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THE 5 ROLES OF A LEADER

Welcome to The Highly Valued Leader podcast where I make it simple for leaders at all levels to amplify their value. My name is Mel Savage and I went from working in the mailroom at a small ad agency to making multiple six figures in senior management at McDonald's, to running my own multiple six-figure executive coaching business. I've had huge successes in my career and epic failures. All of it taught me the world-class leadership, mind and skill sets that I simplify for my clients and share with you on this podcast. I'll help you reset your leadership style, demystify the politics, and help you become the highly valued leader everyone wants on their team. Get ready for the most honest, direct and revolutionary leadership coaching you've ever heard. Let's simplify leadership together.

Hello, leaders. Welcome back to the podcast. Today, we're going to talk about what it is that leaders need to do to be highly valued leaders. I'm talking about what you do and the specific skill sets. Obviously, there are lots and lots and lots of them, but I have bucketed them into five. These five skill sets are kind of 50% of what makes leaders great. I always say that the value equation of a highly valued leader is in two parts. Leadership is a combination of what you do, which is what we're going to talk about today, and how you do it.

The better you get at that combination, the more value you create in your value equation. When I say what leaders do, one of the examples I'm going to share with you today is how leaders create vision. That's one of the five things that I think leaders need to do. Obviously, there are different kinds of vision. I'm going to talk more in-depth about what I mean by that. But that's something that you need to know how to do–a skill set. But how you do it and how you create vision is a whole different thing.

It really depends on your level of emotional intelligence, your ability to communicate, your ability to manage your time, and your ability to believe in yourself. Those are things that will impact how you bring that vision to life. But you also need to know exactly the ins and outs of what it means to create a vision. Like what kind of vision, for what, with whom, and all that kind of stuff. Obviously, being a leader is very nuanced. And being you as a leader, is nuanced. But it really is a combination of what you can do, and how you can do it. That is your value equation as a leader.

Today we're going to talk about what to do. I will be talking about, down the road, how to do it effectively. But you can't really figure out how to do it effectively if you don't know what you're doing in the first place. So we're going to lay that foundation today. I'm going to cover how leaders create value in their role by talking about the five main roles I think every valuable leader needs to prioritize becoming really skilled at, becoming a top performer. You don't even need to master them. When you can create value in these five areas, then you can become the kind of leader everybody wants on their team.

I think that right now, as a leader, what I see a lot of when people are coming to me is that a lot of leaders just gravitate to getting the work done. We did that a lot. I did that a lot, certainly. We all have done that a lot. We go to meetings, we get assigned work, we dole out the work, we check the work, we do our own projects in between checking all the work, and we do it over and over again like *Groundhog Day*. It feels like it's never going to end.

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That's where I was for a long time as well. Just go to meetings, get assigned work, try to keep up, dole out the work, check the work, assess the work… For a while, it was all I was doing.

I'm not saying that's all wrong. I mean, we all need to make sure that the results get delivered. I'm just saying this process of going to meetings, getting assigned work, doling out the work, yadda yadda yadda…, that process feels more like a leader who's operating like an air traffic controller, or those old-timey TV shows where you see the people at the telephone operators and someone calls in, and then they have to go and plug the hole with the thing to connect people to talk to other people.

Those telephone operators and the old-timey movies, you know what I'm talking about? That's what that kind of leadership feels like. We're just sort of getting a request. *Please connect me to this number.* And then we plug in that request with the right person. And we just keep checking and making sure everyone's still plugged in all the time. I mean, it works to a certain extent. But I would love for you to create the value of being an orchestrator of results versus being a phone operator of results, if you will because your job is to create an environment for results to happen.

I think that every leader's job is not to create the results but to create the environment for results to happen. My goal is to say that line in every single podcast from here until I stop podcasting, because I think it's a really great way to think about our roles as leaders in totality, which is not to create the results, but the environment for results to happen. Our job is to orchestrate this environment. And orchestration takes time.

I want you to think about yourself as an orchestra conductor if you will. You're not playing the instruments, you're not plugging holes, but there's a sound you're trying to create. You need to work with the team, the people, the resources, and everything at your disposal, to create that sound. Sometimes you have to bring up certain instruments and bring down certain instruments and tweak the sound of certain instruments so that you can create the sound that you're looking for. It's a creative process. It's not just a plug-and-play type of process.

