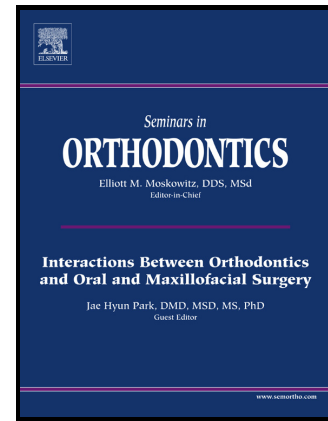


Author's Accepted Manuscript

Leadership & management of orthodontic teams:
Global perspectives and principles that never fail

Chris Barrow



www.elsevier.com/locate/ysodo

PII: S1073-8746(16)30045-7
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1053/j.sodo.2016.08.004>
Reference: YSODO468

To appear in: *Seminars in Orthodontics*

Cite this article as: Chris Barrow, Leadership & management of orthodontic teams: Global perspectives and principles that never fail, *Seminars in Orthodontics*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1053/j.sodo.2016.08.004>

This is a PDF file of an unedited manuscript that has been accepted for publication. As a service to our customers we are providing this early version of the manuscript. The manuscript will undergo copyediting, typesetting, and review of the resulting galley proof before it is published in its final citable form. Please note that during the production process errors may be discovered which could affect the content, and all legal disclaimers that apply to the journal pertain.

**Leadership & Management of Orthodontic Teams: Global Perspectives and Principles
that never fail**

Chris Barrow

Business Coach and Mentor, Cheshire

49 Avon Road, Hale,

Altrincham,

Cheshire WA15 0LB,

United Kingdom.

Phone: +44 7713 644437;

E-mail: coachbarrow@me.com

ABSTRACT - Leadership is a series of behaviors and Management is a set of systems. The most successful practices are those in which both leadership and management are delivered to world-class standards. Practice owners need more training in the qualities of good leadership and here we share 13 steps to the evolution of a good leader. This paper focuses on the behavioral characteristics of the best leaders in Orthodontic practice and how their leadership qualities will influence the deployment of good management systems.

KEYWORDS – Practice Management, Leadership, Orthodontic Teams

Loren Dunton lived his entire life with enthusiasm and an adventurous spirit. He enjoyed an exciting bachelor life in Seattle, Alaska, and San Francisco before marrying first wife, Jane, at the age of 29.

Loren and Jane had two daughters, Brooke and Page. At the age of 40, he and his family settled down to a country-club life in Colorado. At 45 he took up parachuting and published his first book.

In 1965 he sold everything except for his home off of the 17th green, and took his wife and daughters on a yearlong trip around the world. The booklet he wrote, "We Smiled First", recounted the family's adventures and revealed the secret for so much enjoyment that year.

(Adapted from the forward in Prime Time: How To Enjoy The Best Years of Your Life)¹

I was privileged to hear Loren Dunton speak at a USA sales conference in the late 80's.

In particular, I recall the story of his 1-year family trip around the world. As they returned to San Francisco, cruising under the Golden Gate Bridge, one of his daughters turned and asked:

"Dad, there is so much war and turmoil in the world. Why is it that we have visited so many countries and always been accepted and greeted with open arms?"

His famous reply became the title of the booklet "We Smiled First" and, equally, became a mantra for me in my relationships with all. I've been smiling at people ever since, irrespective of their reaction.

In the decades that have followed and in my last 25 years of working with orthodontic practices, many are the times that I have referred back to this phrase and the accompanying story. Manuscripts on Leadership and Management can be scientific but I prefer a more emotional approach to the subject. In this article I want to focus not so much on the performance of people but their behavior - and highlight the behavioral habits that characterize great leaders and managers in an orthodontic practice.

Table 1 (insert)

Step #1 - Understanding the difference between Leadership & Management

Leadership is about your relationship with people. Management is about the deployment of systems. You cannot lead systems. You cannot manage people. You can lead people. You can manage systems. You have to be a good leader of good managers. It's a compulsory requirement of successful practice ownership. A lady at a recent workshop asked "what should I do if I own my own business but I'm hopeless at leadership and don't enjoy it?"

