

**SPEAKER\_00 0:03**

All right. Thank you so much for joining us today. My name is Mark Mitford with HR Catalyst Consulting, and I've got the pleasure of actually having a wonderful conversation that I'm looking forward to today, of actually talking to uh Jay Lee Whittington. And Jaylee is the dean of the Satash and Yasmin Gupta School of Business at the University of Dallas. And um I was gonna say this too, Jay Lee. I'm gonna just say you're a visionary, you're a leadership coach, you're a storyteller, you're a boundary spanner, and you're always a teacher. So I love that introduction. That's on your LinkedIn profile for folks who want to get on uh to follow uh Jay Lee on LinkedIn. But thank you so much for your time today. I'm looking forward to the conversation.

**SPEAKER\_01 0:49**

Well, I appreciate the opportunity, Mark.

**SPEAKER\_00 0:50**

Thank you so much for inviting me. That's great. So thanks so much. So I wanted to so we wanted to focus on today's topic is going to be around legacy leadership. And I wanted to start out with first of all, first off, uh Jay Lee, what is the concept and specifically, what is the concept of legacy leadership in your definition?

**SPEAKER\_01 1:11**

Okay, well, you know, Mark, it really is a model of servant leadership. So there's a lot of things that I talk about in legacy leadership that will resonate with people that are that are familiar with servant leadership because I think ultimately servant leadership is the way to go. But the the idea of legacy, uh, a friend of mine actually is a pastor friend of mine. He shared a book a while back, and it was called Legacy Now. And it the in the book there was this image of you know, you get to heaven and you sit down at this banquet table, and there's this long, long, long, long, long, long list of people that that, you know, way, way, way back influenced somebody who influenced somebody who influenced somebody who influenced somebody that touched your life. And then, because there's no time frame, you could also see the future, and you could see this long, long, long, long, long list of people that you had an impact on, either directly or indirectly. And so that was this idea of legacy. And and then so I started thinking about that idea of legacy and and then thinking, well, it's not just what's going to happen when I die. It's not just what's going to happen at when people give a eulogy at my funeral. And I started thinking about legacy now, that that living and leading in a way that we can have an impact now and for generations to come. So that's kind of where this legacy idea started, I think, marinating in my mind. You know, it's like a seed was planted and it marinated in my mind. And and and I have an image that um that I that I think about when I think about this idea of impact now and for generations to come. And you we've all done this, you know,

we've all uh when we were kids, we may have done it even after we became adults, we just don't admit it. You took a big rock and you stood on a bridge and you threw the rock in the in the pond or you threw the rock in the in the river or or the lake or whatever, and there was a splash. But then there was a ripple.

**unknown** 3:06

Right.

**SPEAKER\_01** 3:07

And so when I think about I think about this idea, is that I want to I want to make a splash, I want to have an impact now on the people that I that I that I coach and that I lead, that I teach, that I work with. But I also want to I want it to ripple out, you know. I don't want it to just be about that one splash, but I want to I want it to ripple out. And and you know, I think a lot of times, particularly as a teacher at any level, we don't always see the full impact. You know, we we know that we taught those those students in that particular class in that particular year, and and we hope we had an impact on them, but we don't always get to see that impact. We don't get to see how how how did the story turn out. And uh I'm fortunate, I've been at this so long. I'm actually getting to see how the story's turning out. You know, I so we think about it, my my my children and and now I have grandchildren. I'm seeing it, I'm seeing it ripple. And then I have a student that she was my student about about 20 years ago at the University of Dallas, and and now she's a professor at TCU. And she invited me over last last fall to be a guest lecturer in her class. And I got to see up close and personal the impact that she's having on her students. And so so we don't always get to see the ripple, but in a couple of cases, I'm getting to see the ripple, and that's that's very rewarding.

**SPEAKER\_00** 4:27

Wow, that is great. That is that is so awesome. So it's a so what point, Jaylee, did this was it, was it something like you said, you mentioned marinating and kind of brewing within your mind? Was it was there a time where you said, you know, at this point in my career, like 10 years ago, 20 years ago, you decided you were going to start really, really diving in and digging into the concept of legacy leadership. What does that look like?