So it really takes an ear for leadership, if you will. I'm just making this up as I go along. How long will this metaphor go on? I have no idea. But it's going on for a bit right now. Actually, I really like this idea of having an ear for leadership, I'm probably going to use that more. I really like that. Because you need to have an ear, you need to be able to monitor the sound of what's happening so that you can orchestrate the environment for results to happen.

And to do that, I think you have five key areas of the orchestra. I promise you, I'm going to let go of this metaphor soon. Because it's starting to wear on me. There are five key areas and just like any piece of music, you don't just necessarily play one instrument. They all work in concert. Sometimes one area takes precedence. One area, one key role of your leadership is the hero. But all of them are always working in concert. I want to go through those five roles with you, and kind of dive semi-deep into each one to give you a sense of what I'm talking about.

I'll start with the first one, which is what I talked about earlier. I think the very first role of a leader is to create a vision. In the context of creating an environment for results to happen, the role of the vision is to create an environment of clarity, an environment of focus and purpose for your team, for your peers, for your stakeholders, whatever it is.

Your job is to create this environment of clarity, focus, and purpose for any situation. It could be a project or a culture you're trying to develop or it could be wholesale sea change depending on your role and what you're trying to do. But your job is to make it simple, keep everyone focused, and help them understand what they're meant to

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do. A vision, to a certain extent, is kind of like a strategy. And I always say a strategy is about which good ideas we're going to say no to.

And as a leader, it's your job to create focus because there are going to be good ideas coming from everywhere and from everyone. Your boss is going to have them–your reports, your clients, other senior stakeholders, vendor partners. Everyone's going to have a point of view and a great idea that actually is a great idea. But if you as the leader, don't keep focused and keep everyone else focused, then things turn into a shit show really quickly. I kind of think your job is like a gatekeeper. But I hesitate to say that because it's not like you should be immovable. You're not like a guard. You're not this inflexible wall.

Obviously, if you have really good new information from one of these stakeholders that you can be incorporated into the strategy, and make the strategy stronger, you should do that. But it should be done with purpose. It should be done as part of the vision and it should be done thoughtfully, calmly; not erratically and dramatically and ad hoc, just because someone said so. Wherever you can, you should at least try. Sometimes you don't get to have a say in everything but you should at least try.

The main reason it's so important for you to have a vision and be the keeper of the vision for your team is because you're a thermostat. I always think of leadership as a thermostat for your team as well. Because if you're unfocused and trying to people please everyone and saying yes to everything and not staying true to the vision of what you're trying to do, then your team is also going to be in chaos. I'm not just talking about the people who report to you, it could be depending on your level. Maybe you have supplier partners that report to you and direct reports. And maybe you're leading a task force or whatever it is and your peer groups are working cross-functionally with you.

The more that you get unfocused, the more your team is going to be in chaos. And those kinds of chaotic environments get results but I'm going to argue that they don't get the best results. We don't know because we don't know what the results would have been if they weren't in chaos all the time because you do get results. But I truly believe that the more focused you are, the more purposeful you are, the more strategic you are, the more you keep everyone focused, the better the results you're going to get, with less drama, with less overwhelm, with less burnout.

If you and your team are constantly running with this energy of *we're just trying to keep up, we're just always on our backfoot, blah, blah, blah…*, then there's going to be room for you as the leader to be providing a better vision. And I'm not saying that your team shouldn't be providing the quantity of work that they are. But if they're going to produce that quantity of work, do it without the energy of running, worrying, overwhelm, and always feeling like you're on your back foot or a hamster wheel or being exhausted. If that's the energy that you're bringing to your team and that's the energy they're doing the work with, the quality of the work will be impacted.

What you want is an energy that is more purposeful, and focused like a well-oiled machine. And if you're not like that, your team won't be like that. At a minimum, I think that there are three visions that every leader should always have no matter what. We always think of visions as one thing, but there are so many things to create focus for that I think every leader needs a minimum of three in these areas. I'm not going to deep dive into each one because we'll be here all day. I will do separate podcasts on these one day because I've five rules to get through.

