

TIM STEVENS



FAIRNESS IS
OVERRATED

AND 51 OTHER LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES
TO REVOLUTIONIZE YOUR WORKPLACE

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

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CHAPTER ONE

LIVE A LIFE WITH MARGINS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Where are you feeling the lack of margin in your life?
2. If you made just one change to increase margin in your life, what would that be?

CHAPTER TWO

WHEREVER YOU ARE, BE FULLY THERE

THINK ABOUT IT

1. What habit do you need to change so people know you are fully listening to them?
2. If you are really brave, ask your spouse if he (or she) believes you are fully present when he (or she) is talking to you. Ask your coworkers. What do they say?

CHAPTER THREE

GO DARK

THINK ABOUT IT

1. When is the last time you disconnected digitally in order to renew your body, soul, or mind?
2. Consider taking time right now to put your go-dark week on the calendar.

CHAPTER FOUR

KNOW YOURSELF

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Do you know what you need to be whole, loving, and full of grace?
What is it?
2. Make a list of things you need and share it with your spouse or a close friend. See if there is anything that surprises that person, and talk about how you can integrate your list more fully into your life.

CHAPTER FIVE

STAY HOME FROM CHURCH

THINK ABOUT IT

1. For those who lead in church: Do you encourage your staff members to stay away from church on occasion for the sake of their spiritual health? If not, why don't you?
2. Do you feel guilty when you don't go to church? What does that reveal about what you think about God and his acceptance of you?

CHAPTER SIX

LEAVE A LEGACY

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Who do you know who has consistently made good choices?
Seek him or her out and ask questions. You might actually learn something.
2. What changes do you need to make right now so you will get to the end of your life with a legacy of integrity?

CHAPTER SEVEN

BE A LIFELONG LEARNER

THINK ABOUT IT

1. How do you learn best? Are you making sure your schedule allows time to learn?
2. If you aren't naturally wired as a learner, what can you build into your regular routine that will enhance learning opportunities?

CHAPTER EIGHT

GET NAKED

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Would the people around you say that you are a vulnerable leader?
2. Have there been times when you've cared more about looking smart and having the right answers than being a trusted leader? If so, what can you do about it?

CHAPTER NINE

CONTROL YOUR CALENDAR

THINK ABOUT IT

1. What can you do right now to make sure your priorities get put on your calendar for the next six months?
2. Are you traveling too much? Consider sitting down with your spouse and boss and talking through some manageable parameters.

CHAPTER TEN

GUARD YOUR FAMILY

THINK ABOUT IT

1. What are you intentionally doing to make sure your family is a higher priority than your job? What more can you do?
2. Look at your calendar. Does it reflect the priority you place on your spouse and kids? What could change?

CHAPTER ELEVEN

LEAVE YOUR KIDS BEHIND

THINK ABOUT IT

1. What are you doing to intentionally build your marriage in ways that will last well after your kids are gone?
2. Perhaps you've been thinking about planning time away with your spouse, but you just haven't pulled the trigger. Wait no longer. Schedule it now.

CHAPTER TWELVE

DEVELOP RUMBLE STRIPS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. What rumble strips do you need to put in place for yourself?
2. What rumble strips should you consider having everyone on your staff or team agree to?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Have you crossed any fences in your marriage, family, or financial decisions? What will you do, right now, to move back toward Jesus?
2. Are your wants out of control? Which of these practices do you need to begin immediately to refocus on your faith and priorities?

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

A RÉSUMÉ IS WORTHLESS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. If you have required a certain level of education for a position, revisit that decision. What is behind the requirement?
2. Are you experiencing a high turnover? If so, it might be due to some hiring practices that need to change. What might those be?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

YOU CAN'T TRAIN CHARACTER

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Have you ever boldly asked a candidate, “If Satan was going to take you down, how would he do it?” How might this help?
2. Is there something in your own life that might trip you up down the road? Consider sharing this with someone.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

SOCIAL MEDIA IS YOUR FRIEND

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Do you need to change your hiring practice so you can begin intentionally cyber-stalking potential staff members?
2. Is there something you need to change about your personal online practices so they don't jeopardize a future opportunity?

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

HIRING FROM WITHIN

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Church leaders: Who do you know is an amazing volunteer, but you've hesitated hiring that person because he or she lacks professional church experience?
2. Business leaders: Do you have a system of identifying entry-level employees who have a far greater capacity than the role they are currently filling?
3. Do you have high staff turnover? If so, why?

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

FRESH EYES

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Is your business or church stuck? Do you need some staff with fresh eyes in key positions to help you get out of a rut? If so, in what ways, specifically?
2. Have you decided what's not negotiable about your company culture or practices? When a new hire pushes back or asks questions, what is open for discussion and what is not?

CHAPTER NINETEEN

QUESTIONS TO ASK

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Which question made you think, *Oh, that's good!* Why?
2. Do you currently have an environment where you could ask these types of questions when interviewing a candidate? If not, what could you change?