**SPEAKER\_01** 4:54

Well, Mark, I I can go right to the time and right to the place. And it was in this very room that I'm sitting in. I had just finished Patrick Linchoni's book, uh, The Five Temptations of a CEO, which I think is is really really good. And and I was sitting in my big chair up here in my in my den game room library, I'm not sure what to call it. And and and I actually, you know, I I this this is the honest thing. I said a prayer. I said, Well, that's what the world thinks about leadership. I

wonder what scripture thinks about leadership. And and and I and I just flipped to my Bible, that's not the way to do it, and and started reading in one of Paul's letters to First Thessalonians. And and as I was reading, I I saw these leadership principles, and I was like, wow, that, wow, wow, and and so I started, I just wrote them down. It's like some boldness amid opposition and and worthy of imitation and uh you know being affirmational, all those things. And and that was at a time when I was in transition. I had already accepted a job, the the job at the University of Dallas. I'm I'm in my 26th year at the University of Dallas. This was spring of 2000. And and and I was leaving Texas Wrestling, and and and so that's when it started, and I started just toying with that and playing with that, and and and the last lecture I gave at Texas Wrestling was around these legacy leadership principles. And and I had two students that walked up to me at the end of that class period. They knew that I was leaving, but uh, and and they were tremendous students. One of them was a medical doctor that had come back to business school because he needed business training for a couple of the world even. And uh he said, you know, JD, that was really good. You ought to do something with that. And uh that was Woody Kegler, Dr. Woody Kegler, and uh Trisha Pitts, who was one of my colleagues there at Texas Westland, she she also said the same thing. I said, Well, I'll tell you what, if y'all will help me, we'll we'll make a paper out of this and and we'll send it to a conference. And and we did. And then we sent it to the Leadership Quarterly, uh, which is the premier journal in our field. And it the paper got accepted and published in the Leadership Quarterly. And so so it kind of took on an academic life, but in a you know, apart from the academic life, it really became a framework that I I really started really trying to flesh out. And it kind of became the framework and the template for for the leadership classes that I teach at the University of Dallas and the framework that I that I teach when I do leadership development workshops. And and I guess you heard it uh there at the business navigators that morning. Uh, you heard those those principles. And so, so it's been you know, it's been a work in process, and and honestly, I I continue uh to revisit it and see things that I didn't see before or see applications that I didn't see before. And so it it really is to me, it it is a living framework that continues to to be revised and and and you know hopefully uh keeps current and stays relevant.

**SPEAKER\_00** 7:55

So well, I'm sure you know I I well I love first of all, I do love it was a real impact on your when you did present at the business navigators meeting and um hearing you speak and just the passion you had because I've I've heard lots of good speakers, but you are definitely one of the one of the top speakers I've I've seen. And uh you're welcome. And also just because of your passion for it, you can just tell this is something this was uh a set of slides. These were this was something that you truly believed and you were you're hugely passionate about. So do you do you think it's it's a is it a mindset? Would you think it's a mindset you mentioned a framework

you were building out, but do you also think it's a mindset of how leaders actually conduct leadership and the way that they actually build some of the leadership attributes they have?

**SPEAKER\_01 8:44**

That's a great, that's a great question, Mark, because I think you know, uh I think back to to the idea of servant leadership. I think you first have to have uh a mindset or a philosophy. You've got to think that this is the right way to lead. And then as you think about it and and as you you know you're you're aware that this is a framework that you want to embrace, then that that mindset, that philosophy, if you will, that informs your behavior. And and I so I do, I do think it, I think it's a mindset. And and for me, just in general, I would say that you know the the foundation for all leadership is character. If we don't have character, nothing else matters. But I think it really the the first principle of that I that I think I talked about is that as a leader, it's not about me. And I've got to have that mindset. I've got to have that humility that it's not about me, but it starts with me. Uh it starts with me, once again, back to character. It starts with me being the kind of person that you would want to follow. It starts, you know, that I'm the kind of person you'd want to join this effort with and and stuff. And so uh, you know, the the legacy principle there is being worthy of imitation, but it's not about me. And and so it who I am is more important than what I do, but what I do flows from who I am. That's the way I say it. That my being is more important than my doing, but my doing flows out of who I am. But so I think it does tie in with your idea that it is a mindset first. It's a mindset first, it's not just a bunch of uh techniques that we can go off and learn and and you know, and just uh in fact, if it if that's all we do, I think people can tell if somebody's real and somebody's authentic. If if it's if we're just playing a role and and engaging in in activities that we don't really believe in, people are gonna see through that pretty quickly. If it's not flowing from who you are, and if it's not perceived as authentic and sincere, it it's just you might get like you might stretch a rubber band and you might get some short-term compliance, but you're not gonna get long-term commitment. And as soon as as soon as you drop the act or you take the tension off, that rubber band's gonna go back to where it was. So I think you're on to something with that mindset idea. It's huge.

**SPEAKER\_00 10:56**

And how about what was you mentioned that you were this about 26 years ago when you were finishing up your your academic career at Texas Wesley? And so was that was there so you remember the time, but was there just was there something that was kind of the driving force that you thought just conceptually you had something bigger in mind that you actually needed to consolidate and put together an academic paper and white paper to actually start bringing this to others? What was that? What was that what did that look like?