But at minimum, you need one, ***a vision for the culture of your team***. How does your team operate? Two, ***a vision for what your team actually works on*** in order to deliver the company's goals. What are your departmental areas

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of focus that are aligned with the company's vision? What are the kinds of projects and things that you will be working on to align with your KPIs for the organization and what won't you be working on? What's in? What's out? Number three is ***a vision for your career development and the kind of leader that you want to be***. And I think that having that is going to help you be a better leader. Because when you know from a career development standpoint what you're here in this job to learn, to get, to become and what kind of leader that you want to show up as then you have a focus, then you have an intention every day, then you are more predictable.

A lot of the time at work, and I talked about this all the time, we would never work on a project without a strategy or brief or understanding how it aligns with the organizational needs, etc. Yet, we go to work every day without a career vision, without a strategy for what we're trying to build for ourselves, without understanding who we're trying to become as a leader. We're just sort of ad hoc about it, which is the most inefficient way to be. You would never work on a project like that so definitely don't work on your career like that.

Those three areas of vision are the *culture of your team, what you work on, and a vision for your career development and the kind of leader that you want to be.* The last thing I'll say on vision is for those three areas of vision, always build those things collaboratively. They do not need to come out of your own head, particularly, the vision for the culture and what your team focuses on. Build those collaboratively with your team or your peer group, depending on what's relevant to you.

Make sure that people are feeding into what you're doing so that when you actually come out with the two or three things that your team is going to focus on, your team's already bought into it. They've already been a part of the process. They're not sitting there going, *why are we working on this? What is this all about? Why can't we work on this other thing, it's so much more fun.* None of that is going to happen because they're already bought in.

And even with your career development and the kind of leader you want to be, do that collaboratively as well. Whether you have your own board of directors or your own sort of support system like your coach, your mentor, your boss, your people that you trust, helping you define where you want to go and who you want to be as you get there. That's just the first role and that is vision.

Role number two is about amplifying critical thinkers. I think a lot of the time we think about this in terms of our reports. And I think the biggest part of this is with our reports, but you can amplify critical thinkers as you manage up and across the organization as well. Your job is always to be helping people think as a leader. When we talk about creating an environment, what I'm talking about here is creating an environment that prioritizes the growth of high-performing critical thinkers.

Creating leaders is your job as a leader at a certain level. You're not just managing one entry-level person anymore, you are managing mid-management, sometimes senior management or upper mid-management people. Your job is to make them stronger leaders. And you do that by prioritizing the growth of high-performing critical thinkers. That's creating the environment. What I mean by prioritizing is you're creating space for it, you're not in meetings all day, every day, you have space to help people learn to do their jobs, think through what's holding them back, delegate the big projects, be with your team every step of the way, have really good two-way feedback conversations with people.

Your opportunity here is to really prioritize your own calendar so that you're making time to help people think. Because what normally happens is we are running our asses off all day long. So when our people or someone comes to us with a question or needs help, we just give them the answers and our best thinking. We don't actually help them think, we just give them our best thinking. Or we may not respond because we're too busy

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doing other things, or we give them our two cents as we're running to the toilet between meetings because we haven't had a chance to pee all day long. This is real, this is what happens.

It's really about taking a look at your calendar and shifting things around so that you have time to be patient. Because when we're so impatient with our people, we're not helping create space for them to learn to think, we're actually just treating them like they're getting in our way of getting our stuff done, which is not what leaders do. As I said, our job is to create leaders. And if we're just running from meeting to meeting, we're not doing our jobs.

There are three key areas of amplifying critical thinkers that you need to think about. I'd like to say it's all coaching, of course, because coaching is the best part. But I would say there are three. There's training, like the basic training, and hopefully, when we're talking about seasoned people, you don't have a ton of this, but this is where the specific form is. This is the process that we're going through. A specific training where they need to understand the steps of something.

If I think back to McDonald's, I would train someone on our marketing process with the franchisees, for instance. They would need to understand that these are the steps we go through to not only create but engage the franchisees in selling a marketing idea. Sometimes there's just training on the process so that they understand what's happening. There's a little bit of that. I would say, that's the smallest amount of how you work with people and grow leaders.

