

# Leadership Insights

By Brad Lomenick

In conjunction with the release of the brand new book, ***H3 Leadership: Be Humble. Stay Hungry. Always Hustle.***

H3 Leadership is available where all books are sold. To order visit [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), and to check out more on the book along with special offers visit [H3Leadership.com](http://H3Leadership.com) or [bradlomenick.com](http://bradlomenick.com).

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## About Brad Lomenick

Brad Lomenick is a renowned speaker, sought-after leadership consultant, author and longtime president of Catalyst, largely credited with growing the organization into one of the largest and most recognized leadership brand and gathering that it is today. For over 10 years, Brad led the Catalyst Conference and garnered the reputation as a convener of America's most respected leaders including John Maxwell, Jim Collins, Malcolm Gladwell, Seth Godin, Mark Burnett, Tony Dungy, Marcus Buckingham and Rick Warren, among many others. In 2013, he published his first book, *The Catalyst Leader*, and his second book, *H3 Leadership: Be Humble. Stay Hungry. Always Hustle.*, released in September of 2015. A prolific content creator, for eight years Brad hosted the Catalyst Podcast, interviewing change makers from across the globe and attracting hundreds of thousands of listeners per month. Additionally, he frequently blogs about leadership, the next generation, creativity, innovation, social media, teamwork, personal growth, and more on his website. He has been featured in TIME, Washington Post, Fast Company, Business Insider, CNN.com, Religion News Service, and others. For more information, visit [bradlomenick.com](http://bradlomenick.com).

## **20 Points on Leading 20-somethings**

A good friend asked me the other day my thoughts on how to lead the 20 somethings on his staff. This is a question I'm asked quite often, whether about 20 somethings or more generally the millennial generation, primarily those born after 1982 and now firmly entrenched in the workforce. We gather thousands of leaders who fit this category on an annual basis at our Catalyst leadership events all over the country, and most of our Catalyst staff are under the age of 30.

I have to admit- *I don't always get this right.* As a 100% Gen X'er, my tendency is to lean away from several of these points, and lead how I've been led over the years by Boomer and Busters. But I'm working on it....

So with that said, here you go, a few **thoughts on leading millenials:**

1. **Give them freedom with their schedule.** I'll admit, this one is tough for me.
2. **Provide them projects, not a career.** Career is just not the same anymore. They desire options. Just like free agents.
3. **Create a family environment.** Work, family and social are all intertwined, so make sure the work environment is experiential and family oriented. Everything is connected.
4. **Cause is important.** Tie in compassion and justice to the "normal." Causes and opportunities to give back are important.
5. **Embrace social media.** it's here to stay.
6. **They are more tech savvy than any other generation ever.** Technology is the norm. XBOX, iPhones, laptops, iPads are just normal. If you want a response, text first, then call. Or DM first. Or send a Facebook message. Not anti calls though.
7. **Lead each person uniquely.** Don't create standards or rules that apply to everyone. Customize your approach. (I'll admit, this one is difficult too!)
8. **Make authenticity and honesty the standard for your corporate culture.** Millenials are cynical at their core, and don't trust someone just because they are in charge.

9. **Millenials are not as interested in “climbing the corporate ladder.”** But instead more concerned about making a difference and leaving their mark.
10. **Give them opportunities early with major responsibility.** They don't want to wait their turn. Want to make a difference now. And will find an outlet for influence and responsibility somewhere else if you don't give it to them. Empower them early and often.
11. **All about the larger win, not the personal small gain.** Young leaders in general have an abundance mentality instead of scarcity mentality.
12. **Partnering and collaboration are important.** Not interested in drawing lines. Collaboration is the new currency, along with generosity.
13. **Not about working for a personality.** Not interested in laboring long hours to build a temporal kingdom for one person. But will work their guts out for a cause and vision bigger than themselves.
14. **Deeply desire mentoring, learning and discipleship.** Many older leaders think millenials aren't interested in generational wisdom transfer. Not true at all. Younger leaders are hungry for mentoring and discipleship, so build it into your organizational environment.
15. **Coach them and encourage them.** They want to gain wisdom through experience. Come alongside them don't just tell them what to do.
16. **Create opportunities for quality time-** individually and corporately. They want to be led by example, and not just by words.
17. **Hold them accountable.** They want to be held accountable by those who are living it out. Measure them and give them constant feedback.
18. **They've been exposed to just about everything, so the sky is the limit in their minds.** Older leaders have to understand younger leaders have a much broader and global perspective, which makes wowing Millenials much more difficult.
19. **Recognize their values, not just their strengths.** It ain't just about the skillz baby. Don't use them without truly knowing them.

