



- I. Huddle Up - How will you show initiative today?
- II. Pep Talk - Monthly Quotes
- III. MVP Award - Profiling Successful People Choosing a Balanced Life - Richard Butler
- IV. Game Schedule - Upcoming Events
- V. On 3 - Ready...1,2,3 - BREAK

I. Huddle Up - How will you show initiative today?



Effective leadership requires certain traits, the most important of which are integrity and initiative. You've heard me talk a lot about integrity, so this month I want to focus on initiative and the importance of exercising it at work and at home. We all have a sense of what initiative looks like, but check out the definition: "The power, ability or instinct to begin or to follow through energetically with a plan or task; enterprise and determination."** What I love about this definition is that it covers everyone - those for whom initiative comes easily and those for whom it requires significant effort and planning. Some people are naturally energetic and geared for the beginning stages of a project, while others are better at the details and follow through that come with the implementation stages. But we all have the power to choose to take more initiative in different areas of our lives: taking first steps towards specific goals and following a plan with determination.

Many of my friends and clients are great at taking the initiative at work, however that same act at home is significantly different. They miss the connection of why their business success does not translate into successful or fulfilling relationships with spouses, friends or kids. The desire is there, but these strong people look at me in helplessness and say that they are unmotivated or too tired to lead and be creative when they get home from a long day at the office. Yet the most important thing to them, why they are working so hard outside the home in the first place, is to provide and care for their family and loved ones. How did this happen and how can we empower change?

The result of applying initiative to only one area of your life is similar to doing bicep curls with your right arm, so much so that you don't have the time, energy or strength to do them with your left arm. Doing that once or twice is no big deal. Making it a habit will result in a handsome, defined, strong, cut right arm (e.g., business success) and a flabby, undefined, weak left arm (e.g., personal relationships). Soon you are so proud of your right arm and all the attention that you get from it that you unconsciously only show your best side hoping that no one will notice the side you have neglected. As human beings we crave good feedback and the power of positive reinforcement is strong - however don't be fooled. Most people (maybe even you) see the lack of balance and symmetry. The praise you receive is simply a compliment on the success you had from working out your strong side, not the total YOU package. The problem is your success and pride in your strong side can not only blind you to your obvious lack of symmetry but also to the atrophy that results from not working to strengthen your weak side.**

Be encouraged! The good news is that you can begin to balance out and make that personal side an integrated success immediately. You can choose to apply the initiating skills that brought you success in the marketplace toward the same level of success in your home (and vice versa)! Which is your strong side where you focus your best? Do you **want** your home team functioning seamlessly like you desire your sales force to function? What are you willing to invest to make it happen? You and your spouse are a team of two. If you have kids, your team is bigger. Your home team is not the field office - it is your corporate headquarters and the driver of the vision, mission, and values of why you go to work each day. So at the HQ - what is your family mission statement and how are you living it out by your core values? As a leader in your home, are you showing the initiative you desire to see in others?

If you could implement one new initiative for your personal life today what would it be? Choose to strengthen your weak side by making a plan, taking the first step, and following through with fierce determination. If you are not sure where to begin or which areas to focus on initiating change in first, hire a coach or check out the Next Level course below, which will help you identify and prioritize your values and where you are expending all your energy. Initiate now and share with someone what first step you are taking...and follow through my friends!

BEGIN IT NOW!
Shandel

**Note I said blind - we all have blind spots and being a person of initiative is to continually seek input to avoid your personal blind areas.

*The American Heritage Dictionary

II. Pep Talk - Monthly Quotes

"Even if you're on the right track you'll get run over if you just sit there." - Will Rogers

"The secret to getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex, overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one." - Mark Twain

"Everything you want is just outside your comfort zone." - Robert Allen

"Their comes a moment when you have to stop revving up the car and shove it into gear."- David Mahoney

"If I had to sum up in a word what makes a good manager, I'd say decisiveness. You can use the fanciest computers to gather the numbers, but in the end you have to set! a timetable and act." - Lee J. Iacocca

III. MVP Award - Profiling Successful People Choosing a Balanced Life - Richard Butler



I love stories of perseverance and initiative and this month's MVP is all that! Richard and I met back in our Coach Training days where we were assigned as "buddies" - neither of us wanted or had time for such nonsense. Alas, we became instant friends and indeed helped each other grow and develop into great coaches. Richard has just completed his master's degree in Leadership Development and he'll hate me for broadcasting this but was voted one of most beautiful people in Pittsburgh. I love it! He's a wonderful dad, a dedicated spouse, and a great coach with a great story. Congrats my friend - I am proud of you! www.richardtbutler.com

Here's Richard...

The last 6 years of my life have been both challenging and amazing. In 2001, my wife and I adopted two children under

practice that focused on leadership development. I did not feel completely satisfied with my abilities to work with leaders and decided to pursue a master's degree in organizational leadership. During the entrance interview, my goal came to a screeching halt. The dean of the graduate program informed me that my grade point average of 2.55 was too low for graduate school. My transcripts also showed that I never completed my communications degree. Imagine, wrongly assuming that you had a degree for almost 20 years. I met with the dean of my undergrad program. His first words were, "we always get you back". I had to complete two Spanish classes in eight weeks and, for good measure, I needed to take a Communications Law course. I had to make a decision. Was graduate school still that important to me? I decided that! it was not, but completing my undergraduate degree as an example of finishing what you start to my children was even more important

For the summer of 2003, I opened my business at 5:00 a.m., jumped in my car at 7:00 a.m. and drove 1 hour to Spanish class, turn back around, stop at my Spanish tutor's home and back to work. I did this for all of June, July and December. I informed the dean of the graduate program that I was completing my degree and he gave me a gift. At least I think it was a gift!?

[the rest of the story...](#)

IV. Game Schedule - Upcoming Events

NEXT LEVEL CLASSES - it is time to BE YOU!!!!

Classes Start in January

Q4 is here folks and it is time to think about what is going to be different in New Year. Sign up now for your 2006 personal development. For less than \$1 day you can make 2006 a life-shifting year. Sign up now and commit to your greatness. YOU ARE WORTH the investment.

January is the time to discover what is YOUR Next Level? Discover what is blocking you from being the best you and living the life you know you've been missing out on. Join the over 200 people who are living the next level today. IF NOT NOW...when? We have opportunities for everyone who is ready, willing, and able to change - so stop thinking about it and go get it.

We have a variety of times, prices, and locations to serve you. We are ready to add a few more if you don't find a time that works for you or if you have a group at your office - we'll come to you!

For more information email info@truelifecoaching.com or call 206-718-6914.

Classes Start! January - so sign up today!

Next Level ALUMNI -

Attention all graduates, if you have already taken the Next Level Class (BE YOU) - you are qualified for the graduate class that starts the 2nd week of January from 6:00 - 7:00 PST over the phone. If you are interested - email info@truelifecoaching.com with the date you finished the class. FUN!

GET LEAN, GET HEALTHY - Join Dr. Mark Adams to maximize your health, take 28 days to experience what your body can do for you, and learn what awaits you when your mind is clear and thinking strong and feeling great. I did the program last January and still reaping the rewards. Email the doc today at drmark@proactive-health-solutions.com

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[Read more about The Next Level](#)

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 click on "update your profile" below or send an email to ss@truelifecoaching.com with the word SUBSCRIBE.

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

Shandel Slaten
Your Life Coach
truelifecoaching.com
206 860 7677

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