The other two are mentoring and coaching. And I think, honestly, my recommendation is coaching gets the lion's share. But there's always going to be room for mentoring, even in my coaching sessions with people. It's not all just mindset management. A huge part of this is mindset management. But I would say, I'm a 75/25 mindset versus mentoring, or what I call strategy, giving people advice, basically.

It's a mix of coaching and advice. And even the advice is still sort of thrown up like *here are some ways I've seen it done, here's what I would do in that situation, yada, yada*. And then what do you think? What resonates with you? How does that apply to you in this situation? So it's always a combination of mentoring and coaching. Mentoring, as I said, is really about advice and strategy on how to do something based on your experience. But then coaching is almost like where your experience takes a back seat where you use your experience to be able to help other people figure out what to do. This is really about teaching them to think.

One is how to solve issues. I always say to my clients that as much as you can, don't solve problems for people. Your job is to help them think through how to solve the problem themselves. Same with delegation. Delegation is not a time saver, it's about giving someone a project that's a bit over their head and helping them learn how to do that project; being with them every step of the way, being behind them, underneath them as a safety net every step of the way, having valuable two-way feedback conversations.

I always say you don't give feedback, you have feedback conversations. And that's just about helping them learn to grow into their role and think through how to do their role. But there's always going to be situations as well where you see them behaving in a way that could hurt them optically. Maybe they're not as politically savvy. Maybe you see their insecurity is creating some behaviors that are less than ideal. Maybe they're complaining about people behind their backs, or they're not speaking up, or whatever it is and you're there to help them think through why they're behaving that way and help them see that it could hurt them. Ask them how they want to behave instead, who would they want to be, and help them get there.

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With coaching and mentoring together, your job is to help them create their own growth vision. Who are they trying to become? You need to do it for yourself, ideally, with the support of a great coach. But also, you need to do it for them and help them. You'd be a great coach for them to help them create their own growth vision and who they want to be. Those are some of the ways that you can amplify critical thinkers.

Number one is ***vision***. Number two is ***amplifying critical thinkers***. Number three is what I'm calling ***leading alignment***. You could also say it's orchestration within the organization. We call it orchestration or managing the organization at McDonald's. In the context of creating an environment for results, leading alignment is about creating an environment that makes it easy for people to adopt and align to new ideas and change. A lot of the time, I'll have clients come to me and go, *"I don't know. I need to have more influence... I need to be a more influential voice… I can't get my ideas bought off on… I keep bringing these ideas, but this place just keeps saying no to everything."*

It's because we, as leaders in those situations are not helping make it easy for people to adopt and align to new ideas and change. So if you're going into rooms with these big change presentations and you're presenting them cold to an executive leadership team or a client or whatever, you are setting yourself up for failure a lot of the time. I always say never go in cold. Always know the vote. That's the way I talk about it. Know the vote ahead of time. Know what people think about your idea.

When you come up with the idea, even as you're crafting the idea, you are engaging with your key stakeholders ahead of time to get them bought in as you go along, especially the squeaky wheels. Those squeaky wheels need to be on the side ahead of time. And when they're on the side, it is so much easier to get other people on the side.

I'll continue with the example that I gave earlier. When it comes to McDonald's marketing and working with franchisees, we had a process where we would engage the franchisees along the way to sell marketing ideas. We always have to be able to get their vote, literally a vote on the marketing plan. And if we had an idea for promotion, let's say it was a value deal on a Big Mac EBM.

Let's say we want to do a Big Mac promotion with a special price on a Big Mac. In developing that idea, we would actually probably throw out two or three different ideas with some of the key franchisees ahead of time. What do you think about this? What would need to happen to make this work? What would you need to see in the idea? From there, we go away. We develop the idea further, and before we even bring it to anyone, we're socializing it with key franchisees. Would you buy this, why wouldn't you buy this, and all that kind of stuff.

Not only with the franchisees, we're doing it internally too. I was talking to an old McDonald's colleague just this week, and we were reminiscing. I'm like, it was harder to socialize and get buy-in internally at corporate than it was with the franchisees. It was so much harder on the corporate side. So I have to do it inside too. Because with marketing, if we're going to sell all these Big Macs, I need to get operations on the side and need to get supply chain on the side. I need to get business insights on sides so they can help me build the case and all the things.

