as much as one but three times as much as one. This example represents the power of synergy. However, if the two horses are raised and trained together they learn to pull and think as one. The trained, and therefore unified, pair can pull not only twenty-four thousand pounds but will hit thirty to thirty-two thousand pounds. The unified pair can pull four times as much as a single horse. They can pull an extra eight thousand pounds simply by being unified. But unity is never simple or easy."

Wow.

Isn't that an \*amazing\* story?

Reminds me of Covey's thoughts on synergy ([see Notes](#) on The 7 Habits...): "Synergy is everywhere in nature. If you plant two plants close together, the roots commingle and improve the quality of the soil so that both plants will grow better than if they were separated. If you put two pieces of wood together, they will hold much more than the total weight held by each separately. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. One plus one equals three or more."

Here's to creating unity and synergy in our lives!

... And, let's take a moment to look at what can get in the way of creating unity!

## FIGHT THE ENEMIES

"If you value unity, then fight, and teach your team to fight, these five enemies of unity. These enemies are so strong that any one of them can cripple your business and two of them can cause

*"Unity, like so many other things in this book, is seldom found in companies but is always found in great companies."*

~ Dave Ramsey

*" Zig Ziglar says, " People say motivation doesn't last, well neither does bathing, that is why we recommend both daily."*

~ Dave Ramsey

you to fail. To the extent any one of them has a foothold in your culture they are stealing your fun as a leader. They are worth fighting to the death.

1. Lack of intention and thoroughness about communication.
2. Lack of intention and thoroughness about goal setting and shared purpose.
3. Gossip.
4. Unresolved disagreements.
5. Sanctioned incompetence."

So, you want unity in your business (and your life)? Then pay attention to these five enemies of unity!

Quick re-cap:

- We need to have clear intention and thoroughness with our communication. (How are you doing with this?)
- We need to have clear intention and thoroughness with our goal setting and articulation of our purpose. (You and your team (at work and home) clear on your goals and purpose?)
- We need to eliminate gossip. (Ramsey \*fires\* peeps for gossiping. As he says: "Hand your negatives up and your positives down. Otherwise it starts to sound a lot like gossip.")
- We need to resolve any disagreements. (You have any lingering frustration with someone that you need to address? Get on that. It's an energy drain.)
- We need to make sure we don't tolerate incompetence. (Pursuit of excellence is such a built-in human need that to be surrounded by sanctioned incompetence is incredibly demoralizing to everyone involved.)

Where can you improve?

What's the next little baby step you can take to rock that?

## HOW'S YOUR PASSION?

"You cannot lead without passion. Passion causes things to move, and passion creates a force multiplier. Passion actually covers a multitude of sins. Real EntreLeaders care deeply, and that is basically what passion is. Passion is not yelling or being wild; it is simply caring deeply."

Passion.

As Ramsey says, it's not about yelling or being all out of control. It's about caring deeply.

Do you?

... And, how about your team?

Here's what Ramsey has to say about passion and hiring: "Passion is so key in leading and creating excellence that I will hire passion over education or talent every time. I prefer to have both, but given a choice I will take passion. La Rochefoucauld once said, "The most untutored person with passion is more persuasive than the most eloquent without."

## IT'S VISION TIME

"As the EntreLeader you have to share your vision with your team early and often. It is impossible to talk about it too much. Andy Stanley has a great book out called *Visioneering*. Andy says you have to discuss the vision of the organization twenty-one times before people start to hear it. He also says you have to restate your vision constantly so that as the organization grows and changes, it continuously reflects that vision."

*" We hire and keep only people who are sold-out passionate about our cause. You cannot work on my team if you are simply looking for a J-O-B."*

~ Dave Ramsey

*"Leo Buscaglia said, 'Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God.'"*

~ Dave Ramsey

Vision.

What's yours?

Are you sharing it and chatting about it ALL. THE. TIME.?

If not, get on that.

P.S. Remember: This isn't just about you and your business. It's about you and EVERYTHING in your life. Are you and your spouse clear on your vision for your lives together? You clear with \*yourself\* on where you're headed and what you'd like your life to look like?

