

PAYING IT FORWARD

Leading With Purpose

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After 40 years in the fire service, Chief Randy Bruegman founded The Leadership Crucible Foundation to reshape future leadership with a focus on fostering courage, empathy, and humility in leadership positions.



Finding Your Purpose

Your GPS of Life

When you get in your car and are heading to a specific destination, and you don't know the way what do you do? You tell your GPS to drive you to that location. The GPS finds your current location and once it's determined where you are, it gives you directions to where you are heading. For the system to work, it simply needs to know your beginning location and your end destination.

The navigation system figures out the rest by the use of an onboard computer that receives signals from multiple satellites and calculates your exact position. Then it plots a course for you, it is up to you to follow it. You may have seen the commercial where the guy is driving to a wedding disregards his GPS which is telling him to go one way, but he chooses to ignore it as he thinks he knows a shorter route, only to get lost and miss the entire event. Life can be that way as well. Your inner GPS is telling us one thing, and you choose to ignore it and we find yourself in a job, a relationship, a career, which is out of alignment from what you really want. I believe we have our own internal guidance system, and success and happiness in life starts with clarify the vision of the destination that you wish your life to take, once you have the destination plugged in, your inner GPS will take you there, if you are willing to listen and follow it.

When I was a young person, I really didn't know what I wanted to do for the rest of my life as a career. Like many other young people out of high school, I just went to work

in the field that a relative was in, for me, that was construction, while others went off to school, with no real game plan on what they would end up doing after they graduated. While I was fine working in the construction field, it was more of a job, than a true passion. One day, my brother-in-law, who was a volunteer firefighter, asked if I would consider joining the department as they needed help. So I signed up, just wanting to help the community out, and I soon found that I really enjoyed the the job. That is when my inner GPS started working, I had plugged in the destination, and once my inner GPS had the destination, it mapped the route on how to get there. As you know, the initial destination that I had in mind led to a forty-year career. It's a classic example of how once you find your purpose, it provides the destination, and if you listen to it, your inner GPS will take you there.

I imagine many of you reading this today are sitting at your desk or doing whatever job it is you do, and saying, "I'm not really driven by what I'm doing right now, and I would really like to find my purpose."



Sometimes you have to ask yourself, “What is it that you really want to do in life? How do you want to make a difference? What do you want to go to work and do each day that really drives your passion?”

Once I started working in the fire emergency services, particularly after securing a position as a career firefighter, I realized the significant potential I had to advance and make a meaningful impact within my organization and the community being served. It ignited something within me that I didn’t realize was there. I’ve spoken with numerous individuals in various professions, and interestingly, many of them experienced the same uncertainty when they first started.

Some are unhappy with the career they chose and are seeking a way out, while others unexpectedly stumble upon something that truly ignites their passion and becomes their purpose. Discovering one’s purpose may be the most important thing you can do for yourself.



Discovering Your Purpose



Discovering one’s purpose can be a transformative experience, as it was for me, that leads one to a more fulfilling and meaningful life. Taking that step to begin your discovery can definitely feel scary at times. It often involves stepping into the unknown and challenging your comfort zone.

However, it can also be incredibly rewarding and lead to personal growth and fulfillment. Through personal reflection, exploration, and taking action, individuals can discover their purpose with the help of specific steps and strategies. Here are a few for you to consider.

1. Reflect on Your Passions and Interests.

Begin by pinpointing what deeply resonates with you. Delve into the activities, causes, or issues that ignite your passion or evoke strong emotions, as these can provide insights into your purpose.

Ask Yourself:

- What activities captivate you, making time fly by without notice?
- What areas of study ignite your curiosity and make you happy when doing them?
- What causes or issues stir a deep sense of purpose and determination within you?

2. Assess Your Strengths and Talents.

Recognizing your strengths and talents can guide you toward areas where you can make a meaningful impact. Take time to reflect on your inherent skills and the tasks where you excel.

Ask Yourself:

- What are your natural talents and what tasks allow you to demonstrate your best abilities?
- What is your temperament? Are you comfortable as an outgoing person, working with others or do you excel working alone? What gives you

strength? What do you shy away from?