You have to be working the people all the time and solving problems all the time so that when I walk into the room, and present this idea for sale, I already know the vote. I already have everyone on the side. The squeaky wheels, I've already bought in. I've already made those negotiations. I never go in cold. That's how you create influence. You have to lead alignment. And it can be for small things, or it can be for huge things. I have so many examples of doing this.

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It's so funny because when I was talking to my McDonald's colleague this week, I was like, I didn't realize what I was learning was such a great valuable skill, when I was learning it and doing it all the time. Because when I talk to people now, I'm surprised how many people don't know it. But it is so valuable. You see it if you're an American. I'm not an American. But if you're an American, I do watch the American news sometimes. I'm a Canadian, that's why.

When people go into one of the houses of Congress to vote, they already know what the vote is going to be. Everybody knows what the vote is going to be. There are no surprises. So your job as a leader is to lead that alignment. That's number three.

Number four is what I call ***useful relationships***. I picked the word *useful*, specifically on purpose. I guess that is the right way to say that. I don't mean it to be manipulative. But our job as leaders is to nurture relationships so that we can use them to accelerate results. That's the environment that you're creating. And we're talking about creating the environment for results to happen. With useful relationships, you're creating an environment that intentionally and consistently nurtures work relationships, because we need them to be able to get results. That's how it works.

When we use the word *use*, sometimes we think of it as manipulative, underhanded, sneaky, selfish, or something like that. But in actual fact, when you work in an environment with lots of people, the relationship you have with them is critical to be able to get the work done effectively. Working with people is everything. At a certain point in your career, when you're a leader, it's your job to be able to build and nurture those relationships with people. It is the foundation and not just the people you like, but all the people, all the stakeholders. Take time to understand them, what they need, how you can support them, and how you can work with them to get the job done.

I have a client right now. He's a senior project person at an architecture firm. He's got a big project, and one of the clients is causing a roadblock. Let's just say that. This client is the conduit to all the other clients and is certainly clouding their opinion of the firm. So what he needed to do was spend more time with this client. They are the squeaky wheel in this case. I know they say, *"The squeaky wheel gets the oil."* But yeah, let's go oil that squeaky wheel.

And the way you do that is not by manipulating them and being a jerk about it, it's by really taking the time to understand what's going on with them. What I always say is when a squeaky wheel is acting out, it's because they feel unsafe in some capacity. This particular client just felt like this job was so big and was afraid to fail. And so they felt like they needed to control everything.

But rather than getting mad about that, why not be compassionate and understand that and just go, *"I totally understand where they're coming from."* And then sit down and understand that with them. Figure out how you can help them because when you can help this client feel safer in what they do and feed them the information to make them feel confident and safe and look good with their employers, etc., then they trust you. Then they want to help you.

Again, it's not backhanded or anything. It's just like, *"Oh, this is what they need to be able to be the partner that I need them to be."* That's what my client did and it's working like a charm. Because people want to be understood and taken care of. We have to take people who feel unsafe and provide safety so that they can show up and do

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what we need them to do. And that doesn't mean they get to do everything we want them to do. No. We get to be open, understand them, compromise, and work with them. That's how it works. We build relationships.

I would say there are probably three areas. I like to try to break things into key buckets so that we can work with them and focus on them. But when you're talking about relationships, like I said, it needs to be with all your key stakeholders. Ideally, it's with everyone. But first and foremost, you need to target your most important stakeholders. And those stakeholders aren't always up. Sometimes they're down, sometimes they're across. And you need to work with those most important stakeholders to deliver results with them.

I would say it's all about building trust. Trust comes in three aspects in building trust with them. And when I say building trust with them, I don't mean that you can trust them. I'm talking about them trusting you. You're the one that needs to be trustworthy. That's all you can control–your being trustworthy. You can't control how they feel about you.

The first thing is, you need to trust them for who they are being, not who you want them to be. Stop expecting them to work like you and do the things that you need them to do. Start trusting them for who they are being. So in my client's case, they were a roadblock. They were being someone who were acting and controlling out of fear and were protecting themselves. My client just needed to trust that that that's who they were going to be.

