Mike Graham
My Leadership Lessons

1) As Reinhold Niebuhr said, Nothing truly worth doing can be accomplished within the course of our own lifetimes; the Graham Theorem to the Niebuhr Axiom is, the more I am busy about things whose outcomes I will never truly see, the better I am spending my time.

2) It’s critical to hire people who are very good at doing the jobs you’re hiring them to do. It’s more critical still to hire people who do not only buy into the mission, they embody it. After hiring them, develop them both individually and as a group. And make sure they do likewise within their own parts of the organization.

3) The “what” is always important. The “how” is even more important. Therefore (to paraphrase St. Francis), preach the Gospel always and, if you’re doing it right, you won’t need words.

4) All you have ever done, ever learned, ever experienced and more prepares you for the moment in which you now find yourself. Trust that.

5) It’s not about you. Ever. So get over yourself.
Re: Ten Leadership Lessons
From: Gary Massa

My professional career includes 17 years in the business world and 22 years in higher education. I’ve had mentors for whom I have tremendous respect and admiration and others not so much. As I teach my kids “we learn how to be and how not to be from those around us”. The following represents a summary of the best leadership lessons I’ve learned from my experience:

- **Make Very Clear the Mission**
  There should be no question of our purpose. Decisions are made based on priorities that support the Mission. (See Mission Statement)

- **Create a Culture of Servant Leadership**
  - Servant leaders are unselfish, honest and help create a culture of “Men and Women For Others”, toward a mission bigger than the individual.
  - Servant leaders demonstrate the faith through actions and “Live and preach the Gospel at all times, when necessary use words”. *St. Francis of Assisi*
  - Servant leaders recognize, “It’s amazing what can be accomplished when no one cares who gets the credit.” As attributed to *Ronald Reagan*.
  - Servant leaders intentionally define values and ways of proceeding including how we respect and treat each other. (see Code of Respectful Conduct)

- **Surround Yourself with Great People**
  Nothing is more important than hiring good people. Competency is just the prerequisite. Spend the time up front to find talent who exhibit the following:
  - A passion for the Mission
  - Track record of achievement
  - Personal pride
  - Proactive problem solvers
  - Team players

- **Golden Rule with a Twist**
  Yes, treat others the way you would like to be treated, however, make sure you understand how others want to be treated. i.e. I’m someone who very much appreciates flexibility and freedom to do my job and respects how my superior manages me in that manner. Others may want or crave more direction and feedback and so a leader needs to listen and manage that accordingly.

- **Be Optimistic and Hopeful**
  I place a high value on positive attitudes. Negativity is a terrible drain on most people and is always non-productive. The need to be realistic and handling difficult situations happens but doing it with hope is ultimately better for all involved.
- **Be Confident (not arrogant) and Check Your Ego at the Door**
  A critical aspect of leadership is to have the confidence to take responsibility when things go wrong (and they will go wrong). “Having your teams’ back” is always important. Anyone can be effective when things are good. True character shows when things aren’t going so well. Leading with Integrity, calmness, and consistency especially during difficult times is key. Deflecting credit from yourself to your team and making sure those who deserve acknowledgement are recognized is critical as well. Celebrate the wins and accept the losses and move on.

- **Insist on Work/Life Balance**
  I’m convinced that the culture of flexibility we have provided our Division relative to keeping family a priority and encouraging vacations and time away has helped us achieve stability, lower turnover, and a high level of productivity. Our staff has shown gratitude and appreciation for this culture.

- **Inclusive Bottom-up Planning**
  Accountability is critical in any accomplishment. What gets measured gets done and therefore planning is very important to make sure everyone understands what is expected. Planning, forecasting, and goal setting should not be top down but bottom-up. Everyone should take part in his/her plan so they buy-in to what they are expected to achieve. As important is being intentional about the role everyone in the Division plays in whatever it is that we hope to accomplish. I love the story of John F. Kennedy while on a tour of NASA asked a janitor what he did at NASA. The janitor responded, “I helped send a man to the moon.” In other words, everyone in your organization should feel like they play an important role.