- Think about those times when you completely lost track of time because you were so engaged in an activity-“in flow” as they say.
- What are the things that others frequently ask you for assistance acknowledging your unique strengths and skills?
- What accomplishments are you most proud of, demonstrating your talents and the positive influence you’ve had?



3. Define Your Core Values.

Your values are guiding principles that influence your decisions and behavior. Identifying your core values can help you shape your life in accordance with what truly matters to you. Value alignment is critical to defining what your purpose is, and must be aligned with the path you choose to make your purpose a reality.

Ask Yourself:

- What principles shape your way of life, guiding your actions and driving your decisions?
- Which values do you consider non-negotiable, forming the foundation of your beliefs and character?
- What type of legacy do you aspire to leave, reflecting the impact you aim to have on the world around you?

4. Explore Different Paths.

Discovering your purpose may involve exploring diverse paths and experiences. Volunteer, engage in new hobbies, or explore different career avenues to discern what resonates with you.

Actionable Steps:

- Volunteer for causes aligning with your passions, allowing you to make a tangible and positive impact in areas that deeply matter to you.

- Explore new hobbies or activities that inspire and energize you, opening up avenues for new discoveries and growth.
- Pursue internships or job-shadowing opportunities to gain firsthand experience in various fields, allowing you to assess where your talents and passions align most effectively.



5. Ask Others For Insight, Help, Feedback and Guidance.

Seeking perspectives and feedback from friends, family, mentors, or coaches and others can offer valuable insights into your strengths and help you to see potential new opportunities.

Questions to Ask When Seeking Feedback:

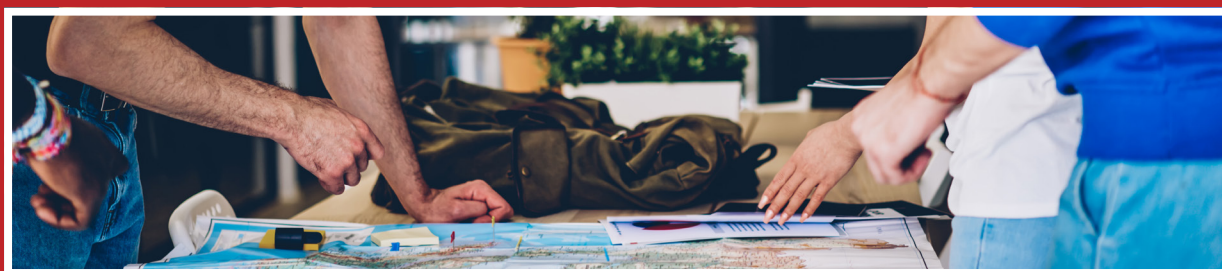
- What do you consider my greatest strengths, acknowledging the unique qualities and abilities that distinguish me?
- When have you witnessed me performing at my best, showcasing the moments where I have excelled?
- Which roles or activities do you believe are best suited for me, offer valuable insights into how others perceive what your natural fit may be and potential contributions you can make in other fields of endeavor?

6. Establish Goals and Take Action.

Once you have a clearer understanding of your purpose, begin to set specific and achievable goals to pursue it. Taking action, even with small steps, can propel you to lead a purpose-driven life.

Actionable Steps:

- Establish short-term and long-term objectives that reflect the milestones you aim to your life to achieve along your purpose-driven path.
- Develop a plan outlining actionable steps to attain these goals, allowing you to frame your journey with purposeful and intentional strides.
- Regularly review and adjust your plan as you progress on this transformative journey, ensuring your actions remain aligned with your evolving sense of purpose.



I understand that discovering your purpose can be a challenging journey, one that can involve deep self-reflection, exploration, and taking action. By embracing your passions, strengths, and values, seeking new experiences, and requesting feedback, you can begin to uncover a purpose that brings fulfillment and significance.

Once you have found your purpose, your destination, don't forget to listen to your inner GPS. Your inner GPS is like a personal navigation system that

guides you toward your goals and purpose. Just as a GPS helps you navigate physical roads and highways, your inner GPS provides guidance, intuition, and a sense of direction in life. It helps you make decisions, stay true to your values, and navigate challenges.