**SPEAKER\_01 11:28**

Well, you know, I'm a synthesizer. I you know, like you you read my I'm a I'm a boundary spanner, and so so I I really like to take content from from lots of different settings and and pull it together. And and so, you know, I have a leadership class where we read a novel, we read history, we read scripture, you know, we read philosophers. I had a leadership class where we actually read Plato and Machiavelli and read a novel. And uh students said, This is the most practical course I've ever taken. I said, What do you mean? He said, Yeah, we're reading philosophy and we're reading novels. And he said, Yeah, and we talk about something every, every, and this happened to be on a Sunday afternoon when I was teaching this class. We talk about something on every Sunday afternoon that I can put to work on Monday morning. And this is the guy that worked at Southwest Airlines. So, so I'm I'm a big picture person. I I read broadly, uh, I read across disciplines. I I you know, I try to challenge myself to read things, even things that I think I'm not gonna agree with. I try to force myself to do it. But there was something about um, you know, pulling all these things together. Um, you know, so so that lecture was a way for me to pull things together that I've been thinking about for a while. And then there's nothing like the pressure of a of a deadline. You remember when you were in school, there's nothing like the pressure of a paper being due. Absolutely. It kind of pushes you to get focused. And and so this this call for papers went out, and uh, we actually missed the deadline. And uh and but I sent a note to the editor and said, hey, we missed it. Can we he said, Oh, I'm just now getting started. Go ahead and send it. And so, you know, and and and we sent it, and and you know, he he had some very constructive uh suggestions, and and we we ended up getting it, and it was the it was the um, you know, in that this it was a special edition of of the leadership quarterly, and and then I ended up co-authoring with that guy on several things. Um so we not only did we get the paper published, but ended up developing a long professional friendship that continues to this day. So that's great.

**SPEAKER\_00** 13:31

That's great.

**SPEAKER\_01** 13:32

But I you know, I I think you know, that there's there's nothing like having a a presentation to make or an interview like with you to do to to help crystallize and bring things to focus that that you've been thinking about. You know, all these ideas are running around, but oh wow, I've got these questions that Mark wants to ask. I've got this talk that somebody wants me to give. So that's just kind of that's just kind of the way I've always worked, is having having something to pull me pull me to it.

**SPEAKER\_00** 14:00

So right. Oh, that's great. So so with your so from an organizational perspective, Jaylee, so you're obviously you're you're uh you're in the academic environment. So um but when you think about when you try to roll this out into an organizational setting, is this something that the concept of legacy leadership can actually be taught to the leaders, maybe the executive team within an organization, then cascaded down? Or is it maybe one, the CEO, who has to adopt and embrace legacy leadership to be able to get this to be possibly part of the culture? Or what are your thoughts there?

**SPEAKER\_01 14:40**

Well, you know, I ideally, Mark, and I've you know, I've done I've been doing consulting for over 40 years, and uh and I've consulted across 12 different industries and over 90 different companies, and so a variety of things, but um in the ideal situation, it starts at the top and it cascades down the organization. But I don't always get invited in at the top, so I just work with whatever level I'm given. And and so you know, I've done a lot of work with first line supervisors, a lot of guys that uh, you know, we called it the buddy-to-boss transition. They they went home as a as a buddy on Friday and they came back as the boss on Monday, and making that transition is a tough transition. I can teach these principles to those guys and it resonates with them, and it gets it. And then and then I've done it where we I actually coach the CEO, and then invariably the CEO invites me to work with his leadership team or her leadership team, and then we we get it through there, and then we bring it to the next level, and we bring it to the next level. So I've done it all kinds of ways. Ideally, and this is ideal and does not always happen. Ideally, it starts at the top and it cascades down throughout the whole organization, and it becomes a framework, a way of thinking, and a way of leading that that permeates the whole organization. That that would be the the best situation. And I've had, you know, been doing it for I was introduced a couple of summers ago for a workshop, and and as actually the president of the university introduced me, and now it's become a joke. He said, Jay Lee has decades of experience. And nobody had ever said that. But it's true, I do have decades of experience. And and uh and but you know, so so in doing it, you know, I've had some really, really heartening, life-giving experiences where you really I really felt like wow, we made a difference here. We we made a difference in individuals' lives, we made a difference in the the people that work here, and it really did impact the whole organization, and it really did help change the culture. And uh that's very rewarding. Uh very, very rewarding when you can see you can see that difference. You can see the light come on and you can see people embrace it. Um, that's that's very rewarding.

