

PROBLEM SOLVER

CONNECTIONS MODULE #4

COMPETENCY: Seeks solutions with intention and navigates issues with grace, humility, and care for self and others. Gain practical tools to navigate issues with grace and humility for the enrichment of self and others.

Opening Questions:

1. Who is the person that comes to mind that is a problem solver?
 2. What are the qualities they display?
 3. What have you gleaned from them?
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ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment 1: Read scripture, Phil 2:12-18, and answer provided questions.

Assignment 2: [Read Moments of Greatness Entering The Fundamental State of Leadership](#)

ASSIGNMENT 1

PHIL 2:12-18

Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Do all things without murmuring and arguing, so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, in which you shine like stars in the world. It is by your holding fast to the word of life that I can boast on the day of Christ that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. But even if I am being poured out as a libation over the sacrifice and the offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you—and in the same way, you also must be glad and rejoice with me.

QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you about this section of Scripture?

2. Where do you think this section of Scripture relates to working towards solutions?

ASSIGNMENT 2

[Read Moments of Greatness Entering The Fundamental State of Leadership](#)

Excerpts from “Moments of Greatness Entering The Fundamental State of Leadership”

As leaders, sometimes we’re truly “on,” and sometimes we’re not. Why is that? What separates the episodes of excellence from those of mere competence? In striving to tip the balance toward excellence, we try to identify great leaders’ qualities and behaviors so we can develop them ourselves. Nearly all corporate training programs and books on leadership are grounded in the assumption that we should study the behaviors of those who have been successful and teach people to emulate them...

When leaders do their best work, they don’t copy anyone. They draw on their own values and capabilities.

Is it possible to enter the fundamental state of leadership without crisis? In my work coaching business executives, I’ve found that if we ask ourselves—and honestly answer—just four questions, we can make the shift at any time. It’s a temporary state. Fatigue and external resistance pull us out of it. But each time we reach it, we return to our everyday selves a bit more capable, and we usually elevate the performance of the people around us as well. Over time, we all can become more effective leaders by deliberately choosing to enter the fundamental state of leadership rather than waiting for crisis to force us there.

Defining the Fundamental State

...First, we move from being comfort centered to being results centered. The former feels safe but eventually leads to a sense of languishing and meaninglessness. In his book *The Path of Least Resistance*, Robert Fritz carefully explains how asking a single question can move us from the normal, reactive state to a much more generative condition. That question is this: What result do I want to create? Giving an honest answer pushes us off nature’s path of least resistance. It leads us from problem-solving to purpose finding.

Second, we move from being externally directed to being more internally directed. That means that we stop merely complying with others’ expectations and conforming to the current culture. To become more internally directed is to clarify our core values and increase our integrity, confidence, and authenticity. As we become more confident and more authentic, we behave differently. Others must make sense of our new behavior. Some will be attracted to it, and some will be offended by it. That’s not prohibitive, though: When we are true to our values, we are willing to initiate such conflict.

Third, we become less self-focused and more focused on others. We put the needs of the organization as a whole above our own. Few among us would admit that personal needs trump the collective good, but the impulse to control relationships in a way that feeds our own interests is natural and normal. That said, self-focus over time leads to feelings of isolation. When we put the collective good first, others reward us with their trust and respect. We form tighter, more sensitive bonds. Empathy increases, and cohesion follows. We create an enriched sense of community, and that helps us transcend the conflicts that are a necessary element in high-performing organizations.

Fourth, we become more open to outside signals or stimuli, including those that require us to do things we are not comfortable doing. In the normal state, we pay attention to signals that we know to be relevant. If they suggest incremental adjustments, we respond. If, however, they call for more dramatic changes, we may adopt a posture of defensiveness and denial; this mode of self-protection and self-deception separates us from the ever-changing external world. We live according to an outdated, less valid, image of what is real. But in the fundamental state of leadership, we are more aware of what is unfolding, and we generate new images all the time. We are adaptive, credible, and unique. In this externally open state, no two people are alike.

These four qualities—being results centered, internally directed, other focused, and externally open—are at the heart of positive human influence, which is generative and attractive. A person without these four characteristics can also be highly influential, but his or her influence tends to be predicated on some form of control or force, which does not usually give rise to committed followers. By entering the fundamental state of leadership, we increase the likelihood of attracting others to an elevated level of community, a high-performance state that may continue even when we are not present....

....Asking Four Transformative Questions

Am I results centered?

Am I internally directed?

Am I other focused?

Am I externally open?

Discussion Questions:

1. What stood out to you most from the article?
2. What were the most challenging takeaways to you at this point in your life and leadership?
3. What area of leadership development stood out to you most?
4. What ideas did it cultivate in you?
5. What are 2-3 practical applications you feel led to take?

Key Takeaways for the team

As we lead with a posture that seeks solutions we reflect Christ to those we lead and serve. We also honor God and display an irresistibility like Jesus.