My answer: "Sell your business madam or you will be forever miserable."

Let me give you a personal definition of good leadership:

- You are the custodian of the vision
- You are the example of on-brand performance and behavior
- You are brilliant at effective delegation

The Custodian:

You have a 3-year vision, a 12-month plan, 90-day goals, monthly management objectives, a weekly focus and daily tasks. You share the vision, plan and goals with ALL of your team on a regular basis (and they understand and accept that the vision, plan and goals evolve all the time). You imbibe the passion and excitement you feel into every aspect of the business and into every member of your team.

An example :If you are late, everyone can be. If you are untidy, everyone can be.

If you are miserable - everyone is! You are on-stage, in the spotlight, 24/7/365 - it's ShowTime! You have to be in first, out last, have an eye for detail, be aware of everything and everyone. You have to be able to read a 100-page document after everyone else - and spot the typo they all missed. You have to rally the troops. You are Henry V at Agincourt. And you lead your team, your clients, your suppliers, your advisors, your strategic alliance partners, your family, your friends and (sometimes) yourself. There is no time off.

You understand that there is no such thing as failure - just 9,999 light bulbs to the one that works.

The Delegator

You delegate everything in the “everything else” column and invest 80% of your time on your unique abilities, leading the team the other 20% - because your team are the managers of your business (and your life). You explain what you want in clear terms. You agree a deadline for completion. You describe the outcome you are looking for. You then back off and do NOT micromanage. You accept that the best team players will get it right 90% of the time and mess up 10% - that will be how they learn.

Management

Everything you ever needed to know about business is embodied in 6 fundamental systems:

1.Financial Systems 2.Lead Generation systems 3.Lead Conversion systems 4.Customer Relationship Management Systems 5.Operational Systems 6.HR Systems

I recommend reading The E-Myth Revisited and learn the principles.² and The E-Myth Dentist and learn how the principles apply in practice.³

Step #2 - Finding the time to be a great leader or manager

Do you remember the circus act that has a performer spinning plates on the top of sticks?

We look in amazement as the artist adds more and more plates - and great show is made of letting plates lose momentum, wobble and almost fall - but just in time, the he reaches the stick, spins and the plate regains momentum. As he does that - at the other end of the line, another plate begins to wobble. The audience loves the “risk” that a plate will fall.

We love to watch others take risks - the plate spinner, the trapeze artist, the walker balancing on the high wire. How often does your life seem like the plate spinner’s act?

We have an unsuccessful habit of making our lives too complicated.

Too many relationships, too many patients/clients, too many contracts for too many services.

Too many appointments in the calendar, too many decisions to make, too many emails to reply to. Too many times we poke our noses into things we shouldn't bother with - or we micromanage people who don't need or appreciate it. Too many plates to keep spinning.

Of course, if the circus performer brings one plate and one stick out - and spins the one plate - we lose interest quickly - there is no "risk". A high wire a foot off the ground will not draw a crowd.

So we have to have some element of "risk" in our lives - that's how we accomplish things - the "risk" of running our own business, the "risk" of closing a sale, the "risk" of a surgical challenge or a tough business decision. The plate spinner knows his limits. Do you know yours?

Think about the plates you have spinning - and ask yourself:

- Do you have enough?
- Do you have too many?

What can you do to simplify your life?

Step #3 - Assessing your capabilities as a leader or manager

It can be useful to conduct a SWOT analysis on yourself before you start to consider how you can lead others and manage systems. Strengths - what do you consider to be your strongest capabilities? When do you feel "in the zone"? Weaknesses - how do you let yourself down? When do you feel outside of your "comfort zone"? Opportunities - where do you see your biggest chances of success going forward, both personally and professionally? Threats - what can stop you, drag you down, block you, and damage you?