**SPEAKER\_00 16:55**

Sure. Oh, that's great. That's great. Well, that's that is wonderful. We're gonna take a quick break, Jay Lee. So if you want to grab a glass of water and then we'll uh we'll be right back in

just a couple of minutes. All right, thanks for getting uh coming back, everybody. So um as we've mentioned, as we've heard already from Jay Lee Whittington, so looking forward to another good conversation for the second half of the podcast. So, Jay Lee, what I wanted to ask you next is if you wouldn't mind maybe walking our audience through the principles of legacy leadership. And what do those principles look like and what do they entail from uh from your from your uh your your background?

**SPEAKER\_01** 17:36

Okay, well, thanks thanks, Mark. You know, I think the I mentioned the first one in the in the first half was you know being worthy of imitation. I think that as leaders, you know, we have to be intentional about cultivating our character. Uh I read something one time that said that if we're gonna be a people of integrity, we have to constantly confront our lack of integrity. And and so I think, you know, focusing on our character and and being willing to invite people in, to ask us hard questions and uh kind of a personal board of directors, I think that's important. It doesn't mean we're gonna be perfect, we're gonna mess up, we're human. Uh, but character really matters. There's a great quote that that I got from uh Andy Stanley. He said, your talent and your giftedness as a leader have the potential to take you further than your character can sustain you. And then he adds, and that ought to scare you. And and I think, you know, I I've I I talk about that a lot because I think some people just we have natural gifts and talents, and and we can go a long way with that. But at some point, if we build we build more than our foundation will sustain, we're gonna topple. And so I think we have to constantly be be working on on the on the character issues, and and so that that whole idea of being worthy, uh worthy of imitation is is very important, and the character issue is very important. Um, but another principle I think is uh tied to that and in is that um as a leader, not only should I be somebody that's worth following, but I really need to be follower-centric in my leadership. I really need to be a student of the people that I'm leading. I need to understand them, I need to understand how they're wired, I understand you know, what their uh their strengths are, uh what their limitations are. And and then I also need to be affirmational. Uh, I think it's important that you know we we talk a lot about feedback, and I think too often people think feedback is is just about correcting problems or straightening something out or fixing something, and that that's part of it. We need to be constructive and corrective. But I think a dimension that is often left out is um affirmation. When people are doing a good job, we ought to affirm them in doing a good job. We ought to, you know, there's a there's a well, the five love languages book. Um they actually, every time I taught that, I said, you know, I think there's a workplace application. Well, sure enough, the guys that wrote the five love languages wrote a book called The Language of Appreciation. And they took the the five love language framework, brought it into the workplace, but they only brought four into the workplace. They left physical touch in the workplace, which is good. You know, you don't want that you get physical touch in the

workplace, you get to go see HR about that. But but you know, I think it's important to be a student of people and to understand what is their language of appreciation. Because people uh way back, uh Tom Peters and Bob Waterman wrote that book in search of excellence. They said everybody wants to be part of something bigger than themselves, but they also want to be recognized for their contribution. So we got to be affirmational, but affirmational but not content. We we need to affirm people, but then then and and let it really sink in and let it resonate, but we're not content. There's still more to do, we can still get better, and so affirmational uh but but not content is a principle. Um another principle, it just comes with the territory. Uh in fact, uh we're we're gonna launch a uh um LinkedIn uh series with me. Uh I think the first one's going up tomorrow, and we're we're talking about um leading through the rugged reality of leadership. And and in part of being a leader at any level, it doesn't matter if you're a first-line supervisor or a middle manager, if you're a CEO, the the very nature of leadership is that leadership is about change. It's about getting better, it's about moving us from where we are to where we need to be. And anytime you're dealing with change, you're gonna deal with opposition. And so I think as leaders, we have to be have what I call boldness amid opposition. But boldness is not playing whack-a-mole. You know, I I know I work for some guys that, you know, if you were opposed or if you were concerned or you were worried, I mean, they're gonna, you know, whack-a-mole, uh, and and that's not it. I think we have to be bold amid opposition, but we have to see that resistance is really a form of feedback. If somebody's resisting what we're trying to do, uh, what they're really saying is that we haven't done an adequate job of explaining why we need to make this change, and we probably haven't done an adequate job of addressing their me issues. You know, they they're concerned. We're we're disrupting the organization, we're changing the structure, we're changing processes, and people have legitimate fears about where do they fit in in the midst of all these changes. So this idea of boldness amid opposition, we're gonna stay the course, but that it's not about being, you know, as I said, we're not playing whack-a-mole. Uh we're not we're not we're not just gonna not eliminate anybody that doesn't agree with us or doesn't um you know, isn't on board. And so that that's that's important. And and and part of that really flows from our motives. Um you know, I think as a leader, I mentioned earlier that we ought to have a handful, like a personal board of directors, that of people that ask us hard questions. And one of the most important questions that I think we should ask ourselves as leaders and that we should allow people to ask us is what is our motive? Why are you doing this? And and I said before, it's not about me, but it starts with me, but why am I doing this? And and and for me, being in a leadership role, it's about how can I use my position, my authority, my access and control of resources, my influence, how can I use those things to create an environment where people can flourish. And and and so so my motive, and we're never gonna get there 100%. But I really want to operate from an altruistic motive pattern where it really is about others rather than an egotistic motive pattern where it's all about me. And and you know, we're we're humans, we're we're never

