

GROWING LEADERS SESSION 9 STAYING FRESH

Introduction

Session 9: Staying fresh considers how we can stay fresh in our leadership over a long period of time. It uses the analogy of a race and argues that leadership is more like a marathon than a sprint. It suggests an appropriate training regime will be made up of the following parts:

- Personalised training.
- Ongoing stretching.
- Working out a rhythm.
- Keeping close relationships.
- Completing the course.

As a result of the exercise they will have created their own personal training programme. Invite them to share this with you and then use it as a basis of conversation.

Here are the areas the participants are invited to explore with their mentors:

- What are characteristics of someone who is 'fresh' as a leader? And someone who is weary? What would some of the tell-tale signs be for either?

- What most helps you to stay fresh in your leadership role?
- Who is a leader you admire who has gone the distance well? What are the qualities that have helped them to do that?
- What is currently making your leadership role a chore rather than a delight? Why?

Keeping Going

What do leaders need to give attention to if they are to go the distance?

PATTERNS

Throughout GL we have emphasised that leaders need to continually give attention to their own development. Otherwise leaders can quickly become stuck, stale or stagnant. Therefore it might be helpful to reflect with your mentee on what are the things that have most helped them to grow through the course, and how might they continue those things beyond GL.



'I HAVE RUN THE
RACE, FOUGHT THE
GOOD FIGHT, KEPT
THE FAITH.'

PAUL

LEADERSHIP TRIP-UP FACTORS

One leadership development consultant writes: 'These are blindspots or a failure to recognise specific competences as a priority for growth. A gifted, highly competent leader can undermine significant gospel ministry through:

- Use of poor/immature humour, or an annoying mannerism.
- A failure to cultivate a capacity to think through the implications before speaking, deciding or acting.
- A failure to cultivate a capacity to analyse and anticipate risks and to develop a plan B.
- A low capacity or desire to consider issues through the eyes of others.
- Loss of a teachable spirit—evidenced by a defensiveness and a lack of openness to receiving feedback.
- Lack of discipline.
- Lack of forward planning, especially by those who are gifted at thinking on their feet.

(From work by Sandy Jones in A Passion for Leadership.)

Have you spotted any of these factors in your mentee? If so, are they aware of them? What are they doing to address them? How might you help them to see the issue more clearly and work with them on it over the last part of the programme?

A NAGGING FEELING

At this stage in the process, you may have a hunch, a nagging feeling, a sense of something that you can't quite put your finger on but you are concerned about.

I was mentoring someone and over many sessions there had been a growing concern. I wasn't quite sure how to articulate it, and I certainly wasn't sure I was right. What do we do?

At this stage the relationship will hopefully be strong enough for you to take a risk, to find a way to offer a thought and see what happens. Obviously we need to do it sensitively. Not 'thus says the Lord', more 'I wonder if I can mention something to you that I think may be of help to you. It might be completely wrong, but if you are up for it shall we see if it makes any connection with you.'

There are very few people who will speak truth into these leaders' lives in the way you might be able to as an GL mentor. So we would want to encourage you to take the risk and gently see if the hunch is right.

AND FINALLY

As you read through these areas of exploration you hopefully will gain a sense of which one might be best for your participant. Please don't bring them all up in the same meeting! But rather, focus on the one that might be most appropriate.

Remember, speaking truth into people's lives is never easy, should never be done hurriedly, and should always be done with genuine concern for their well-being. But speaking the truth in love might be just what they need.



'MOST LEADERS DON'T
BURN OUT BECAUSE THEY
FORGET THEY ARE
LEADERS. THEY BURN OUT
BECAUSE THEY FORGET
THEY ARE PEOPLE.'
DR HART (ADAPTED)

Growing Leaders
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