Step #4 - Determining your own goals before you attempt to lead others

Over the years I have found it useful to help clients establish goals by reference to two major headings, with sub-heading under each:

Professional Goals

1. Overall strategy
2. Finance
3. Marketing
4. Client Relationship Management
5. Sales
6. Operational
7. Team

Personal Goals

1. Self
2. Family
3. Social
4. Physical
5. Intellectual
6. Spiritual
- 7.

Step #5 - Removing tolerations before you begin leadership or management

Clients “get it” that personal and professional evolution is about deciding what you want more and less of in life - and doing something about it. If you want more money, more time, more fitness, more clients, more qualifications. If you want less travel, less paperwork, less procrastination, less stress, less having to do everything. Then DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT! If only it were that easy.....

Ask yourself what you have to REMOVE from your life before you can move forward.

On the controversial subject of tolerations; we all tolerate:

- things that don't work properly
- situations that aren't right
- relationships that don't work

That applies to your personal and your professional life. Those tolerations slow us down, eat into our self-confidence and prevent us from moving forward. The job you hate, the commute that wears you out, the computer that doesn't process data fast enough, the team member who isn't on brand, the patient/client who drives you nuts. Make a list of all the tolerations in your life. Let me warn you - this is scary stuff - it will move you outside of your comfort zone.

Step #6 - Discovering your Unique Ability

Let me give the credit and attribution right away to Dan Sullivan at The Strategic Coach, from whom I have learned much since first hearing him speak in July 1993.

www.strategiccoach.com⁵ is an incredible source of knowledge products and their courses and programmes are, in my opinion, some of the finest in the world.

Here's the basic idea:

"Each of us is born with a potential Unique Ability that has four characteristics: First, it is a superior ability that other people notice and value; second, we love doing it and want to do it as much as possible; third, it is energizing both for us and others around us; and, fourth, we keep getting better, never running out of possibilities for further improvement."

Imagine that from an early age, you had a growing clarity about what you were really great at in life — and that your whole life could be organized around the never-ending development of that ability. As this ability grows, so does your sense of confidence about how you can contribute best to a greater number of people. As a result of this growing contribution, you are constantly rewarded with increasing income, resources, and opportunities.

This continually inspires and motivates you to develop your ability even more so that you can make an even greater contribution. Now imagine being surrounded by dozens, hundreds, thousands, and millions of other individuals who are growing and contributing in the same fashion. Imagine the impact on the world in every sector of life. Imagine the creativity, innovation, improvements, and breakthroughs that this would introduce into every situation. Finally, imagine that all of this is entirely possible with the concept of Unique Ability. I know it is, because I am seeing it at work all around me in the lives of thousands of individuals.

Everyone to whom I've described the four Unique Ability characteristics immediately understands what I'm talking about. They've had moments, experiences, whole days and weeks in their lives, where they remember operating in their Unique Ability. Some people call it being in "the zone."

Others describe it as "flow." Or "on the beam." For most people, these situations have been infrequent, but for a growing number of people, being in their Unique Ability has become a daily way of life, and the results are remarkable. They live with a sense of direction, confidence, and capability that most people would think of as a dream. They are truly people who know themselves in the way Socrates encouraged us all to do. This book describes how Unique Ability can become a conscious, systematic reality in your life."

Dan Sullivan

November 14, 2003

When I first "conducted" this exercise for myself, many years ago, I decided that my own unique abilities were:

- public speaking
- writing
- coaching
- networking

And that I would focus all my efforts and finances on creating an environment in which I could spend 80% of my time on my unique abilities and 20% of my time doing "everything else". To do this - I had to engage support teams both internally and externally. For now - do what I did over 20 years ago. Take a sheet of paper. Draw a vertical line down the middle.

Head the left hand column "My Unique Abilities". Head the right hand column "Everything Else". Start writing and determine what your unique abilities are.

Step #7 - Creating the boundaries for strong leadership and management

Having strong boundaries is principally about learning when and how to say “no”.

I’m going to make a sweeping generalization here:

- that 80% of the people you know need help 80% of their time and want to help 20% of their time - **the helped**
- that 20% of the people you know want to help 80% of the time and need help 20% of the time - **the helpers**

The challenge this creates for you and I is that we are in the latter group. We are actually a more dangerous version of this group - we are compulsive helpers - all of us - coaches, consultants and trainers, dentists, therapists and hygienists, managers, motivators and makers - we love to help others - in helping we find our true purpose. When helping we are at the top of Maslow’s hierarchy - self-actualized by the number of people who are dependent upon us.