gonna be what was the old uh soap uh commercial was 99 and 44, 100% pure. We're never gonna get there. But I think if we aim in that direction, is that I'm gonna use my influence, my power, my authority for good of others to create an environment where others can flourish and thrive. My very first supervisory job, my dad said to me, your job as a manager is to create an environment where people can perform. And then when I first started teaching, I was first teaching job was at Tarrant County College, adjunct teaching economics. My dad said, you know, as a teacher, your job is to create an environment where people can learn. And uh I I didn't put it all together until later on. I I found that the idea of servant leadership and thinking about, yeah, my job as a leader is to create environments where people can thrive and flourish. So I really want to lean into that that altruistic rather than egotistic uh motive pattern. So um yeah.

**SPEAKER\_00** 24:47

That's great. Wow, that's no, that was that was just like you said there, it my mind is is turning to around and it's almost a little bit of self-reflection too, which is great. So um kind of on that note, Jaylee, do you think you are there some people who are naturally born as legacy leaders, or is this truly because there's such a myriad of skill sets and uh and character qualities? Do you think this is something you have to grow into?

**SPEAKER\_01** 25:17

Well, I think I don't I don't think leaders are born. I think some people have some natural, you know, you may have some some personality traits and and and things that that are helpful as leaders, but but even if you have those, if you if you're not aiming it in the right direction, you're not gonna you're not gonna be a leader. So I don't think leaders are born, I think leaders are made. In fact, the image that I like to use, Mark, is is that that it's cultivated. And that's a that's an agricultural metaphor. And if you know, if you've ever had a flower bed or had a garden or observe, you know, farmers, and uh they they they're very intentional and it's a process, it's not an event, but you prepare the soil, you you put nutrients in the soil, and you really get the soil ready, and then you plant the seeds in the in that soil that you prepared, and then you you continue to water, even when you can't see any growth, you continue to water, and then eventually you know something starts to pop up, you know, breaks the surface, and you continue to water it, nurture it, and as the plant grows, you you water it and you nurture it, you fertilize it, and hopefully it continues to grow and it gets to the point where it's mature, and a mature plant either produces fruit or it produces a flower that that contains seed that allows it to reproduce. And so when I think about what I do as a as a as a professor and as a leadership coach and as a as a consultant, I'm wanting to take that image of cultivating. I want to take use that image, and you talked earlier about mindset. Well, that's an image that I have in my mind about what leadership is really about, and particularly about leadership coaching, leadership

development, is cultivating. We we have we've we've made a major pivot in our curriculum at the University of Dallas, and and that that image is actually part of the presentation I do about cultivating virtuous leaders. And that that that agricultural metaphor is is just really important. So that's a long response to your question. I think we grow into it, but we don't grow into it without intentional effort. It takes, you know, it doesn't just happen. It takes intentional efforts. It's like, you know, I I see people that I think are worthy of imitation. I read something that I find inspirational, and I say, you know, I want to be like that. And and so, you know, it's not like just snap your fingers and all of a sudden you're there. And even having pursued it, that there's a title of a book called The Long Obedience in the Same Direction. Even having pursued this for a long time, I haven't arrived. And I think that as leaders, we we never arrive. I mean, we have to maintain that that humility that and a teachable spirit that there's still more to learn, there's still more uh where there's still gaps in that I need to that I need to work on.

**SPEAKER\_00** 28:02

Right, right. Um do you think on that on that note, Jaylee, do you find that um can somebody who is a uh maybe they're in their first supervisory position? I don't know, let's I'm just gonna throw in a number here. Let's say they're 32 years old, suit first supervisory position. Can they can they acquire and develop those traits at that early age in their and uh early age period, and also early in their leadership career, can they actually acquire a lot of those traits to become a leadership? Absolutely, Mark.

