

Take initiative



"HOW CAN YOU SAY I DON'T SHOW ANY INITIATIVE WHEN EVERYDAY I'M THE FIRST ONE TO LEAVE FOR LUNCH?"

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Nothing happens until something moves. Einstein

My favorite word in the English language is *initiate* and its noun form, *initiative*.

Life favors those who take initiative.

Most people live passive lives; others are aggressive. Aggressive is better.

This may be the single most critical difference between leaders and followers. Leaders initiate; they are proactive. They have an agenda. I've even noticed that good leaders walk fast, literally; they know their destination and want to get there quickly.

Kirkpatrick and Locke agree: "Effective leaders are proactive. They make choices and take action that leads to change instead of just reacting to events or waiting for things to happen; that is, they show a high level of initiative. Instead of sitting idly by or waiting for fate to smile upon them, leaders need to challenge the process."

When teaching the Lead Well workshop, I ask delegates to consider the difference between a thermometer and a thermostat. A thermometer merely *reflects* the temperature of a room; a thermostat

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Think with me

has the ability to *change* the temperature. Leaders are like thermostats; they visualize a better future and take the initiative to make necessary changes.

Often, initiative must be paired with courage because you will inevitably pursue things that you have never done before, and that can be intimidating. Also, when other people follow your initiatives, you'll sense a responsibility toward their effort and well-being, and that also takes courage.

Initiative requires a [bias-to-action](#) and a frustration with passivity. It likes movement.

Don't always sit in the passenger seat. Be the driver.

"I would not sit waiting for some vague tomorrow, nor for something to happen. One could wait a lifetime, and find nothing at the end of the waiting. I would begin here, I would make something happen." Louis L'Amour, *Sackett's Land Summary*

The year 2019 lies before us like a blank sheet of paper. Write out some goals and objectives for the next 12 months. Don't succumb to doing the same-old-same-old. Start small and go slow, but do start and keep moving.