We are the compulsive helpers, burning ourselves out, helping the helped.

It’s no bad thing in some respects - Michael Gerber says:

- the objective of any business is to make a profit - it has no other objective
- the endgame of any business is to be sold - there is no other endgame
- the purpose of any business is to help somebody solve a problem - it has no other purpose

So, by definition, we get paid to help people - and we get paid well when we help:

- the right kind of people
- to solve the right kind of problems
- in the right way
- with a smile on our faces

Where it goes wrong is that as compulsive helpers we help:

- the wrong kind of people

- to solve the wrong problems
- in the wrong way
- and we still smile all the way through - and then cry into our drinks in the evening or our pillows at night

So “boundaries” are about answering a series of questions for yourself, both personally and professionally (here’s one I prepared earlier):

Things I will say “yes” to

Personal life

- Friends who give as well as take
- children who put some effort in
- intimate dinners
- ex-wives who are respectful and courteous
- great customer service
- keeping my office tidy
- buying 5-star goods and services
- fabulous hotels, restaurants and locations
- great television
- a dining table full of women

Things I will say “no” to

Personal Life

- Friends who just take - and want me to be their unpaid coach
- children who never put any effort in and just want endless rescues
- parties
- ex-wives who are rude and disrespectful
- poor customer service
- making my office untidy
- buying cheap goods and services
- second rate hotels, restaurants and locations
- lousy television
- a dining table full of men
-

Things I will say “yes” to

Professional life

- Clients who genuinely appreciate what I do
- prospective clients who never quibble on the prices
- a fair chance to pitch for a client
- adding value

- team members who GSD (get stuff done) and can be left to get on with it
- suppliers who are a pleasure to work with
- people who keep secrets
- people who fill me with energy
- people who are organized
- people who show up on time

Things I will say “no” to

Professional life

- Clients who don’t appreciate what I do
- prospective clients who quibble on the prices
- beauty parades with other consultants
- discounts
- team members who don’t get things done and need lots of supervision
- suppliers who are a pain in the ass
- people who gossip
- people who drain my energy
- people who are disorganized
- people who are late
-

These are just a few examples - the list can be and is much longer.

The secret here is that I rarely say “yes” to any “thing” that I don’t want to do, or to people I don’t want to be with. It makes for a very enjoyable life - even when I’ve completed a 70-hour week and arrive home looking like a ghost. I don’t go to bed thinking about the “dementors” who are trying to drag me down - they have all been avoided or eliminated! Who are your dementors? The people who drain the energy out of you? What steps can you take to create boundaries around yourself that prevent you from having to deal with them? Or prevent you from doing the wrong type of work at the wrong times?

Step #8 - Learning to delegate effectively

Once upon a time I stepped off the train from Stockport to Taunton and left my suitcase on the luggage rack, 250 miles from home. Arriving at my hotel, I called my personal assistant Phillippa and asked her to track it down. It arrived 3 hours later. Every week I travel

hundreds of miles between meetings with coaching clients. I use trains 80% of the time and enjoy catching up with emails and project work.

Delegation is an essential aspect of time management - we are all doing too much - some more than others. How do we delegate well?

The first step is the list we discussed earlier:

- left hand column - your unique ability
- right hand column - everything else

The second step is to identify to whom you are going to delegate to in your personal life.

- housekeeping - the cleaners
- holidays and special events - my partner Annie Bradley
- my work calendar - Phillippa Goodwin

Then for your professional life

- Finance - my accountant Doug Murphy (hand picked because he is a mentor and not just a bean counter)
- Calendar, calls, meetings, travel, accommodation, lost property - Phillippa Goodwin
- Independent Financial Advisor - Simon Booth

The list goes on - if it is in the “everything else” column then “everyone else” does it!