**SPEAKER\_01** 28:36

I I think they can. I think they can, but but there's two things. I already mentioned one of them. One of them is that being intentional about it. Uh but the other one, and this is huge, uh, is do they have a teachable spirit? And and I have the privilege of of coaching some some young leaders. Uh there's there's one that that I've been I've been working with her now for eight or nine years, and and I started working with her in her very first leadership position, and just this month, she now became the chief operating officer of a really large organization. And she is thriving and she is flourishing, but she has a teachable spirit. And when people call me and they want me to do executive coaching, um, or even if a kid reaches out to me and is looking for more of just an informal mentoring, the the question I'm always gonna ask, and I don't very I don't wait very long to ask it, is do they have a teachable spirit? Do they have a teachable spirit? And if they don't have a teachable spirit, I don't want to work with them. And it's not because it's not it's not about me. It's just I just know if you don't have a teachable spirit, this isn't gonna go well. You're gonna resent the fact that you have a coach. I'm gonna feel frustrated because I'm not making a difference, and then particularly in a coaching situation, and I'm sending them an invoice for my work, and they're paying the invoice, but they're not seeing any any change. So, you know, it but so I think I think you have to be intentional and I think you have to have a

teachable spirit that you're willing to lean into it. And and you know, and in in my in my teaching and coaching, I actually uh practice um I try to practice radical candor, and which is a great book, Kim Scott's book, radical candor, is a great book. And and it's that you really care personally and you challenge directly. And you know, I as parents we understand that we don't call it radical candor, we call it tough love. I love you too much to let you go down this path. And and so in fact, I was having a conversation with there's a couple of people that I coach that work for the same organization, and they they exchanged notes about their their discussions with me, and and and one of them said, Man, Jay Lee said some really tough stuff. And and and the one that I've been coaching the longest, she's she told him, said, well, he's gonna say tough stuff. But you gotta, you just gotta, you get, you gotta hang in there because sometimes when he says it, you aren't ready to hear it. But if you lean into what he said, it's gonna pay off. And and in, you know, so so I I think, you know, but once again, she she is intentional and and she she definitely has a teachable spirit, and and she is just having a huge impact on her organization and in the in the people people talk about this. This is this is a strange thing, Mark, but people talk about what a blessing it is to work for her. Um there's another leader that I that I encountered in in a in in Missouri, and uh he's in an environment where every employee in his organization works for one of two unions. And he's one of the most effective leaders I've ever seen. He just leads anyway, where a lot of people would use that as an excuse. He just leads anyway, and and the people in that organization talk about what a blessing it is to have him as their CEO. So, you know, I I just think yes, we can we can make a huge difference, but we got to be intentional about it and we have to have that teachable spirit.

**SPEAKER\_00** 32:01

So that's great. Um now, do you have to be in a leadership role, um, Jaylee, to be to actually be a legacy leader, or can you be in an individual contributor role?

**SPEAKER\_01** 32:14

No, I think you uh absolutely asked that because um my definition of leadership is that leadership is intentional influence that takes place in the context of a relationship. And that really has absolutely nothing to do with a formal title or a position. And in fact, there are a lot of people that have formal titles and positions that are not leaders, much less legacy leaders. They may be power wielders, but they're not leaders. And so I think that that all of us are in leadership positions more than we realize. You know, that there are times when my students are leading me. My students are giving me feedback, my students are asking me questions, my students are are challenging me, and in that moment they're leading me. The the people that quote unquote report to me on the org chart, they lead me all the time. And and so, you know, and and I think you know, leading uh across boundaries, and you know, we talked about me being a boundary span across the boundaries of the organization where I have no formal

authority. Uh, I can't, there's no there's no formal authority that I can lean on. Uh so you have to be able to lead independent of your title and your position, and just because you have a title and position doesn't mean you're a leader. That that's actually another one of the legacy principles, is that legacy leaders actually have influence without asserting their authority. Um I think it's a pretty weak place. If I have to if I have to rely on my formal authority to get you to do something, once again, I might I might stretch the rubber band and get some short-term compliance, but I'm not gonna get long-term commitment leaning on that. And uh it's not like people don't know that I have the title and the rank or the position, but I don't I really don't want to lean on that. I don't want that to be the reason why somebody's doing something that that I feel like we need to do. So yeah.

**SPEAKER\_00** 34:07

And that's not gonna be probably it's not gonna be sustainable long term. If you're if you're if it's because you are you're the supervisor, you're you are more superior to them on the org chart, that type of sustainability and level of accountability and for them to truly have any type of trust or respect with you is probably gonna be short-lived.