- **Be Authentic – Don’t Take Yourself Too Seriously**
  Your staff will appreciate a leader who is honest and comfortable in his/her own skin. Don’t try to be someone you’re not. Be real, be yourself and have fun.

- **Make Sure They Take the Monkey With Them**
  A mentor once used an example of someone coming into his office with a monkey on his shoulder (which represents a problem). He said it’s important that you not let them leave without taking the monkey with them. In other words, don’t let them make their problems be your problems. His very good lesson was that as a leader, you shouldn’t feel like you have to know everything or think you have to solve all problems. Sure, open your door to discuss problems but encourage conversations about solution options as well.

Favorite references on Leadership:

**The Leadership Moment** – Michael Useem

**Reagan on Leadership** – James Strock

**Winning Every Day** – Lou Holtz

**Lessons in Leadership** – Robert J. Kohlhepp
University Relations Mission

To connect and engage alumni, parents and friends in the spirit of Jesuit Catholic higher education to build and grow the University campus, identity and academic programs.

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<th>Raising Funds</th>
<th>Engaging and connecting alumni and friends</th>
<th>Recruiting students</th>
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Vision

To be recognized as the National Model of Excellence for University Relations among Jesuit institutions.

Values

Make a Difference
We work passionately to fulfill our mission as men and women for others.

Attitude and Positive Focus
We focus on success and in creating a better future by envisioning options and owning results. We recognize and celebrate excellence.

Go Beyond
We are proactive and take personal responsibility in all we do. We take thoughtful risks, support and encourage all to go the extra mile, and create mutual accountability.

Integrity and Pride
We believe in our purpose, ourselves and each other. We applaud and support effort, make corrections as necessary, and continually strive for even better outcomes.

Servant Leadership
Our primary responsibility is to serve others. We work together so as not to let others fail. We believe in the All For One.

DID YOU KNOW?
Magis is Latin for “more.” Ignatius Loyola and the Jesuits define Magis as continuous quality improvement for the greater glory of God.
As a member of Xavier University's division of university relations, I want to work in an environment where I feel respected, challenged and appreciated. Everyone who works in university relations has a responsibility to contribute to the creation of a professional, safe, supportive, comfortable work environment based on honesty, integrity and respect. Such an environment will result in a positive experience personally as well as professionally.

I WILL HELP CREATE THIS ENVIRONMENT BY:

• Daily and deliberately striving for excellence in my job performance.

• Communicating problems and concerns to my supervisor, without fear of retribution, with a goal of resolving them and making our division better. If satisfactory action is not achieved, I will take my concerns to the next person in the chain of command.

• Refraining from harassment or discrimination of any kind, including such action based on gender, race, color, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or marital status.

• Making a conscious effort to support the work of my colleagues.

The division vice president and direct reports recognize their responsibility to provide support and set the example to make the spirit of this code a reality.
Aaron Meis
Points of Leadership
Xavier University
September 9, 2020

1. Happy employees make happy customers. Help your employees find joy in their work; help
them find something they are passionate about/enjoy doing/a career path in the work they do.

2. Hiring is the most important thing we do. As a leader you should spend a lot of time on hiring
and/or be involved in every hire in your organization. If you can’t be involved in every hire, you
should set clear standards and expectations for hiring and be involved in setting the tone.
Hire people with the right attitude and work ethic. Don’t worry about talent.

3. There is no room for drama. Just deal with each other in a straightforward manner. We can be
respectful of one another and be collegial and at the same time have healthy conflicts.

4. Be attentive to results. You can hold people accountable and not create an environment of fear
or embarrassment. Set the tone up front that we will ‘look at the numbers’ and be clear that
the culture is not one of blaming, but of asking questions to get to the best solution.

5. Provide people with hope. Set the tone for optimism. Celebrating victories is a good way to do
this in a regular basis.

6. Operate with Courage and Discretion. Don’t be afraid to lead people. You are always going to
disappoint someone when you make a decision, but in the end people are yearning for
leadership – they want to be led.

7. Leadership is teaching. As leaders we should be asking questions and listening more than
speaking, providing guidance and direction to help teammates solve problems. Discussing the
big picture – explaining ‘why’ in addition to ‘what’.