The third step is often problematic - the agreement

- explain and agree the task - give a full and proper brief
- agree the resources required
- agree what the outcome will look like
- agree any cost implications
- agree a deadline
- agree the method of reporting back

That's far too complicated for recovering a lost suitcase - in situations like that you can rely on the individual to use their common sense (if they don't have any they shouldn't be

working for you). But for more complex tasks - like "build a website" then you have to have these agreements in place. The secret of attractive leadership is to then step back and leave them to get on with it. The reason I am successful at delegation is that I don't interfere when the task has been agreed (in any event I'm busy with other things). My support team LOVE IT that I trust them enough to make their own decisions - it gives them a sense of purpose in their work that they do for me - they own it. My support team (like you and I) get it right 80% of the time. 20% of the time it (or they) mess up. That's OK - we blame the system not the person, learn, change the system and move on.

An empowered team, trusted with responsibility, will increase your effectiveness by an order of magnitude that far surpasses the investment you make in them.

The action plan should be to create spaces in which you can do your best work and live your best life. The List - what do you intend to stop doing? The People - who do you, intend to hire to do those things? The Agreement - how do you intend to lead those people?

Step #9 - Deciding on your internal team

No great surprise to find that I am asking you to populate the list of people who are directly on your payroll - your internal dream team of people who make everything so simple and effortless for you and anticipate your every need. I've been self-employed in one form or another since January 1987 and there has NEVER been a moment when I've been without an essential personal assistant (currently Phillippa Goodwin) who is my Radar O'Reilly, my wingman, my right hand. When I arrive at an airport, station, hotel, and restaurant - they are expecting the tickets/seats and me are ready. If a form needs filling in, she fills it in and I sign it when she asks me. There is very little that escapes her attention or that she does not know.

That way, and with an excellent internal team, I am able to focus 80% of the time on my unique abilities and lead 20% of the time.

So who are your internal team?

- Managing Director
- Practice Manager
- Business Manager
- Clinic Manager
- Financial Manager
- Marketing Manager
- Client Relationship Manager
- Operations Manager
- HR Manager
- IT Manager
- Logistics Manager
- Systems Manager
- Social Media Manager
- Treatment Co-ordination Manager
- Personal Assistant

Step #10- Writing things down

I was recently touring a beautiful dental practice with the owner - absolutely drop dead gorgeous surgeries with “state of the art” equipment in a pristine white environment - white tile floors, white cabinetry, white walls and ceiling, white dental chair with a bright orange seat. The overall effect - stunning - and “on brand” with the rest of the building. On the work surface in each surgery - the same small digital music Centre. Playing on the radio - a local station with a couple of young male DJ’s chatting about trivia and playing a selection of rock classics. The owner grimaced and said, “Rock music! Why are they playing rock music? It says “X Dental Spa” on the front of the building. People come here for a spa experience. I’VE TOLD THEM I WANT SPA MUSIC IN THE SURGERIES, WHY DON’T THEY LISTEN?”

The capitals are for emphasis.

“I’ve told them - why don’t they listen? “That, of course, is the dangerous assumption that leads to discontent in teams and frustration for owners. I asked my client “where is it WRITTEN that spa music must be played? “And he just looked at me - raised his eyes to the heavens, smiled and said, “OK - I get it”.

This story then took another interesting turn. The client owns 5 practices in different locations up to 100 miles apart. He employs an operations manager for his group and 5 practice managers. The Group Ops Manager was in the building with us but not in the room. She was in a meeting with the Practice Manager. I bet you can guess what happened next. The owner started wandering around the building, looking for the nurse who works in the surgery we had visited - to find her and TELL HER to REMEMBER to play spa music.

Spot the mistake?

So here are some lessons from this story (perhaps for those who are working long hours and never seem to get to the bottom of the list).

Never assume:

- that people know what to do
- that they listen
- that they remember

WRITE IT DOWN.

The McDonalds Hamburger University, The Toni & Guy Academy, The L’Oreal Academy, Hilton Brand Standards Manuals have a support manual to follow. Trainers show them what to do. Consultants show them how to apply the training in their situation. Coaches hold them accountable. Mentors listen to their feedback and suggest improvement and evolution based on their wider experience.