CHAPTER TWENTY

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Think through Alexander Kjerulf's list of why job descriptions are useless internally. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
2. Do your job descriptions include value and integrity statements like the illustration from the chapter? How might this benefit you?

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

FIND LEADERS, NOT DOERS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Have you ever been frustrated because a doer was in a position that should have been filled by a leader? Describe the situation.
2. Do you feel as if your church or nonprofit organization communicates that leaders are more important than doers? If so, how could this be changed?

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE DYNAMIC TENSION BETWEEN CREATIVES AND LEADERS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Leaders: Have you had a high turnover of artistic staff? If so, what is it about your style or practices as a leader that is making it difficult for artists to stick around?
2. Creatives: What can you improve so that you are leading up more effectively?

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

PAY WELL

THINK ABOUT IT

1. How do you think your business or church is doing right now with its compensation plan?
2. Are you currently caught up in the comparison trap because you know how much someone else makes? Consider confessing this and asking God for the grace to be content with what he has given you.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

IT'S MESSY WHEN YOU WORK WITH YOUR FRIENDS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Have you ever had a working relationship with a friend end poorly? Has this caused you to build up any walls toward people you work with now?
2. Is there someone you need to have an honest conversation with even if you know it might hurt him or her, or yourself? What can you do about it?

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

LEAVE WELL

THINK ABOUT IT

1. You just got fired. You didn't see it coming, and you don't think you deserved it. How do you respond? Write out your talking points for what you will say when asked about it.
2. Consider Proverbs 21:23: "Watch your words and hold your tongue; you'll save yourself a lot of grief" (MSG). When have you forgotten to apply this verse in a job situation, and how did it go?

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

TEAMS TRUMP PERSONALITY

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Does your organization have a true team model of leadership? If not, why not?
2. With your group, go through the list in this chapter and mark yes or no next to each characteristic, answering honestly whether or not it exists in your environment. Discuss every point that was marked with a yes.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

THE THREE Ss

THINK ABOUT IT

1. What are you doing to intentionally create a healthy culture in your organization?
2. Do you have a weekly gathering where values and culture are experienced by your team? If not, what is stopping you from beginning such a meeting?

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

ALWAYS BELIEVE THE BEST

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Have you ever been on the other side, with an untrue accusation thrown your direction, and felt the betrayal of others not believing the best about you? What was it like?
2. What do you do regularly to communicate to your team that you have their backs? What more can you do?

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

LET YOUR LEADERS LEAD

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Make a list of what is held tightly or loosely in your organization. Are the loose things really loose, or do you sometimes swoop in and micromanage?
2. Do you have leaders to whom you've given responsibility without authority? What can you do to clarify their roles?

CHAPTER THIRTY

HAVE FUN

THINK ABOUT IT

1. What have you intentionally planned for your team in the fun category?
2. Do your leaders know it is okay to occasionally plan fun activities for their teams? If not, what will you do to change this?

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

MEETINGS THAT WORK

THINK ABOUT IT

1. You probably can't control or fix every meeting in your organization, but what is one regular meeting you can immediately address?
2. Is there a leader you should come alongside and tell, "Let me run point on these meetings for you"? What's the best way to do that?

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

LISTEN TO YOUR TEAM

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Answer the previous ten questions honestly. Then ask your spouse or close coworker to also assess you on the same questions. Discuss where you differ.
2. If you struggle with listening, develop the discipline of asking three questions before you begin talking about yourself or sharing your knowledge.

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

ASK QUESTIONS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Why do you think business professionals like Peter Drucker and Gary Cohen are advocating for a style of leadership that comes straight from Scripture and exemplifies the humility of a Christ-follower?
2. What do you need to change about your leadership so that you talk less and listen more?

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

DEALING WITH MISTAKES

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Have you been too unforgiving when people under you make mistakes? Has someone been unforgiving of you? What are the consequences?
2. What should you change about your leadership style to encourage innovation and risk, even if you know it will open room for mistakes?

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

ALL IN

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Do you have any policies that have been written because of hurts from the past? Should these be reconsidered?
2. Do you have people on your team who only attend the church because they have to as a condition of employment? Consider a conversation with them.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

LEADERSHIP RETREATS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Do you not have a leadership retreat on the schedule? What is keeping you from getting it on the schedule?
2. Does your senior leader normally lead these types of meetings? Is he or she best suited to drive an agenda? If not, identify the person who can best facilitate your annual retreats and weekly meetings.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

HOURS AND FLEXIBILITY

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Are you unsure if your structure is too inflexible? Survey your staff and ask them to rank what would be most important to them (e.g., more money, more flexible hours, better office, tools, or benefits).
2. Are you personally maintaining a good work–life balance? Would your spouse agree?

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

FAIRNESS IS OVERRATED

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Where have you tried to be fair in order to keep people happy when a decision needed to be made regardless of fairness?
2. Where have you been unfair (bordering on discrimination) because of a person's ethnicity, gender, or life phase?

