

He Gave Them
a Vision of
Something Larger
than Themselves



Jesus walked up to the fishermen and said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."⁶⁴ They dropped their nets and followed him. He met a woman at a well and said, "Follow me, and you will never be thirsty again."⁶⁵ She dropped her bucket and ran to get all of her friends.

History repeatedly has shown that people hunger for something larger than themselves. Leaders who offer that will have no shortage of followers. In fact, *higher purpose* is such a vital ingredient to the human psyche that a Scripture says "Where there is no vision, the people perish."⁶⁶

Studies show that people will work harder and longer

on projects when they understand the overall significance of their individual contribution. The study most often quoted is that of airplane workers who were divided into two groups. Members of one group simply did what they were told to do, while the other group's members were taken to the engineering lab and shown how their particular pieces were part of a magnificent jet that would fly higher and faster than any jet had ever flown before. Without any additional incentive, the second group's productivity soared. They knew how important their contribution was to a larger plan.

Today stores and companies print their mission statements on their literature to inform the public about why they exist. A flyer by a local jeweler reads: "My mission is to create magnificent jeweled pieces that bring beauty to the soul." She feels a higher calling with her work.

Everyone has heard or read about the superhuman strength that possesses a person who suddenly needs to lift a truck off a fallen buddy or leap into flames to save a child. These events may seem extraordinary and dramatic, but they demonstrate an important fact. When we are called on to do something beyond the thought of our own survival, special energy comes to our aid. A leader can tap into this special energy by showing staffers the long-lasting significance of what they are doing.

Jesus clearly and consistently conveyed to his staff the significance of what they were doing. He spoke long

and often about the calling, and they could feel and see the long-lasting benefits of their work with him. They were changing people's lives for the good. They were working for something beyond themselves.

Leaders, both humane and inhumane, have been able to tap into this special human need. History is full of stories of people who gave their lives for a cause that was noble and holy in their eyes. Perhaps it is because deep down, we know that we are made of stardust, not just dust, and are willing to give up what we have on earth in order to approach the heavens from whence we came.

Jesus gave them a vision of something larger than themselves.

Question

What would your employees answer if asked, "What is your job?" And more important: "Why is your job significant?"

Question

Do you clearly communicate to your staff the higher purpose for their activities?