MANUALS are the bible of “how we do things around here” and provide a mechanism by which team members can be held accountable to keep the ship on course. You are the trainer, consultant, coach and mentor in your own business.

In the example above - the owner is trainer, consultant, coach and mentor - to his Group Ops Manager, Finance Manager, Marketing Manager and Clinical Director (not to everyone in the business - he is the leader to everyone in the business). His Group Ops Manager is trainer, consultant, coach, mentor to her Practice Managers. The Practice Managers are trainers, consultants, coaches and mentors to their teams.

What he should have done is:

- explain to the Group Ops Manager that he was unhappy with the choice of music station
- have her add this to THE MANUAL
- ask her to make sure that all Practice Managers “make it so” - train, consult and coach their teams on this

Instead - he is charging around the building looking for a nurse. And trying to keep control of everything else that is going on his business.

MANUALS can be word-processed and a collection of ring binders or they can be any format - mind-maps (very useful), online notes, slide shows, Camtasia videos - in fact, be creative because people get bored with ring binders. But please stop assuming that people listen, understand “why” and remember - they just don’t.

Step #11 - Communication

How often do you communicate with your internal support team? Not enough.

How do I know that? Because part of my work is to deal with the consequences.

Remember my all time number one saying: “All problems exist in the absence of a good conversation. “Those conversations can be 1:1 or team meetings.

Here’s a meeting schedule I devised some years ago for “perfect practice” and also to minimize the risk of relationship and communication problems in any business:

Daily

- a daily huddle before the curtains are raised, to review the good and bad points of the previous day and to preview the day ahead

- 15 minutes

Weekly

- a weekly reflection on the best and worst bits of the previous week and agreement on what we can learn and how we can evolve

- 30 minutes

Monthly

- a monthly review of all key aspects of the business

- Financial Performance

- Marketing results

- CRM highlights

- Pipeline and Sales

- Operational issues

- Team well-being

- a half-day for a 3-hour meeting

Quarterly

- Morning as per monthly meeting, afternoon as training on any of the above topics

- full day

Annually

- a getaway that includes an overnight

- day one morning - same agenda as quarterly but with the annual review

- day one afternoon - fun

- day one evening - party and awards

- day 2 morning - plans for the coming year

- day 2 afternoon - fun
- Strongly suggest location away from home town

You might be wondering where the annual appraisal falls into this schedule.

Ditch it - it is useless. If people require 1:1 time with you then deal with it in real time - as it happens. The concept of sitting down with an employee once a year for "judgment day" is Industrial Revolution stuff - not the connection revolution of today. I agree that individuals require PPI's (personal progress interviews). If you do decide then here is your meeting agenda:

Part 1 - Questions for the team member to answer:

- what do you like best about working here?
- what do you like least about working here?
- what would you most like to change about your work here?
- in what area would you appreciate some further training?

Part 2 - Feedback I would like to give to you:

- what I like best about the work you do is.....
- what I like least about the work you do is.....
- what I would most like you to change about the work you do here is.....

Lets remind ourselves that just about every survey of employee satisfaction ever undertaken came to the same conclusions, that people stay in a job when:

- they feel genuinely appreciated
- they can see a career pathway for themselves (Maslow again)
- they feel well paid for what they do
- they are having fun

In that order.

It's not all about the money.

Step #12 - Zero Tolerance

You are a good leader, you have a great team of managers, you genuinely appreciate your team on a regular basis, you create career pathways, you pay well, you have fun, the business has protocols and systems - so that everyone knows exactly what is expected of them, you do good in your business and your life!

In which case...Being “on-brand” is your mantra. Your team members are either “on-brand” or “off-brand”. If they are “off-brand”, get rid of them.

Well-poisoners

The landscape gardeners enjoy hearing about “the vision” and they “get it”. The lawn mowers just want you to tell them what to do - clearly, with deadlines. The well poisoners want to remain silent during team meetings and then criticize after the meeting, in the staff room, in the pub, over the phone that evening. Get rid of the well poisoners.

