The Most Powerful Leadership Question

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Nothing can animate the future quite like a question. For leaders, living in questions instead of giving answers or having something to say is a powerful place to be.

Questions makes us learners, open ourselves and those we’re leading to possibilities and creates a safer, more level playing field between you and your team.

Before we can hope to possibly lead anybody else, we first have to lead ourselves. We self-lead to shift our focus from *what about me* to a perspective that is outwardly focused on serving and leading others with character and intention.

The most powerful self-leadership question you can ask yourself is:

WHAT IS LIFE LIKE FOR THOSE I’M LEADING?

LIFE – We tend to compartmentalize life into work, family, faith and any number of other sub-divisions that might classify as having a *life* of their own. When we think of leadership we tend to only think of that part of *life* where we’re associated with the person.

However, the *life* you impact is inclusive of all aspects of life, not just the eight to ten hours you’re together. The life in this question is spiritual, emotional, family, work, physical and any other part of their human experience.

You may not be able to impact each of these areas, but considering them all when you ask the question gives you a view of the entire person you’re leading.

LIKE – One dictionary definition of this work is: similar, comparable to, resembling. Using these words, the question could read: what does life resemble or is similar to for those you lead?

What’s the experience they are having? Is it *like* a nightmare? Is it *like* a trip to the dentist? Is it *like* something they could live without?

We forget sometimes that work is more than just fulfillment of duties but part of a person’s human experience.

THOSE I’M LEADING – The answer may seem very obvious. You are a director or manager and the org chart says that a certain six people work for you. However, since leadership is about influence and not an organization chart, your leadership extends to anyone who you have influence on, whether they are a direct report or not.

On certain projects you’re influencing your boss, your peers, vendors, the team on the factory floor and your clients.

All of this isn’t even to mention your leadership (i.e. influence) of your spouse and kids.

What is life like for those I’m leading? Ask it every day, do something about it, and watch your future be powerfully animated.

Jeff Harmon is president of [Brilliance Within Coaching & Consulting](http://www.brilliancewithincoaching.com/) which specializes in developing servant leaders. Jeff is the author of [“The Anatomy of a Principled Leader: A Field Guide to Being the Type of Leader Everyone Dreams of Working for.”](http://www.amazon.com/Anatomy-Principled-Leader-Everyone-Working/dp/1938886100/ref%3Dsr_1_fkmr0_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1419630007&sr=8-1-fkmr0&keywords=%E2%80%9CThe+Anatomy+of+a+Principled+Leader%3A+A+Field+Guide+to+Being+the+Type+of+Leader+Everyone+Dreams+of+Working+for.%E2%80%9D) Jeff has been developing leaders for nearly 20 years and has led the execution of over 100,000 hours of business strategy.

<http://leadingwithquestions.com/leadership/the-most-powerful-leadership-question/?utm_source=Feedburner+import&utm_campaign=e2a1941f61-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8f94eda8f8-e2a1941f61-73193325#sthash.R6Kac8l4.dpuf>