CHAPTER THIRTY-NINE

IDENTIFY SILOS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Do you currently have any silo departments that need to be addressed? What action will you take today?
2. Are all your key leaders tuned in to the danger of silos? What can you do to make sure they know how to identify a silo and understand why it is unhealthy?

CHAPTER FORTY

DESTROY SILOS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Do you have any silos that you've been reluctant to address?
What action will you take today?
2. Have you ever been the creator of a silo because of a disagreement with the direction of the church or business? What communication needs to happen to get realigned, or to find another place that more closely matches your view?

CHAPTER FORTY-ONE

BE A GOOD FOLLOWER

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Rank yourself A, B, or C on each of these characteristics of a great follower. If you gave yourself any Bs or Cs, what can you do to bump it up? (A=this describes me; B=doing okay; C=needs improvement)
2. If you are really brave, ask someone else to rank you. Have a discussion about the areas where you differ.

CHAPTER FORTY-TWO

SIGNS OF AN UNHEALTHY CULTURE

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Take time with your team to honestly consider each of these characteristics. Evaluate your health.
2. Pick two things you can do as a team to improve your culture right away. It won't happen overnight, but with intentional steps, progress can happen.

CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

LEADING CHANGE

THINK ABOUT IT

1. What area of your organization is stuck right now? What change could you instigate to get it moving?
2. Have you initiated change poorly? What did that look like, and how will you do it differently next time?

CHAPTER FORTY-FOUR

COUNT THE YES VOTES

THINK ABOUT IT

1. In some of the criticism you've recently received, is there a kernel of truth you should be paying attention to?
2. Do you get easily sidetracked by the no votes? Can you pull some people around you to help you shoulder the criticism?

CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE

RESIGNATIONS AND CHARACTER ISSUES

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Is your company gracious when someone resigns? Do you focus on the person's years of service or on the hurt that he or she is leaving?
2. Have you ever waited too long to let someone go for a lapse in character? What were the results?

CHAPTER FORTY-SIX

BAD ATTITUDES AND LIMITED CAPACITY

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Have you been avoiding a difficult conversation with someone on your staff?
2. Is there someone on your team with a stinky attitude? What will you do to make sure that person's attitude no longer impacts the rest of the team?

CHAPTER FORTY-SEVEN

UNAVOIDABLE LAYOFFS

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Do you have someone watching your contributions and expenses closely? How can he or she act to help avoid a layoff?
2. Would you be able to tell twelve to eighteen months before a financial crisis was on top of you? How can you make a plan for this?

CHAPTER FORTY-EIGHT

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Has there been a change you tried to implement when you didn't have the meeting before the meeting? What were the consequences?
2. Have you been on the other end of a change when the communication was lousy? How did it make you feel about the change?

CHAPTER FORTY-NINE

GO OFF-LINE

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Can you think of a time when you've personally seen a "gentle answer turns away wrath" and keep a conversation from going nuclear? What can you learn from that?
2. Make a commitment to never handle another tense conversation by e-mail, and ask someone to help you keep your commitment.

CHAPTER FIFTY

THE PAIN OF GROWTH

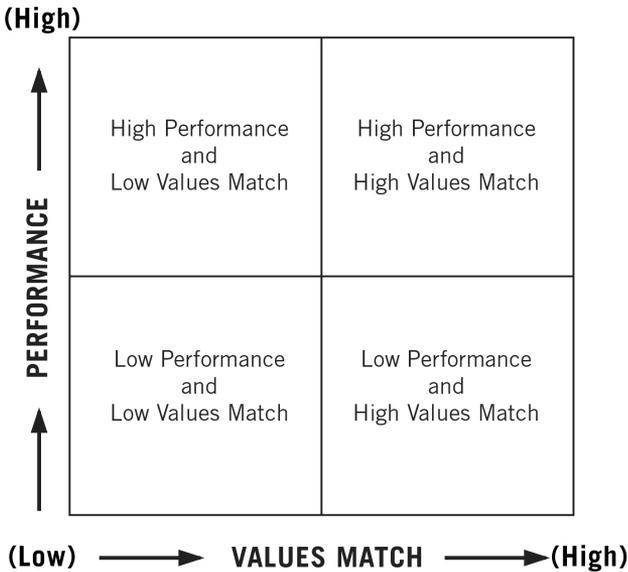
THINK ABOUT IT

1. Read through the lists and the questions in this chapter and do a gut check with your team.
2. Are you risk averse to the point that you might be missing God?
How or how not?

CHAPTER FIFTY-ONE

WORK ON ALIGNMENT

The Performance-Values Matrix



THINK ABOUT IT

1. Is there a leader in your organization who came to mind as you read this chapter? What will you do to address his or her misalignment?
2. Sometimes misalignment is God's prompting to move on and start something. Are you the crooked arrow? Is God prompting you to move someplace new?

CHAPTER FIFTY-TWO

THE FIVE STAGES OF FAILURE

THINK ABOUT IT

1. Is an area of your organization experiencing failure right now that you are still trying to justify, question, blame, or redefine? What is it?
2. Have you adopted an either/or mentality about something when both/and would be more appropriate? How so?