Bargain hunters and price shoppers

The bargain hunters and price shoppers are the patients from hell. They want to shop around for the best price. They want you to “do them a deal”. They want to query everything. They want to sue you. They are arrogant upper-working class and tight-fisted lower middle-class. They promise you money and then eat your heart out and drain your energy. Get rid of them.

The Dementors

The Dementors want to suck the life out of you, because they hate their own lives. They tell you your ideas will not work. They “advise” you not to do it. They want to research all the risks of failure. They want the safety and security of status quo. There is no status quo - there is only their fear and low self-esteem. They want you to be as predictable as themselves. They masquerade as family, friends, partners, suppliers, team members and strategic alliance partners - even as clients. Other people’s opinions of you are none of your business. Get rid of them.

False promises

People tell you they are going to try harder do better and improve. Then they don't. But they are experts at the creation of excuses and can always find somebody or something else to blame. They appeal to your conscience and ask you to help them. Then they take your help, abuse it and repeat their performance and behavior. They have an advantage over you. They have no conscience. Get rid of them.

Take action

You spend hours and hours talking about the people that you don't fire from your life, trying to make it better, make it work. It never gets better, it doesn't work. Get rid of them. Make a list of the people you are going to get rid of and get rid of them.

Step #13 - Commitment and Sustainability

It has been suggested that the best way to demonstrate the difference between involvement and commitment is to consider a plate of egg and bacon. The chicken is involved but the pig is fully committed. Are you a chicken or a pig when it comes to your own life? We are nearing the close of this article and I hope you have enjoyed the marathon.

The crowd are cheering, the bands are playing, the flags waving - and you can see the finish line in the distance. Everything hurts, every muscle is sore, every bone aches - and your inner voice has been telling you for the last 10 miles to stop. You have been slower than you expected and feel as if the pack are racing ahead and leaving you behind. But your mental stamina, willpower and stubborn determination to succeed are going to get you across that line to pick up your winner's medal (that's one of the reasons I love marathons so much - every finisher is a winner).

This article has been a marathon with a difference. There is no finish line ahead. There is only a start line ahead.

Machines, like systems, can be managed but not led. People can be led but not managed - because we have our little ups and downs. There are days when you just don't want to do it and days when you feel on fire. It is impossible to predict which will be which - because we

are so sensitive to external and internal conditions. Things, situations and relationships can lift us up and drop us down again just as quickly. We are all the same - and any “guru” who tells you there is a way to avoid human nature is selling snake oil.

Success is defined as “doing what you love to do, with the people you love doing it with, when you love doing it.”⁶ The secret of long-term success is sustainability - not short sharp shocks on training courses but the ability to maintain that 80% pace for mile after mile, for month after month, stretching into years.

Why is it that best sellers are best sellers (Covey's 7 Habits, Gerber's E-Myth, Kiyosaki's Rich Dad Poor Dad) preach and yet we are not all millionaires with great businesses and lives? In fact, why do we read one book after another, after another? Because we sign up for this stuff, but don't work towards making it SUSTAINABLE. That's why “tribes” are so important - people with whom we can share how we feel on the good and the bad days and receive the encouragement we need to get up and do it again. And it's also why coaches are so important.

A pacemaker in a marathon will guide a group of runners over the line inside a target time. A coach is a pacemaker for your life. Everyone needs a coach - a mentor who can train, consult or coach (as needed) and who brings the wisdom of experience. Someone who has run the course many times, knows the strategy and tactics for success and has knowledge that has entered through wounds received. And everyone needs a tribe - because you cannot do this by yourself - and there is no need - we are Homo sapiens - we are tribal by nature and by evolution.

SUSTAINABILITY is the magic extra ingredient that can genuinely move you forward - evolve you. TRIBALISM can create the supportive community you need to encourage you. COACHING can be the pacemaker for your continued success.

Remember - all I'm asking is that you get your leadership and management in order. 80% of the time - 20% you can mess up and that's OK - because your tribe and your coach can be there to pop you back on the tracks.