## NEVER GO ALL IN

"When we launch an idea it has to meet at least two minimum financial criteria. One, we can't borrow money to fund the idea. Two, if it fails it can't be fatal, meaning if our decision is faulty it can't have the possible consequence of closing us down. In poker, you call this going "all in." Too many businesses have closed as a result of going all in on one decision that they just knew would be a success. I've spent twenty years building this business; I'm not going to risk the whole thing on any one decision, idea, or product line. We never go all in."

That's brilliant.

Let's never go all in.

Slow and steady wins the race...

## DECISIONS ARE LIBERATING

*"A good plan, violently executed now, is better than a perfect plan next week."*

~ George S. Patton

"You will find that decisions are liberating. The paradox is that some of the most stressed people on the planet are people who are frozen by indecision. There is a tremendous energy and peace that decision making brings. Your team is energized by a leader who can make the call as well. Can you even envision a scene in *Braveheart* where William Wallace would stand in front of his ragtag band of brothers and wring his hands indecisively, pacing back and forth, worried if he should attack or not? Can you imagine the fear that his troops would feel, and can you imagine them becoming afraid because their leader was indecisive?"

Want to stress yourself out?

Avoid making decisions. Especially on the little stuff.

Our team has been focused on implementing [David Allen's](#) "Getting Things Done" approach. There's a lot of great stuff in there.

My favorite Idea BY FAR, though, is his rule to ALWAYS do something when it takes less than 2 minutes.

Take your email inbox, for example. Most of the time, the reason we let emails stack up in our inbox is because we're indecisive.

—> "Oh, I'm not 100% sure what to do with that so I'll just come back to it."

That indecisiveness creates a NIGHTMARE.

Simply make a decision: Delete the email. Respond to it. Or delegate it (including to yourself later if absolutely necessary). But don't open it and then leave it there.

Think about it: If we can't make little decisions with our email do you think we're going to be able to make bigger decisions in our life?

So, next time you're checking your email (or approaching any other decision in your life), imagine you're William Wallace and make a decision! :)

## WORKING FOR FIFTEEN YEARS TO BE AN OVERNIGHT SUCCESS

*"To create big-time success  
you have to stay focused  
and stay intense over an  
extended period of time."*

~ Dave Ramsey

"If you can find someone who can stay on mission, on task, with focused intensity for an entire decade, I will show you someone who is world-class in their chosen area of endeavor. They are likely a national brand, or will be. In his great book *Outliers*, Malcolm Gladwell writes that one of the keys to unusual heights of success is spending ten thousand hours of practice at your chosen craft. The Beatles spent countless hours playing at summer festivals before you ever heard of them; Peyton Manning, widely regarded as one of the best quarterbacks to ever play football, has been known for his work ethic since he was a child. I just won my first Marconi Award, which is essentially the Academy Award for radio, and afterward counted up that I have been on the air over ten thousand hours. Remember, you work your tail off for fifteen years and you are suddenly an overnight success."

As you know by now if you've read many of these Notes, I'm a HUGE fan of the 10,000 hour rule. Check out the Notes on [Mindset](#), [Talent Is Overrated](#), and [The Talent Code](#) for more mojo here.

And enjoy this gem from Carol Dweck's *Mindset*: *"Is it ability or mindset? Was it Mozart's musical ability or the fact that he worked till his hands were deformed? Was it Darwin's scientific ability or the fact that he collected specimens non-stop from early childhood?"*

Answer: They worked really hard. :)

Here's to staying on mission, on task, with a focused intensity for over a decade, my friend!

B

**Brian Johnson,**  
*Heroic Philosopher CEO*

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## About the Author of This Note

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Brian Johnson is the Founder + CEO of Heroic. He's spent half of the last 25 years as a Founder/CEO and the other half as a Philosopher. Brian loves integrating ancient wisdom and modern science to help YOU become the best, most heroic version of yourself so we can create a world in which 51% of humanity is flourishing by 2051. Learn more at [heroic.us](http://heroic.us).