20. **Provide a system that creates stability.** Clear expectations with the freedom to succeed, and providing stability on the emotional, financial, and organizational side.

### **15 Ways to NOT Lead Well**

It's ultimately up to you to lead well. It's your responsibility to be the best leader you can be.

***We see lists all the time of what makes a great leader, but what are some of the other sides of the equation, in terms of not leading well?***

How is your leadership dysfunctional? What stands out as areas to improve?

Here are a few key indicators of the kind of leadership and ultimately a leader that needs to reimagine, re-engage, and recommit. Look for these, and if they exist, be committed to change.

So here you go, **examples of NOT LEADING well** and consistent killers of momentum for leaders, their teams and organizations:

1. **Pointing fingers and blaming others.** Blame is getting passed around like a bad virus. Trust is gone. Everyone is cordial but behind closed doors there is deep distrust, driven by fear and insecurity.

2. **A focus on the wrong priorities.** Not willing to confront the key areas, and a constant default to Sideways Energy. More energy in scheduling lunches than in bringing in new revenue. Spend more time on updating the employee handbook vs getting on the phone and finding new customers. More time on updating headshots on the website than working on the strategic plan for next year.

3. **Bad decision making.** Making decisions based on whoever pays you the most, whoever screams the loudest, and whoever requires the least amount of effort and pain. Everything starts to become about the lowest common denominator and the lowest barrier to entry.

4. **Passing along the decision stick.** Counting on someone else to make a decision, other than yourself. Putting things off so that someone else will have to fix them later. Kicking the can down the road as Maxwell says.

5. **Allowing bureaucracy to be an excuse for getting nothing done.** Here comes the "they" mentality. It becomes about "them" and "us."

6. **Personal entitlement has taken over.** Putting your own personal goals ahead of the team, or the greater cause at play. In this case, the good of the organization takes a backseat to you keeping your office or role or title. Your default is "how will this affect me" instead of "how will this affect the organization."

7. **Arguing constantly,** vs listening and looking to create collaboration and areas of common ground.

8. **No one values each other and silos now exist everywhere.** Staff meetings and leadership team meetings start getting cancelled on a regular basis. Lack of communication between key people and teams becomes normal. Cliques and gossip become rampant in the void of communication and trust.

9. **Lack of empowerment.** No one feels able to do anything about the situation.

10. Same old same ole. **The work and environment is mundane.** It's boring. Energy is non-existent.

11. **There is no accountability.** People on your team just feel like they can do whatever they want, whenever they want. Everything is last minute and late. Nothing goes out on time, or gets scheduled on time. No one knows where everyone is and can't find anyone. This will drive your best team members crazy.

12. **Not willing to confront the brutal facts.** Loss of reality and not willing to confront what is really going on. The leader is living in hopa, hopa land and suffering from Reality Deprivation. A lack of self-awareness is prevalent here as well.

13. **Vision is gone.** Lots of hype but very little true and authentic hope in the future. Lots of promises made but very few promises kept. The painting of a preferred future has turned into a hype machine that everyone sees through.

14. **The buck stops here doesn't exist.** No one is ultimately responsible. The responsibility tree has been chopped and split up so many times you can't really figure out who is driving what and who has responsibility for what.

15. **Safe, secure and stable starts to drive the future** instead of innovation, creativity, risk taking and courage. Holding on and control is the posture instead of giving, catch and release, generosity and big picture thinking.

"Don't rock the boat" is the inspiration, which quickly becomes uninspiring.

## **Gaining Credibility as a Young Leader**

Are you a **young leader looking to gain credibility**? What to do?

I talk to leaders all the time, especially those in their 20's, who are seeking the quick credibility answer. How do I get credibility now and not have to wait until I am in my mid 30's or early 40's before people will respect and respond to me?

Well, great question.

I have a theory. The Credibility theory.

Starts with an equation, since I was a math minor in college..... Ultimately, credibility is this:

**C = T x (E + E). Credibility = Time (multiplied) by Experience + Expertise**

Whether a young leader, or a seasoned leader, this Credibility theory can work for you.