Step #14 - The Unexamined Life

"The unexamined life is not worth living" *Socrates - 469-399 BC*

So here we are - at the start line of the rest of your life! As a result of working through this article, you may have examined your life (Socrates asked me to say "well done") - and, as a result, has it become worth living? A life that is so exciting that it is worth showing up? I have never been so excited about the rest of my life as I am right now - and I want you to feel the same way about yours. If so, it's time to review this article and...

DECIDE WHAT is going to be different

DECIDE on the ACTIONS you are going to take

DECIDE WHEN those ACTIONS are going to be taken

DECIDE WHO you will need to support you in taking those ACTIONS

DECIDE to be the change you want to see in the world.

Concluding Remarks

I'm going to end by sharing with you these observations:

Focus - Always focus on what is the most important - do the A's first (no matter how tough) - don't get distracted by B's, C's and BSO's (bright shiny objects) and great ideas.

"Ideas are a dime a dozen - execution is all that matters".

Simplify - Do everything you possibly can to make your life simpler - my personal coach Michael Myers cough taught me a valuable question...

"is what I'm about to do going to increase the level of confusion and complexity in my life?"

If the answer is "yes" - walk away, no matter how much money is on the table.

Tolerate nothing and nobody

"its not the people you fire from your life who cause the problems - its the people that you don't fire"

Fail fast - Failure is how to find success - it is a process of trial and error, elimination of the impossible so that whatever is left must be possible. Take a look at the history of Virgin Megastores and over 100 Virgin subsidiaries that either failed or never started (including Virgin Dental in October 2008) - Branson knows how to fail fast.

Plan - Take the time to plan; time to think, buffer time, creative time, time to listen to your team, your suppliers and your clients - it's not about "doing it, doing it, doing it" (Gerber)

Control your calendar - Because if you don't, everyone else will - don't answer every call, email, tweet, message, letter; you don't have to !

Control your money - Be fanatical, meticulous and obsessive about money and the way it shows up in your life - learn to love the spreadsheets and the numbers.

Cherish your mind; body and spirit - They are all priceless - control what you fill your mind with, what you fill your body with and how you feed your spirit. Exercise, nutrition, flexibility, sleep (Sullivan)

Put something back - I do some pro bono work for people who are genuinely in need of help and cannot pay for it - and I also support Bridge2Aid, the African dental charity.⁸ Make sure that there is some giving back in your life - it pays you back a thousand-fold

Create - Words, pictures, sound, products, food, art - feed your soul by developing a creative side of your life, beyond your focus work

Read more novels - There are only so many business books you can read - enjoy the inspiration of literature then can lift your spirit, make you laugh, cry and gasp in wonder

Love someone unconditionally

Make your life a work of art (Godin)

Smile first - remember the words of Loren Dunton with which I began.

I hope you have enjoyed our journey, I wish you well on your future adventures in leadership and management.

References

1. Prime Time: How to enjoy the best years of your life: Loren Dunton. Nov 1992
2. The E-Myth Revisited: Why Most Small Businesses Don't Work and What to Do About It: Michael Gerber. Oct 2004
3. The E-Myth Dentist: Michael Gerber, Alan Kwong Hing, Chris Barrow: Jan 2014
4. Strategic Coach: www.strategiccoach.com
5. Toward a Psychology of Being: Abraham Maslow: 1962
6. True Success: Tom Morris: April 1995
7. Bridge2Aid: <http://www.bridge2aid.org>

Table 1:

Leadership & management of Orthodontic Teams (The Fourteen Point Checklist)
Step #1 - Understanding the difference between Leadership & Management
Step #2 - Finding the time to be a great leader or manager
Step #3 - Assessing your capabilities as a leader or manager
Step #4 - Determining your own goals before you attempt to lead others
Step #5 - Removing tolerations before you begin leadership or management
Step #6 - Discovering your Unique Ability
Step #7 - Creating the boundaries for strong leadership and management
Step #8 - Learning to delegate effectively
Step #9 - Deciding on your internal team
Step #10- Writing things down
Step #11 - Communication
Step #12 - Zero Tolerance
Step #13 - Commitment and Sustainability
Step #14 - The Unexamined Life