**SPEAKER\_01** 34:28

Yes, absolutely. But you know, back to what started this whole string, Mark, you were talking can can young people learn it? I think yes, they can. And and and one of the joys that I have is investing in younger people. You know, obviously as a professor, I I get I get a bunch of kids from 18 to 22, but then then in the graduate program, we get kids that are in their late 20s to early 40s. But even beyond just the classroom setting, I really it is life-giving to me to be involved with with younger people that are hungry to learn and and and I think you know that they're hungry for mentors. And and I now we've got to be careful because that that word can be a heavy word, and I tell students, don't go ask somebody to be your mentor, just go say, I'd like to ask you some questions about something I'm working on, and let the let the relationship evolve and emerge. But I think there young people are hungry for older people to invest in them. And and I think that older people, uh there's another guy that I've been I've been coaching now for almost 15 years, and the whole conversation started with, hey, I've been I've been praying about having an older man come into my life. And okay, well, I'm the older man that you're talking to. Um and that relationship started, and and my gosh, we've been together now, working together. We have a call every other week for 15 years. And but he he was hungry for a mentor, and then now he himself is a mentor to younger people. And I just think that's that's an important dynamic, is that we all need people that are a little further ahead of us on the road. We all need wingmen, people that are going through whatever, you know, it's kind of the same stage of life. But then, regardless of our age, I think we ought to all be investing, you know, reaching back and investing in in people that are kind of behind us on the road. And and all of that is is part of

our ongoing leadership development. So uh, but I think that uh I'm gonna say us older guys, Mark, you're not as old as I am, but I think we ought to be looking, we ought to be on the lookout for for young people that that really want to tap into our experience and and our wisdom. And once again, it's not all about us, but they're they're they're looking for somebody to be a sounding board, they're looking for somebody to give them guidance, and uh it is such a rewarding experience uh to to to invest yourself in and be involved in in in younger people's lives.

**SPEAKER\_00** 36:56

That's so true. Well, and that is you know, that like you said, there's a lot of people out there, whether they're in the academic environment in university or even younger than that, I think who are who are there's there's this leadership void that's out there and good good mentors, good role models in some cases is really is is really lacking. So any final thoughts you have on legacy leadership? Um any final words of wisdom you wanted to share, Jalen?

**SPEAKER\_01** 37:25

I think I think we've got to be intentionally intentional about it. It doesn't just happen. I think it's intentionally intentional. I think we have to understand it's a process, not an event. So the whole cultivate metaphor. And then here here's something that I think is very important, Mark, is that the real measure of what we do as leaders, and by the way, the most important leaders are parents, and the second most important set of leaders in our society are teachers, and then those of us that have formal titles and positions and organization, but the real measure of our effectiveness as a leader is change lives. You know, are people changed because they spent time with me? Are they changed because I was part of their life, changed for the better? And that's the real measure. And I think too often, particularly in a corporate environment, we get caught up on external metrics, you know, return on investment, quarterly. You know, I worked at a company and I called it the tyranny of the quarterly. We're so concerned about those metrics, and and and we and we lost sight of the human side of the business. And so so for me, I want to stay focused on that you know, the real measure of my effectiveness as a leader, as a as a husband, as a father, as a grandfather, as a coach, as a as a teacher, the real measure is change lives. That's that's the bottom line.

**SPEAKER\_00** 38:39

Yeah, that's huge. That's huge. Well, thank you so much for your time. I was gonna ask you a couple more questions to finish up because I know I know you're gonna have a couple of great, I'm sure you're gonna have some great insights here, but um so favorite books, if there were your top three books, what would your top three books be that you'd recommend to the other?

**SPEAKER\_01** 39:00

I mentioned one earlier, uh Radical Candor. Uh-huh. And uh, in fact, uh a friend of mine at Texas Wesleyan just sent me a text last week and said his son-in-law is in a leadership position. What would you recommend? Well, Radical Candor. Uh Henry Cloud's Boundaries for Leaders is huge. We get as leaders, we get what we expect and we get what we allow. And then uh the classic book uh by John Crotter called Leading Change. Those three I think are uh at the at the top of the list. And uh, you know, I mentioned that book on on asking better questions that I read at the end of last year. Uh another, and I'm I'm gonna I'm gonna have a post on LinkedIn here in a in a week or so about the best leadership books that I read last year. Another one is a book called 10 to 25. Um David Yeager. He's a social psychologist at the University of Texas. And 10 to 25 is an age range, 10 to 25. And he talks about how we need to think. Change our thinking about people that are that age. And he it's very similar to radical candor. He talks about wise feedback. And he talks about we have we have really high expectations. We have high standards for uh performance and what we expect. But we're gonna move in alongside you and we're gonna create a supportive environment to help you get there. We're gonna help you reach our high expectations and high standards. So it's an and and it's kind of like radical candor. It's care personally and challenge directly. Well, in his wise feedback, it's I have really high standards, but I'm gonna move in alongside you and help you reach my standards. A lot of people have high standards and just leave you to the wolves. A lot of people have a real caring and supportive environment, but they don't really hold you to high expectations. So I I heard him, and it's just so easy to listen to, and it's so practical. And if you if you if you found him on YouTube, you would see, and it's in his book, everything he says is applicable to us as parents, it's applicable to us as teachers, and it's applicable to us as leaders. And uh so it's that that idea of wise feedback in that book, 10 to 25. So um, so there's a short list. If y'all y'all get through those readings, then send me a note and I'll I'll give you some more.