I had a consultation with someone last night whose client is also running a small business, worried about money, and is micromanaging. It comes a lot from worry–micromanaging. So just understand that. Be compassionate about it and help them get rid of their worry. Help them and support them. Trust them for who they are. Stop expecting them to be like you. Understand and support them. That's the second thing. Never throw them under the bus. Deal with the issues head-on.

I had a client last week who I wouldn't say threw this person under the bus. He's having a rocky relationship with one of his peers and rather than understanding and looking for what they were afraid of and creating safety, what he did was in a group environment like in a public environment, called them out on a mistake that they had been making. Now, under the guise of, *I'm just trying to help*; if ever you find yourself in a situation where you're just trying to help, just stop.

My husband always says this, I say this, *I was just trying to help*. No, you're not. You're never just trying to help, you're trying to get things done the way that you want to get them done. He didn't intentionally try to make her look stupid. He was really just trying to fix the problem and was doing it in a public forum. That's all. Rather than going over saying, *"Hey, I noticed this. What happened here? What was your intention here? Why did you think this was the right solution? These are the objectives of the organization, how can we move from where we are now to there? What would you suggest?"*

Notice that my language isn't pointing the finger, accusing anyone, or judging. It's more understanding and compassionate. When you understand them, support them and trust them for who they are, they can let their guard down with you. They're like, *"Oh, this person isn't out to get me. This person wants to support me."* And I think the third thing is you got to be consistent with that. It's not just when you need them. It's always consistent. Consistent trusting them for who they are, not expecting them to be different, understanding them, supporting them, dealing with issues head-on, not throwing them under the bus, and doing it consistently. That's the framework for building useful relationships.

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Don't get me wrong, I know that this isn't always easy to do, particularly with people who like to trigger your own issues, your own challenges with insecurity, taking things personally, etc. But if you want to build relationships, we have to work on our mindsets and be stronger than that. It's not that we don't allow ourselves to be triggered, we can't always control when we're triggered. But we don't act out from that place. We process that trigger as our own issue, not their issue, and then get ourselves back to a place that's going to be effective for us to be able to continue to build that useful relationship. That's what coaching is for, my friend. It's to be able to get good at that transition. So useful relationships is number four.

Number five is what I call ***easy advocacy***. This is about creating an environment where you naturally and consistently advocate for yourself and your team inside and outside the organization. When we think about advocacy and even the idea of self-advocacy, you might say, how does that create an environment for results to happen? And what it really does, is it creates you as an authority. It creates you as an influence, as a presence. And it helps people trust you more. It helps people trust your team more. It creates a space where people feel safe again when they know what a great job you're doing, what you're great at, what your brand stands for, and that of your team as well.

Inside the organization, it's important to create that advocacy with your stakeholders. And outside the organization, I'd say it's more so for you, but certainly doesn't hurt for your team as well, to create that advocacy so people see you as an authority. You're the go-to person in your field for what you do. You have a position. You have ideas that are original and creative, which are not that hard to create, by the way.

When it comes to easy advocacy, the reason I say it's *easy* is because it shouldn't feel slimy, weird, forced, or awkward. It should come naturally and consistently, where I say, first of all, you're intentionally focusing and grounding yourself to be your best performer with your top stakeholders by identifying who those people are. The best way to demonstrate your brand and build a brand for yourself is through your performance. That's a natural and consistent way. Sometimes we're not always our best selves. We have bad days and we have bad moments. We just got off a shitty phone call with a client or whatever it is. We're not our best selves in every moment.

That's why I'm saying, when you pick your stakeholders, like maybe some certain parts of the executive team, certain peers, or certain reports, when you are going to meet with those people, what I'm suggesting is you are intentional. You're like, *"I'm about to go meet with the executive group or a member of the executive team. I know I just had a shitty phone call. I know I just had something throw me off. But guess what, I'm going to now intentionally ground myself in my best leader brand that I have and I am going to show up as this person."* That's what you need to do. You need to be intentionally performing as your best leader with your top stakeholders.

