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I. Huddle Up -- What's Your #1 Decade Declaration?



Happy New Year!

It's the end of "tweener" week. You know, the week between Christmas and New Year's. Basically, it's a "bye" week, if you sport fans know what I mean and I hope you took advantage of it. If not, you still have this weekend to reflect on 2009 and set your intentions for 2010.

Something new for me this year was a challenge from a friend to set a decade resolution. My friend asked, What is the one thing I want to concentrate on for next 10 years? My answer came instantly.

Before I tell you about it, why don't you ask yourself the same question? Before you jump in, though, take a moment and prepare to listen to your answer! Get yourself quiet and very still. Then ask, What is the one thing that would get me closer to fulfilling my purpose and living my vision? What is the one thing that would make the biggest difference?

A Must for a Level 5 Leader

Ironically, when I asked myself the decade question, the answer was *trust*.

I say ironic because a great value I bring to organizations is improving communication and restoring trust. I believe in trust, preach trust, and build trust all day long. Yet I feel I need more of it in my own life, and my intention is to grow it for the next decade.

Why Trust?

As leaders, we make decisions, resolve conflict, and navigate change everyday. Think about it: we live and die by trust. What I have discovered in coaching top leaders is, the best ones have learned to trust themselves, their people, and something bigger than themselves.

Leaders who have **learned** to trust themselves take great pains to live lives of integrity. They do not compromise their values, they have accountability to others, and they do not think higher of themselves than they should but instead they have a very clear vision of themselves. Jim Collins calls it "humility," and it is a must for a Level 5 leader.

When we have a right view of ourselves, we can then work on our "stuff" and submit to ongoing learning. And because we acknowledge we have blind spots and are in constant need of improvement, we offer the same gift to our people, so that they can maximize their potential and grow in humility and trust alongside us.

Humble leaders trust more easily because they realize that the world does not rest solely on their shoulders. They get it that they are not in ultimate control. It sounds weird, but while they are fully responsible and take ownership, unless they are narcissistic they understand they are not the highest authority in life. Even the most powerful leader is under some kind of authority.

I find that when leaders realize they are not in complete control, acknowledge they need help, and are accountable to someone or something else - then self trust can grow.

Yielding to Authority

For example, when as a leader you submit yourself to the authority of the vision and purpose of the business, there is relief. When done correctly, you are able to trust the agreed-upon purpose and plan to drive the behaviors and motivations of the company. This in turn makes it much easier for people to trust you. They can trust that you aren't going to knee-jerk change the plan when the pressure gets to you. You will deliver upon the vision and values of the company and you trust that everyone else is working toward the same purpose.

Let me tell you something. People want to follow that leader! When leaders have learned to yield to authority, they are much more equipped to wield authority.

This is what I experienced from leaders who weathered last year's storm. They trusted themselves because trusted the purpose of the company and values on which it stands. They worked the systems and processes they had in place, always challenging any that were not working. They took great pains to make sure they had the right people doing the right things the right way. They were held accountable by a coach or peer group to their leadership of the vision and values of the company as they executed the strategic plan with passion. In short, they didn't trust blindly nor do it in a vacuum - they trusted the plan, the people, the process, and mostly their purpose. Wisely, what I want you to see that they did NOT trust is their ability to do it alone.

Stop Trying So Hard

Don't misunderstand me. I am not talking about flippant trust or giving trust freely. I do mean giving up the illusion of control where you do not have it. It includes being thankful for your team and assuming good will when you have good reason to do so.

Some of us by nature walk around with this fear that people are going to take advantage of us and therefore live from that place of defensiveness and paranoia. Others trust too easily and then freak out when people let them down and don't meet their expectations. Still others do not trust at all because they have been burned in the past and fear that will happen again. If you're like me, I need to trust myself more and stop trying to please every one.

The truth is what you believe you control, in reality you probably do not, so stop trying so hard and trust others to help you.

You can begin by trusting that small voice that tells you what need in your life as your one word decade declaration. And if you don't trust yourself to hear yourself, then get yourself a coach and work on that immediately!

You have what it takes. You just need tools and insight to get to your next level. So dare to believe and ask yourself what do you want to be known for at the end of this decade?

Then boldly go live it!

Your Coach,

Shandel

p.s. Please leave your comments and tell me your #1 Decade Intention [here](#) and then why not subscribe to our [new blog](#) its still coming together but check it out in beta. Here is your [New Year Planning Tool](#) as promised! :)

II. Pep Talk -- Monthly Quotes

"If you want to realize your dream, you need to let go of the things that don't really matter so that you can accomplish the things that really do." - John C. Maxwell

"Leadership must be demonstrated, not announced." - Fran Tarkenton

"The goal is not to be better than anyone else but rather be better than you were yesterday." - Jon Gordon, The Energy Bus

"If you are working on something exciting that you really care about, you don't have to be pushed. The vision pulls you." - Steve Jobs

"The only place where your dream becomes impossible is in your own thinking." - Robert H. Schuller

III. MVP Award -- Successful People Living with Intention: Connie Mish



What a super fun assignment it was to coach this month's MVP: Connie Kelmendi Mish. Connie's spunk, drive and high "D" was ready to grow, learn and take it to the next level. It is such a joy to coach high-potential people who are like sponges ready to soak up all they can and then squeeze every ounce out of life and come back for more. Connie not only took all the tools she was given and put them into use. She also opened her eyes to the people around her and the value each one held for her. That took her relationships to higher ground as well. When I graduated her out of the three-month program last month she was able to clearly articulate how she had implemented all she's learned. Consequently her company is benefiting from her growth and so is the rest of the world. Connie, it was a joy to coach you, and I am proud for you to tell your story and others to learn from you!