**SPEAKER\_00** 41:17

No, that's great. Thank you. So how about uh are you uh do you listen to podcasts?

**SPEAKER\_01** 41:22

And if so, do you um a lot of podcasts, but but one that uh I I think this guy probably has more practical leadership wisdom and insight than anybody out there right now is a guy named Craig Rochelle. Okay, and uh and he also leads the the the Leadership Summit. And uh he's just uh he's just a phenomenal leader, he's a tremendous communicator. Um and and so uh but I I don't I don't spend a lot of time listening to podcasts, but uh anytime I hear Craig, he's got he's got really good insights on the leadership stuff.

**SPEAKER\_02** 42:00

Yeah.

**SPEAKER\_00** 42:01

And the last question for you is so what what feedback or advice would you give your 16-year-old self?

**SPEAKER\_01** 42:09

Uh my 16-year-old self. I think about 16 years old. Um I think I I would give myself the advice to do the hard thing. Uh I think too often I I didn't want to do the hard thing. Uh, you know, I didn't want to uh for instance, you know, growing up in Texas, I should speak Spanish. And uh I didn't want to do the hard thing of taking Spanish too and doing the work. And uh, you know, so I I think if I if I could have had the discipline to do the hard thing, uh back then it would have it would have paid off. But back then, you know, I don't I think it was maybe two um wanted to stay in my comfort zone too much and wanted wanted wanted to have fun rather than than you know pay pay the price for uh a future benefit in return. So that that's that's what I would say. And you know, I've got grandkids. Well, I've got two grandkids in their early 20s and two that are 14 and 15, and then two more that are 12 and 10. So, you know, I'm thinking about it. If I was to give them that advice, um I would give them that advice. I'm just still not sure they wouldn't. I'm I'm thinking they might be like me and they might not embrace it.

**SPEAKER\_00** 43:24

So uh that's so what about you, Mark?

**SPEAKER\_01** 43:27

What would you what would you tell your 16-year-old self?

**SPEAKER\_00** 43:30

Wow, my 16-year-old self is um no great question. It's a you know, I would probably say yeah, it's it's I've never asked, I've never had somebody turn the tables on me, so it's like this, but it's you know, I would I would really say to stop and smell the roses, stop and enjoy the small things in life. So um you if you didn't hear, we took a short break there, as you know, but then I I grew up in Canada and I grew up in a beautiful place, and so even the fall colors were phenomenal. So even the fall colors were great, and I don't think I even but of course as a 16-year-old, you don't think about the beauty of the reds, yellows, gold, rest colors when you're a kid at 16. It's like who cares? And so now, you know, if you live in Texas like we do, um, you know, you have to fly somewhere to go see the beautiful fall colors. So I it only lasts two or three days, yeah. And we I had that in my backyard kind of a thing. So I think that would be the big thing is stop and stop and enjoy the moment. I think we all get so busy and wrapped up. But um, yeah, so where can people so Jay Lee, this has been a great thank you again for your time and your shared

appreciate the opportunity. You're welcome. How can people find you? What's what's the best way to find you?

**SPEAKER\_01** 44:53

Well, you know, I'm on LinkedIn, so you can go out and find me on on LinkedIn, and uh, you know, then from LinkedIn you can connect with me. Uh, I'm I'm at the University of Dallas, and so you can you can find me on the University of Dallas webpage. Um, so I think that's probably the best way to connect with me. And uh and I would welcome anybody that that's interested in these things. I'd I'd love to talk, I'd love to talk about it. I mean you said it earlier, I could talk all afternoon, all evening on this. We do have some some some time constraints.

**SPEAKER\_00** 45:24

So I love your I love your passion and what you do. I love the passion you have, period. And I'd imagine you're a great grandfather, so it's uh or whatever your whatever all your grandkids call you, but I'm sure they oh they call me pops, yeah.

**SPEAKER\_01** 45:37

So I'm pops and Laura is Lolly, and and and that is what a blessing that is. We love being pops and lolly. So but all their friends call us pops and lolly too. I mean, so it's like the whole uh the whole world now knows us as Pops and Lolly.

**SPEAKER\_00** 45:51

So there you go. That's okay. Well, thank you again so much for your time and have a have a blessed uh have a blessed rest of the day, and we'll talk again soon.

**SPEAKER\_01** 46:01

Okay, thank you, Mark. Okay, bye.