That alone is going to create consistent advocacy, because you're going to say, *"Oh, there's that Mel again. She's always calm, she's always focused, and she always speaks when she has a great idea and not just to talk."* Whatever it is that you want your brand to be, that's how you show up. What I do with my clients, one of the very first things we do when we start coaching together is we spend, probably like a session and a half really solidifying your overall leadership brand vision so that you can start being that vision with the key stakeholders that we identify in the beginning. It's really, really important. And I keep it extremely simple. My goal has always been to put your brand strategy on a sticky so that you can actually put it in your notebook, on your iPad, or whatever it is so that you can always have it with you.

The first one is an intentional performance with your top stakeholders. Secondly, I would say is a consistent communication channel to spotlight your achievements. I don't know what those are. You have to decide but you want to be able to get the message out consistently. So rather than like saddling up with someone at a corporate

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event, or like, *"Hey, did you see that amazing thing I did?",* which is so cheesy; you want to be able to create consistency. Is it something that's as simple as a weekly wins checklist where you send your top three wins to your stakeholder or your boss every week? Maybe you position it as something that they can talk about. Or maybe you have team meetings where you're going to talk about the wins of your department.

I don't know what it is, and who your stakeholders are, but it's you being creative and finding a way to consistently communicate and spotlight the achievements of you and your team. Because even as you get to be more and more of a leader, it's your team who's going to be executing against the results. They're going to be the ones that everyone's going, *"Oh, look what they did."* And so it's your job.

It could even be on your one-on-ones and communicating what you're doing, how you're growing people, and how you're supporting them to your boss, your mentor group, or having key strategic relationships with the executive team as mentors or just regular coffee chats or whatever talking about your development. There are ways to do this to spotlight your achievements so it's done consistently and people see it as part of an update, rather than you just going, *"Hey, look at me."* It has to be natural and consistent in a way that makes sense for you.

I think the third one is especially for the people who love their jobs right now, this is for you, too. And always on the external drumbeat. That's what I call it. Always on the external drumbeat of who you are as a brand. So a lot of times what people do is they'll be like, *"I love my job so I don't have to worry about what people think of me outside of here."* Then all of a sudden, one day, you get a bad boss or you don't love your job anymore and you're like, *"Oh, I've got to go look for a job. I haven't been doing any work on my brand outside the organization."*

But that should always be on like a couple of coffee chats a month, a speaking engagement in your industry a quarter, or a volunteer position every quarter. You need to be out there consistently networking, and I'm not talking about going to networking events, which can be weird and awkward too. I'm talking about intentional strategic choices about where you want to go out and tell people what you want, like coffee chats and catch-ups with your past colleagues and seeing how they are and talking about how's work, and that kind of stuff.

But also out there in the industry, whether it's on LinkedIn, speaking engagements, or strategically choosing a volunteer support opportunity with an industry organization. Maybe there's some sort of a gala that you're putting together. I don't know what it is, but where you can work and demonstrate your prowess and strategic abilities outside the organization and people get to know you and see what you can do and see your brand. You need to be able to find those things.

I know this is going a bit long, but this is the foundation. Everything I'm talking about today, like what leaders do, you need to think about, are you doing these things as a leader? If you didn't notice, the five things that I put together actually spell the word **VALUE**. This is how leaders create value. So the V is vision. You create vision. The A is amplifying critical thinkers, L is leading alignment, U is creating useful relationships, and E is easy advocacy, making it really easy for you to self-advocate and advocate for your team. Those are the five roles of what you need to do as a leader.

This is the first half of your value equation as a leader. The second half is, of course, how you do it, how you communicate your emotional intelligence and your self-belief, how you manage your time and lead your time, and prioritize all of those things that create your presence. The presence of doing these things is the other half of your value equation. I'll be talking about executive presence in the future. But for now, I do a little audit. How

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many of these things are you doing? Where are the gaps in these areas for you and why are those gaps there? And how can coaching help you fill those gaps? We need to think about that.

In summary, it's not your job to get the results. Remember, it's your job to create the environment for results to happen. And if you're not focused on these five things that I've talked about today, creating value as a leader, then you're missing opportunities to be even more valuable to your team, your company, and most importantly, my leader friends, yourself.

That's what I have for you this week. Have a great one. Talk to you soon. Bye for now.

Hey, if you want to simplify leadership while amplifying your value, then you need to get your hands on my free training. Head over to melsavage.com/simple for instant access to the training and get a taste of how I help my clients lead with ease and make more money in the process. I'll see you there.

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