



BLP 35. How to Make Sure Your Leadership Isn't Weaksauce

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Welcome to BLP. In today's episode, Pastor Carter discusses something that can easily trip up new leaders. He explores how to keep it from weakening leadership capacity and longevity, and ultimately, how to turn it into a leadership strength.

- **What makes leadership weak?** // After nearly a decade's experience with leading, guiding and discipling up-and-coming leaders, Carter has observed one thing that can get in the way of even the most charismatic and gifted new leaders. He's seen a consistent pattern, beyond age or generational stereotypes, it can affect good people, and it's crucial to long-term leadership. What is he describing? Lack of structure- namely the absence of a predictable, intentional schedule that outlines how the most important things will get done, thus avoiding getting side-tracked with the less important.
- **What's the cause?** // The crux of the problem is a loose spirit. Loose in terms of: commitments, free time, development, sleep. Lack of discipline can leak into other areas. Without a commitment to a schedule, important things don't get done. More stress is created through a sort of meandering, like mowing the lawn randomly with no pattern, there is no real progress. A lack of structure creates more anxiety than is necessary and results in relationship conflict.
- **What's the solution?** // Proverbs 16:9 TLB *We should make plans-- counting on God to direct us.* If we do what we can, God will do what we can't.

Why do new leaders wrestle with structure?

- **1. Backwards thinking about freedom.** // We can think vagueness is freedom, when it's actually bondage. To get over the discipline threshold, pushing a little hard for a little while helps hard work become more enjoyable, it becomes a habit, autopilot. Carter's family saying is, 'The hard way is the easy way and what looks like the easy way is actually the hard way'. If you do the hard thing first, your spirit gets used to doing hard things and being structured and it gets easier as time goes on.
- **2. Fleishy protection of laziness in the name of authenticity.** // Believing people should accept our bad habits because that's just the way we are is a sign of a haughty spirit. In an effort to protect our "freedom" we fail to create a schedule that would help us make progress. We blame others for not valuing authenticity, when authenticity is not the highest value. Fulfilling our duties is a higher value. To hide behind "authenticity" is a form of pride.



- **3. Lack of suspicion toward feelings.** // Our culture tells us our feelings are god and that we should follow them without question. If we don't feel like doing something, we don't. We forget that our flesh is actually an enemy, darkened by and hungry for sin. We trust our feelings and do what's comfortable.

Signs that structure is missing or messy.

- **1. Not making progress on the most important things.** // This is often a calendar issue because there is no structure or regularity to our schedule. We haven't prioritized tasks so the most important get done first and the less important get cut. We have to keep re-thinking what we should do next instead of the calendar guiding us to what we should do. Have an agreed upon schedule for how the week is going to go, so there is predictability for everyone. Think of your week as a "20 Mile March", a tangible point of focus that keeps everyone moving forward, a Jim Collins' [concept](#). Create blocks of time in your schedule for your highest priorities, if it's important, it needs a parking place within your schedule. There is no such thing as a perfect schedule, think of it as an outline. Most of life is balancing and counterbalancing; your schedule won't always go according to plan, but you'll still be making progress. Know you can deviate from it if necessary, but because there is a schedule, you'll have that structure to come back to.
- **2. Having a junk drawer approach to time management.** // When there is no format or regularity to how we manage work or tasks coming at us, including email, mail, texts, commitments, confusion results. We can't store everything in our brains. A junk drawer includes new and old projects, needs from others that interrupt. To know which is the right thing to do, and how the tasks relate to each other, we need a trusted task management system that helps us review and identify priorities. For a paradigm on how productivity works, check out [Free to Focus](#) by Michael Hyatt or [Getting Things Done](#) by David Allen. A quick fix is to review your calendar the night before and list three to four important tasks and commit to completing them.
- **3. Getting pulled out of deep work.** // It's essential to set aside time to get into the zone, or a groove, in which you can work on a project, "[Deep Work](#)" as author Cal Newport calls it. Distractions easily pull us from focused work and, like a diver can't quickly come up for air, it's impossible to surface and then in a flash return to that same depth. It's important to have a set work environment with few disruptions. Start with what you can get and let God do the rest. Even if it's just 15 minutes in which you put a do not disturb sign on your door, get agreement from your spouse or house-mates, and allow them the same uninterrupted time.



Suggestions to implement now:

- 1. Plan your week.** Create structure, get disciplined about it, write and complete a schedule. “Discipline is only developed by going against the grain of what our flesh would prefer.” If this is a weakness, you’ll have more work, if not, work on removing destructive things so you can get down to business.
- 2. Read books, listen to podcasts, explore software/apps on productivity.** Remember, leaders are readers, be willing to grow in the area of productivity. [Making it All Work](#) is another great book by David Allen.
- 3. Consider how much deep work time you need and negotiate what it would take to get it.**



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