Developing Leadership to Make Things Happen

Different types of people = Different types of leaders!

by Fran Kick

The best definition of leadership I can share is by way of an example. At a leadership conference before it began, one person saw that the room was kind of a mess. There were papers on the floor, a Coke® can in the corner, and other miscellaneous remnants indicating that an entire day of classes had occurred in this lecture hall. Before we started the session, one person got up out of his chair, picked up a piece of paper and the Coke® can, threw them out and sat back down. Not less than maybe 30-60 seconds later, two other people got up, went around and picked up trash near their chairs, threw it out and sat back down. That first person was leading by the most effective form of leadership possible, leading by example.

No one went up to that first person and said, “Hello, we’d like to appoint you the official room picker-upper and give you two assistant room picker-uppers.” They did not receive any special consideration, grandiose title, extra bonus points, cash incentive or reward. They took Nike’s® advice and just did it. No one even went up to the other two people who helped out and said, “Look at that! Did you see what that person did? Now if you were even half that responsible, aware, or caring, you’d help out too!” They didn’t get any that-a-boy’s, pats on the back, gold stars, happy face stickers or candy bar rewards. They saw someone take the lead and they followed.

Leaders do what needs to be done, when it needs to be done, whether they want to or not, without being asked

...which in the words of Thomas Huxley is what it takes to be successful in this world. It’s about a different level of awareness more than anything else. Leaders see opportunities to make something happen and they act on it.

Leaders pay attention to more than appearances. They notice the small details as well as the big picture; things that others miss. Leaders take the initiative in making things happen because they see opportunities before others do. You’ve probably heard the saying, There are three types of people in the world, those who...

Make things happen,
watch things happen,
or wonder what’s happening!
Everyone has varying degrees of how well they pay attention to the world around them. If you’re the type of person who pays attention at a very high level, you’ll tend to see more opportunities and therefore make more things happen. If you’re the type of person who just pays attention to what they “have to” to “just get by,” then chances are you may notice a few opportunities, but for the most part you’ll tend to notice other people making things happen and then you’ll join in. If, however, you’re the type of person who doesn’t pay attention at all, you’re not going to even notice the opportunities. You’ll occasionally notice other people making things happen, but most of the time you’ll wonder what’s happening.

It’s your choice based on how well you pay attention. Are you going to make something happen and take the lead? Are you going to just watch things happen and follow? Or are you going to wonder what’s happening? The first person at that leadership workshop was paying attention, saw an opportunity to make something happen and took the lead. The two other people who were watching what happened saw the first person’s example and followed. Everyone else in the room probably didn’t even notice what happened. Leaders pay attention, make things happen and KICK IT IN!

Fran Kick has been inspiring people to Kick It In® and Take The Lead since 1986. With a B.A. in Education, a M.A. in Educational Psychology, and three children of his own, Fran knows What Makes Kids KICK!

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