**So here are some thoughts on how to best gain credibility now:**

1. **Listen. Listen. Listen.** Simple enough. Ask great questions of those around you, and then LISTEN to the answer. Don't talk until you have something to say. Learn to ask great questions and learn from them.
2. **Write it down.** Record it. Put it in a moleskine or evernote or on your iPhone. But be just short of annoying on capturing things you hear and watch and are part of. You'll find that writing something down automatically makes it a priority.
3. **Find those who are smarter than you, and latch on.** Learn from them. Ask questions. Be a learner. Connect with leading organizations, networks and individuals- connect with companies, teams or individuals who are highly respected, and you'll gain respect.
4. **Become an expert NOW, even before you need to be.** Set a standard of excellence way before you're the leader in charge who is expected to. That way when it's your turn to come off the bench you are ready. When you are asked for your opinion or involvement, give it or do it.
5. **Self awareness and self identity.** Be self aware. Know who you are and where you are in life. You are young- deal with it. Don't think you know more than you really do, or have more experience than you really do. Maintain a very clear and realistic picture of your self identity and current

reality.

6. **Demonstrate your ability to collaborate and be a team player.** Reality is, most of us work in a team environment, so you have to show your ability to get along with others in making things happen. The Lone Ranger and Han Solo aren't ideal.

7. **Stay focused, but broad.** Those who have the most credibility no longer are just experts in one area. You need to be a generalist, but have the ability to dive deep in a certain expertise area.

8. **Learn how to follow.** And follow really well. It will position you for authority later.

9. **Deliver. Faithful with little, faithful with much.** No matter what the task or assignment, whether how important or how minuscule, GET it DONE. Work really hard. Be a hustler. Accomplish getting coffee or making copies or working on spreadsheets or filing papers like it's the most important assignment ever. Demonstrate in the small and unimportant tasks the characteristics you will still have with the large and important tasks. Do what you said you would do. Follow through. Credibility is built over time because of hundreds and hundreds of small assignments done well.

10. **Lead with humility.** Be known as the team member who will always get it done and is completely trustworthy. Show up early. Leave your ego at the door. Do your work with excellence. Volunteer for the tough assignments that no one else wants. Be the Hungry 2nd, not the Arrogant 1st. Act like you don't belong. No one enjoys being around someone who thinks they deserve way more credibility than they really do. Stay humble and motivated, with an attitude and posture like you really don't belong in the conversation.

11. **Be patient and let your Experience create your Expertise.** Credibility comes with action- doing, not just thinking or talking. Jump in and get involved. Do something. A little dirt on your hands and sweat on your brow goes a long ways. A platform takes time- it's just a reality. Most of us aren't patient enough to spend adequate TIME at DOING something until we gain a platform or credibility. We usually lose interest, get bored, or just simply move on to something else. The key- stick with it. Gladwell says it takes at least 10,000 hours.

## **5 Points on Decision Making as Leaders**

Leaders are decision makers. Period. Whatever the time of year and season of life, lots of decisions are probably on your desk or in your to do list waiting to be pushed forward. It's something we must do. Constantly. So here a few thoughts on making decisions:

1. **Understand that it's part of your job.** Making decisions as a leader is normal and ordinary and required. It's why you are a leader. Embrace it.
2. **Sleep on the big ones.** For big decisions, always sleep on them. The extra time will allow your decision to be made without the spontaneous emotion that comes with a spontaneous response.
3. **Know your values.** As Roy Disney stated, "It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are." Many times indecision occurs because of lack of clarity on vision and values. Values are foundational and must be in place in order to move the organization forward.
4. **Understand the context.** Do your homework and make sure you are informed. Plus be aware of the situation- in the case of a good/bad decision, those are pretty easy. In the case of a better/best decision, those take a bit more time to push forward and get to a final decision. Different decisions require different levels of involvement, awareness, and information.
5. **Just do it.** Create a culture of action in your organization. Many leaders quickly become overwhelmed with several decisions in front of them and then unintentionally paralyze the organization by avoiding them all. Create a system of action that demands completion and execution, and ultimately your system/culture will demand decisions from you.

## **10 Good Leadership Questions to ask yourself**

1. **What's it like to be on the other side of me?** Are others around me flourishing?
2. **How can I improve?**
3. **Who currently has permission to call me out** and say the hard things to me that I need to hear?
4. **How do I respond in moments of crisis?** Do I chew people out when something is not done right?

5. Am I truly self aware? **Where/what are my blind spots in my leadership?**

Am I a secure confident leader?

6. **Do I talk more than I listen?**

7. **What do I need to learn from my most recent failures?**

8. **How do I lead people way different than me?**

9. **Am I comfortable surrounding myself with people who are better at their jobs than I am?**

10. **Who else should I be learning from?** Who is currently coaching or mentoring me?

