

Big Results from Simple Actions

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The following is a list of ten qualities that make leaders worth joining and make participants valuable to leaders. These ten simple actions are what leaders and participants do who create vibrant, sustainable, productive environments in which excellence is the norm. The list also speaks to what parents hope their children will learn, and what children hope their parents already practice. In addition, the list speaks to how friendship is honored, and how marital partners express respect for one's self and the other.

The driving force of these qualities comes out of what psychology calls an internal locus of control, and the rest of us call being responsible because it feels good and it's good to do. Simply put, the action-oriented qualities listed below show that a person brings ability, effort, and excellence to what they do.

The list:

If you open it—close it.

If you unlock it—lock it back.

If you drop it—pick it up.

If you borrow it—return it.

If you use it—take care of it.

If you break it—fix it.

If you can't fix it—call someone who can.

If you mess it up—clean it up.

If you give your word—keep it.

If it is your responsibility—own it.

And since no list covers everything, I add number 11: If it encourages someone—say it.

To summarize, I end where I started. The actions listed above are what make leaders worth joining, and make participants valuable to leaders. The actions speak to what parents hope their children will learn, and what children hope their parents already practice, so they can learn. In addition, the actions speak to how friendship is honored, and how marital partners express respect for one's self and the other. People who live the list, imperfectly of course, aren't watching what others are doing. They are paying attention to what they are doing because it feels good and it's good to do. These people like having ability, applying effort, and enjoying excellence.