Tuning into your inner GPS involves listening to your instincts, understanding your passions, and staying attuned to what truly matters to you. When you trust and follow your inner GPS, it can lead you toward a meaningful and fulfilling life journey.

Leaders Are Readers

I believe that to be a good leader, one must be on a continuous quest to gain more knowledge. The leadership benefits of reading are wide-ranging. Evidence suggests that reading can improve intelligence and lead to innovation and insight. To that end, we provide a few suggested titles below for you to consider:

Man's Search for Meaning

Viktor Frankl

The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I here For?

Rick Warren

The Life You Were Born to Live (Revised 25th Anniversary Edition): A Guide to Finding Your Life Purpose

Dan Millman

The Last Lecture

Randy Pausch and Jeffery Zillow

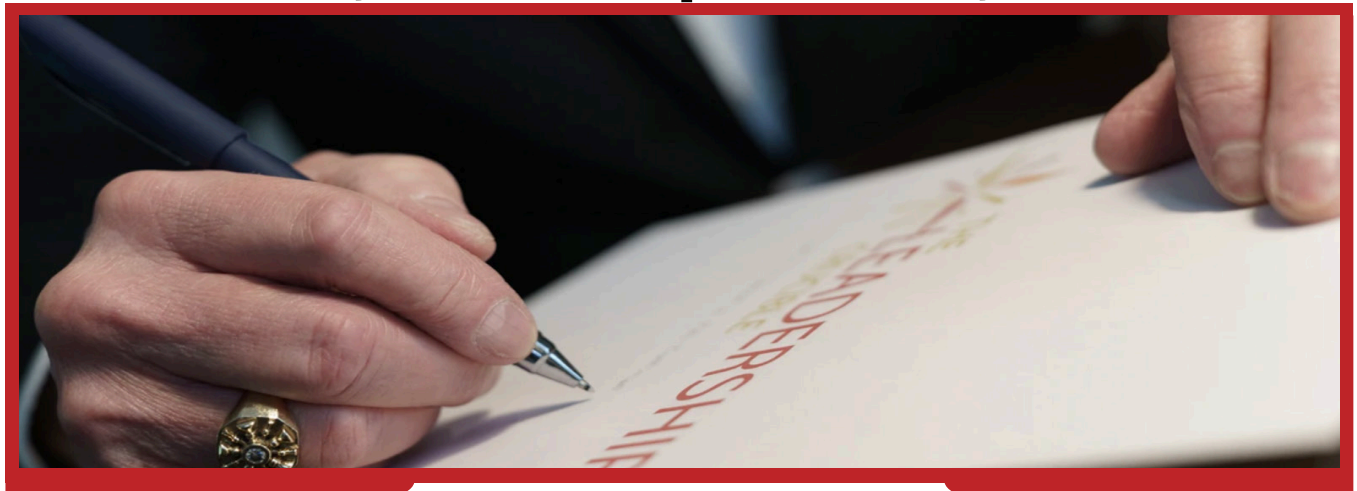
Wake Up With Purpose!: What I've Learned in My First Hundred Years,

Sister Jean Dolores Schmidt

It Starts with Why

Simon Sinek

Chief B's Key Leadership Takeaways



Having the honor of speaking to great leaders in their profession in **The Leadership Crucible Podcast**, we take notes on the key leadership takeaways we discussed.

We share these personal and leadership takeaways - these insights - with you in hopes they will help you reflect on them personally or from a professional perspective. Points you can discuss with

your team or colleagues, often creating great dialogue insights:

- Life without out purpose is like a ship without a rudder, it floats, but never reaches its destination.
- Figure out your passions, interests, strengths, and talents, they will always lead you to your purpose.
- Your core values must align with your purpose, otherwise, you'll find yourself in constant conflict.
- Finding your purpose is your destination, your inner GPS will provide you with direction to get you there.
- Once you find your purpose, you passion will be the fuel to get you there.