Here's Connie....

What happened to my life? One day I looked in the mirror and saw an unhappy, frustrated woman who looked older than her 30 years. I saw not just the years that I had gained on my face but the emptiness behind my eyes. I used to spend days inside a prison maintaining safety and security as a Correctional Officer; then one day I woke up and found myself a victim of domestic violence. When my son was kidnapped, that started an emotional and legal battle beyond the scope of my experiences. After coming out on the other side, with my son by my side and a year of extra grocery money saved up, I was ready to begin my life again.

I read somewhere that when wine sits in the same place, it turns into vinegar. I had turned into vinegar. Ever tried to turn vinegar into wine? I hear it takes nothing short of a miracle. For me, the miracle was a U-Haul, my children's smiling faces, a few people with amazing hearts and Shandel, who popped the last nail out of the glass coffin I was in.

I moved 3,000 miles away from everything I knew to start over with my children. I enrolled full-time in a university; took a finance and accounting course in Boston for non-financial managers; passed the Sarbanes-Oxley Certification Exam; completed the Paralegal Professional Program with Northeastern University; and gained employment with an amazing corporation that utilizes Shandel for coaching.

I always thought that succeeding in my professional life would translate into success in my personal life and afford me true happiness. Boy, was I wrong! In fact, I had it all backwards. Shandel's bag of tools--filled with

self-evaluations and true indicators of personal motivation--guided me down a fulfilling path I hadn't been able to see. I was so focused on achieving my goals that I lost sight of the path.

I spend more time each day with those that I work with than I do with my family. Shandel helped me see that I wasn't looking at my co-workers as people with whom I share life. As a condition of my prior situation in life I had shut down my ability to connect emotionally with others. Shandel gave me tips for changing parts of my speech which brought about significant changes, not only in how I communicate with others but also in how they react to me and in their level of engagement. I quit thinking about my faults and began to focus on and became genuinely curious about what the other person was bringing to the conversation.

I am now engaged in everything I do. I am no longer a spectator of my own life. I am accomplishing more than I ever have, and I feel as if I have more time than I ever did. I have never felt more accepting of myself than I do now. Coming from a place of love and acceptance in my own heart has changed the direction of my life. I no longer feel as though I am in a hole and trying to climb out; I now exist on an equal and level playing field to my peers both professional and emotionally. I always have been, I just needed someone to hold up the mirror and help me open my eyes.

That's good stuff!

Connie Mish

IV. Game Schedule -- 3 New Year Questions Leaders Should Ask

Lead with Intention

True Life Coaching can help you say yes to these 3 questions

Is your company executing to its one page strategic plan?

Is your organization as a whole growing in trust knowing that all conflict is resolved?

Has your team recovered from last year and fully engaged and motivated for 2010?

Live with Intention

Life 301 starts January 21st - only 4 spots left!

Define yourself, your next level, and what success looks like to you!?

[Sign up today! ??](#)

Is your life battery charged and ready for the next step? The Life 301 workshop is for those who have successfully taken on the basics in life and now seek the next level in which to excel. If you've attained a measure of success, yet find yourself at a personal or professional plateau, Life 301 is for you. If you find that practically every minute of your life is filled, yet you lack fulfillment, this workshop is just in time for you. Discovering and working from your personal values you'll maximize your potential to succeed in all aspects of

your life. Are you ready, willing, and able to do what is necessary to experience such a life?

Life 301 was a great reminder about the importance of living a values-based life. Stress builds up when we are unable to live our lives in sync with our values. My old boss used to say: "make work work for you". This is so true, but difficult to practice at times. Life 301 provided strategies and new thinking around simplifying our lives and working towards goals that will energize us! - Life 301 Graduate

Contact us today for more information or check out our Workshops page on <http://www.truelifecoaching.com/>

[How Life 301 works and testimonials here](#)

V. On 3 - Ready...1,2,3 - BREAK

Thank you for taking the time to read this month's edition of *The Coach's Time Out*. I truly appreciate you forwarding this newsletter to those whom may find it beneficial. If you desire to subscribe, please visit the front page of our website or send an email to ss@truelifecoaching.com with the word SUBSCRIBE.

If you would be so kind to forward this to a friend - see below for an easy click to help you pass it on.

Life's a blast - go for the 2 EXTRA points!

Shandel Slaten

Your Life Coach

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Be You. Be Real. Be the Best You can Be...Today!