



LEADERCAST

VOICES OF CHANGE 05.06.2011

SPEAKER Q&A: DAVE RAMSEY

Who has influenced you the most in your life? Why? Describe the relationship.

A lot of people have influenced my life. My parents instilled a strong work ethic in me and taught me what it meant to be an entrepreneur. But, I'm always reading and talking to experts so that I can continue to grow and learn. People like Zig Ziglar, John Maxwell, Jim Collins and others have influenced how I lead my company.

What has been a defining moment in your role as a leader?

There have been a lot of defining moments but the one that stands out is when I realized our business was officially bigger than me. It scared the crud out of me. I am a control freak extraordinaire so turning loose of tasks and responsibilities is not easy. When you turn loose of something the person you task with that area really has to breathe air the way you do. I mentored and grew my first three key leaders over several years with one-on-one instruction. But this hand-to-hand method of growing leaders was way too slow to grow our next layer of leaders. So we set out to teach a class that is our playbook on how to do business our way. We mentor and discuss with our leaders daily in a very intentional way. But the EntreLeadership class is the foundation and the starting point.

What are you most passionate about?

I have the heart of a teacher. Helping people get control of their money and leading a business that is focused on helping people is what I am most passionate about. If you help enough people you don't have to worry about money.

How did you get to where you are today? What advice would you give to other leaders who are working towards their goals?

Prayer, hard work and I never gave up. Set written goals. Keep working toward the goals, keep learning and just never give up. There's really no such thing as overnight success. The tortoise always beats the hare – slow and steady wins the race.

Define leadership.

Leadership according to Webster's is "someone who rules, guides and inspires others." At our EntreLeadership events I ask the audience to write down the one word that best describes the character of a great leader. They always list character qualities like: integrity, servant, humble, visionary, decisive, disciplined, passionate, loyal, listener, influential, driven and charismatic. Taken together this is a good definition of leadership. It's interesting to me that most of us can list out what we want our leader to look like, but we don't apply it to ourselves. You must intentionally become more of each of these every day to grow yourself and your business. And to the extent you're not doing that, you're failing as a leader.

What are some ways for Chick-fil-A Leadercast attendees to apply your talk to their professional life?

Immediately, start being a proactive leader – passive leader is an oxymoron. Start loving your team well, treating your team like you want to be treated.

There are articles for business leaders at daveramsey.com. My latest book, *EntreLeadership* will be out in the fall. It's a look at our playbook and shows you how to win in business and have a blast doing it.