



LEADERCAST

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SPEAKER Q&A: SETH GODIN

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

This is such an unfair question, because it's based on the 'great mentor' theory of leadership. I can't answer it that way, because if I mention my dad or Elly Markson or David Seuss or my mom or Susan Piver or Zig Ziglar or David at Dean & DeLuca or Jacqueline Novogratz or any of a hundred other heroes I've had the honor of working with, following and knowing over the years, I won't do the rest justice.

I think real impact comes from people who have willfully blended the lessons of a number of leaders, from people who want to honor those that came before them and those that want to support their tribe. Any time I do work I consider great, I see the fingerprints of those that came before me.

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

I remember firing my company's biggest client, a firm that accounted for more than half our revenue, because we didn't like who they were, how they did business and what they were turning us into. My ten employees were completely behind the decision, but it was hard—half the group would lose their jobs if we were wrong about our ability to grow as a result of this gutsy move. We replaced the lost revenue in a matter of weeks, and it allowed to us grow in a way were proud of.

What are you most passionate about?

My life's work is helping other people (that would be you) overcome the brainwashing, organizational regimentation and fear that is holding them back from doing great work, work that matters.

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

I think the most difficult thing about leading is drawing your own map. If you're not doing that, you're following. Ironically, then, don't ask me for advice. Go draw a map.

Define leadership.

It's not management. Management is getting other people to do what you say, fast, cheap and reliably. Leadership is giving other people a platform they can use to grow (and to surprise you).

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

I hope you'll buy a copy of Linchpin, of Pressfield's The War of Art, and of Hugh MacLeod's Ignore Everybody. And read them. Highlight them. And then don't go to bed until you've actually done something frightening as a result.