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A Leadership Field Guide

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**Advocacy**

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# Create an Advocacy Agenda

One of the main points from the Advocacy chapter is that we often do think think deliberately about the things we want to advocate. A good way to address that is to create an Advocacy Agenda. The idea is to give thought to the things that are important for us to advocate. Work through the following instructions to help formulate your agenda:

- List the various communities in your life currently (i.e. work, family, clubs/organizations, etc.) and for each one, identify needs that you see.
- For each need you identified, what is your recommended solution (think through the purpose, outcomes and methods for each)?
- How committed are you to advocate for those solutions (words, comfort, safety, survival?)
- Assess your credibility with each community. What makes you credible? How can you increase your credibility?
- What is your compelling case for why the community should adopt your solution?

# Monroe's Motivated Sequence

In the 1930's, Alan Monroe (at Purdue University) developed a technique for organizing a message to inspire people to take action. It consists of the following steps that you can also use to create a more compelling case for your advocacy.

- 1. Attention:** Get the attention of your audience with the use of a compelling story, shocking example, powerful statistic, provocative question, etc.
- 2. Need:** Show how your issue addresses a relevant need of your audience. The premise here is that what motivates people is a felt need. This step is about bringing the need to the level of conscious attention and connecting your topic to that need.
- 3. Satisfaction:** Once the need is elevated to the level of awareness, provide the likely solutions to that need in comparison to your particular solution. Demonstrate how your solution is the superior one in comparison to the others.
- 4. Visualization:** Help your audience see the positive benefits if your solution is implemented and/or the negative consequences if it is not. Furthermore, provide a clear, step-by-step process for how to implement the solution.
- 5. Action:** Specifically tell your audience what actions they can personally take to implement the solution to solve the problem.

# Advocating for people

Some questions worth considering in regards to advocating for people are:

1. Who have been the most significant advocates in your life? What specifically did they do to sponsor you?
2. Who have you sponsored in the past? What made you advocate for them?
3. Who is someone you would like to advocate for now? In what way do you want to advocate for him/her?
4. What is your plan to maximize the impact of your advocacy?

# Mood management

One of the things we unwittingly sponsor is mood. A mood is a feeling so pervasive that it affects others and often escapes the conscious awareness of others. For example, if someone is in a somber mood, it can dampen the mood of others. In the next meeting you attend:

1. Consciously decipher the mood.
2. Evaluate how appropriate that mood is to meeting the needs of the situation.
3. Identify and make at least one move to adjust the mood so it is more conducive to the needs of the community.

# Advocating ideas

As you interface with the world around you, there is at least one powerful idea that you most wish to advocate for—one that is deeply relevant to your authentic purpose. Here lies a singular point of intersection among the concepts of authenticity, purpose and advocacy. Identify the following:

1. What is one idea that you most wish to be associated with sponsoring?
2. What is your level of advocacy for that idea?
3. What specific actions must you take in order for that idea to spread?

# Unintended Consequences

Often, when someone successfully advances an idea or way of doing things it is often to produce a desired result. Unfortunately, a change in one thing can lead to negative consequences that we may not expect. In his book *Why Things Bite Back: Technology and the Revenge of Unintended Consequences*, author Edward Tenner describes many examples of innovations meant to solve problems accidentally creates other problems that were not anticipated.

One example (not in Tenner's book) has to do with the rise of Mexican drug cartels. Crystal meth was a growing problem in the U.S. and many producers were able to easily acquire the ingredients to produce it. U.S. legislation was passed to make those ingredients much more difficult to obtain. Because Mexican laws did not prohibit those ingredients, production of meth increased dramatically in a country where drug enforcement mechanisms were not nearly as developed as in the U.S.

Whenever you advocate for something, think through potential secondary effects that you may want to avoid.

1. What problems could be created if something you advocate is successful?
2. How could those problems be eliminated or minimized?
3. Do the merits of your advocacy exceed the potential problems?
4. What information would you need to gather to anticipate the potential unintended consequences?



## Questioning methods from *The Art of Focused Conversation* by The Institute for Cultural Affairs

Identify one person, thing, or idea you would like to advocate for in your community. In order to assess how you can be the best advocate, practice identifying and using the best types of questioning techniques to meet your need:

- 1. Objective Questions:** distill the reality (not opinions) of the situation. Examples: “What happened?” or “What are the relevant data, facts and details?”
- 2. Reflective Questions:** gather reactions to the objective data. Leaders ask these questions to gauge the response of others. Examples: “What do you think of the situation?” or “How have you made sense of this?”
- 3. Interpretive Questions:** find out the meaning of the situation. Interpretive questions help form potential responses from which to choose the best course of action. Examples: “What does this mean for us?” or “How does this affect our work?”
- 4. Decisional Questions:** help chart the new direction and bring closure to the issue. Examples: “What is our response?” or “What are the next steps?”

You can probably see the relationship between situational assessment and the third and fourth Pillars of Credibility. These questions provide a method to develop *essential understanding* and *actionable insights*.