BONUS: Who am I grooming/coaching to replace me in my current role?

### **12 Keys for attracting young leaders to your team**

Let's face it- young leaders are the future of your organization. Whether you like it or not, they will soon take over and be running the show. Your show. My show. If you aren't attracting young talent, then the days are numbered for your influence and the legacy of your organization.

So why are there certain organizations and certain leaders who always seem to attract younger leaders to their team? Whether a pastor, entrepreneur, CEO or non-profit Executive Director, there are certain leaders, certain teams and certain organizations that EVERY young and ambitious leader wants to be a part of.

What is it about THIS leader and the organization they lead that attracts young leaders? Such a draw that young guns are willing to jump on board with them and storm the castle. Regardless of pay, structure, environment, city, setting, or future opportunities, young leaders want to be around these types of leaders and be a part of what they are doing.

You want young leaders on your team? Here are a few KEYS I think young leaders are drawn to:

1. **Humility, combined with incredible passion and skill.** Realizing it's not about you. Jim Collins writes about this as the key characteristic of a level 5 leader.

2. **Unwavering commitment to reaching their desired audience and accomplishing the mission.** Know the hill they are climbing and willing to fight to get to the top.

3. **The IT factor**- hard to explain, but easy to spot. Young leaders can sense it and want to be tied to leaders with IT.
4. **Collaboration and not competition.** A leader who celebrates others' victories along with their own.
5. **Willing to give over responsibility and authority, vs. a "wait your turn" mentality.** This kind of perspective and organizational culture will allow young leaders to lead - given they are qualified and can handle it.
6. **Authenticity.** They keep it real. Young leaders clamor towards authentic and honest leaders.
7. **Open to change.** This is a big deal. If you as a leader are not open to change, no one worth their salt will probably be willing to follow you, especially younger leaders. (thanks to [Shinabarger](#) on this one)
8. **Can have at least a little fun.** Like attracts like. It's a reality= regardless of age, demographic, and style. The next generation wants a family environment that is fun and experiential.
9. **Confident risk taking.** Passionately create a culture that takes risks, allows for failure, and thinks outside the box.
10. **BIG vision.** Young leaders want to change the world, and want to follow leaders who think BIG and dream big.
11. **Hustle and Hungry.** The next generation expects you to be beside them in the trenches, not in the corner office sipping on Spritzers. Hustle and hungry, not arrogant and entitled. Besides your team, not out in front of them.
12. **BEST at what they do.** Regardless of industry or profession or organization, young leaders want to be part of a culture and organization built on excellence with a desire to be great. This is why Google and Facebook and Apple have hundreds of thousands of college graduates clamoring for a chance to be on the team.

*What else would you add to the list of those leaders who are drawing young leaders to be part of their teams?*

### **Authentic Leadership**

Here are 13 points on the importance and practice of being **Authentic as a Leader**. You might consider these "Authenticity Rules." And in today's leadership culture, it's true that "Authenticity does actually rule."

Some best practices I've found helpful:

- 1. Be real in all mediums.** Digital age makes it easy to be inauthentic. Although we are always "on," ultimately we can create a fake persona behind a profile on Facebook or a twitter account. It's easy to live a secondary life and feel like we are someone we aren't. Have to be authentic across the board.
- 2. Constantly turn the rocks over in your life and in your leadership.** Uncover the areas that need to be made clean. Big things are at stake. It's exhausting to not be the real you. It's easier and less work to be who you really are.
- 3. The more successful you become, the less accessible you are.** It's reality. More people clamor for time with you, but it's not possible to be available to everyone. Be wise and discerning, but also open to helping where you can. As Andy Stanley says "do for one what you wish you could do for many."
- 4. Learn to open up.** You can impress people more easily from a distance, so many leaders keep others at arms length. For example, we often prefer digital interaction to life-on-life exchanges. This insulates us and prevents others from uncovering our weaknesses and flaws. But it also reduces our ability to influence others.
- 5. Ask great questions.** Great leaders I know solve problems and create solutions through the questions they ask. Questions many times reflect your values, and give value and dignity to the person you're asking the question of.
- 6. Invite direct reports to do a 360 degree review of you on a regular basis.** It's uncomfortable, but also helpful. As Rick Warren has said, "You can't love people and influence them unless you are close to them. Up close means you can see my warts."
- 7. Accept a better standard.** The goal of every Christian is to become more like Christ, but often our standard becomes some "great" leader who we admire. When we exalt fellow influencers, we try to dress like them, talk like them, pray like them, tell jokes like them, and achieve like them, it's dangerous. By emulating them we hope to someday become like them. This never works, and a painful side effect is that deep down we end up feeling like a cheap knock-off.
- 8. Be interested over interesting.** Start with leaning into others and caring

about them vs. only worrying about yourself.

**9. Be accountable to those who know you best.** Know your blind spots in your leadership. We all have areas of weakness. Know what they are and give your team, your family and your friends permission to call you on them. Are you comfortable enough in your leadership that those around you have the freedom to tell you the truth without repercussions?

**10. Make more of those around you, and less about yourself.** Make others the center of the story. Authentic leaders are servant leaders, and willing to be less in order for others to be more. Authentic leaders seek to serve and understand the power of putting others first. And great leaders attract great people to their team. Like attracts like.

**11. Actively build a Support Network.** Beware of CEO disease, the temptation to surround yourself with people who only tell you what you want to hear. Keep honest people in your life so that you can stay grounded in the reality of your experiences. Don't ever think you've arrived. Don't take yourself so seriously. You're not a big deal. Seriously. I don't care who you are. Humility is way more attractive than arrogance.

**12. Give others permission.** Allow your team, your friends, your family and your community to continually have permission for pushing more towards the true you. Asking questions, pushing for clarity, pushing back, disagreeing, confronting, bringing new and different ideas to the table, and ultimately the ability and the freedom to push and pull.

**13. Give yourself permission to be who you are.** Authenticity requires true honesty, self awareness and a selfless approach to leading. One of the challenges in organizations today is actually creating space for leaders to admit and share their challenges. We need to create community where you can talk about the things you are dealing with without getting arrows in the back. Be willing to share your struggles. Create and find environments where we can deal with things and be honest and real.

### **Feeling Stuck? Here are 8 Ways to Push Through**

Sometimes we just feel stuck. Not that anything is really wrong, but more the sense that we're not going anywhere. That place where you sense that things are okay, but not great. Where it seems like you are just going through the motions. Dependable and reliable, yes. Consistent, absolutely.

But not necessarily bringing your A-game.

I know the feeling. For me, this usually happens after an event is over, or completing a big project. About 10 days-two weeks later. I usually just feel stuck at that point. I have a hard time being creative, being intentional, getting things done, moving the ball forward, and making decisions. I feel like I'm walking in knee deep mud at these points.

Another time of the year many of us feel stuck is mid to late summer, right about now. You feeling it right now?

If so, here are a few things to do:

**1. Get out of your "normal" routine.** Break up your schedule. Go on a trip. Visit someone you've wanted to see for quite a while. Hang out with people you don't know but want to learn from. The key on this is break up your "normal" with something that is out of place, out of context, or just simply breaks up the rhythm. Makes you see things from a different vantage point. For me, when I travel, it usually "unsticks" me.

**2. Go back to the Basics.** Sports teams will go back to the basics to get out of a rut. In football it's back to "blocking and tackling" or in basketball it's back to "passing, dribbling, and shooting." For you, this could mean a number of things, but in essence, returning to the foundations of what you do, why you do it, and how you are uniquely designed to be doing what you are doing.

**3. Jump on the Inspiration train.** When I get stuck, I usually take time to find some stories of inspiration, read some emails, watch some videos, and allow myself to be re-inspired and re-energized.

**4. Talk with someone who motivates you.** I also like to make sure I find some time to spend on the phone or in person with people who inspire me, because they usually can pull me out of my funk that I'm in. Make sure you have some people in your life who are motivators and inspiration icons-when you are around them it just fires you up. Could be a friend, a boss, a mentor, or someone you don't know well. For me, I'll call Bob Goff. If you know Bob, you know what I mean!

**5. Keep it simple stupid.** Kiss. Figuratively, not literally...! Start a new to do list with no more than 5 things on it. Get those done. Then move on to the next 5 things to do. Don't overwhelm yourself with a to do list that is unachievable and not reachable. Focus on simplicity and clarity.

**6. Hang around kids.** Whether your own kids or someone else's. Children

have a way of providing inspiration because of their imagination, childlike faith, and sense of amazement at everything.

**7. Return to the core.** What do you love to do? What brings you to life? Maybe it's reading a good book, or taking a drive in the country, or playing golf, or playing guitar or singing. Reconnecting to our areas of strength and passion usually reignites the momentum.

**8. Exercise.** Take a run, go swimming, work out, climb a mountain, jump on a bike, water ski, play basketball, or whatever activity fits you.