

Personal Mastery God's Way 6

Successful People Leave a Legacy

Legacy focuses on what will endure. It's about passing on things of lasting value to those who will live on after us. Legacy involves living intentionally and aiming to build into the next generations for their success.
Bill High

Research was carried out on what people look for in leaders and what came out number 2 was "a long range view of things". Sadly, this is the thing leaders find most difficult. The Chinese think in centuries but on our continent we tend to focus on the present and the past. What would happen if your wise grandparents had written books? Africa needs to shift from just an oral tradition. What would have happened to you if your wise grandparents had written books? Your story is worth telling. Why is it that some people just know that your success sometimes only manifests after you die whilst others seem to measure themselves on their current results? In this message I will share with you some key scriptures that inspire us to leave a legacy. We will also explore what leaving a legacy entails and how best to choose what legacy one will leave.

Vincent Van Gogh only became famous after his death. The artist died in 1890 having sold only 1 painting (It sold for the equivalent of about \$109. Popular recognition of his work only came after 1910. After his death about 2000 pieces of his work were discovered valued in millions today. Similar stories are Bach (after a revival of interest in his music in the 1800s) Henry David Thoreau and Emily Dickinson. Don't measure your success only by your current impact. Think of how you can impact generations to come.

What is leaving a legacy?

- 1. Giving something that will be valued and treasured by those who survive after your death.**

It requires you though, to ensure that what you think is meaningful is viewed in the same way by them.

- 2. Putting a stamp on the future**

- 3. Contributing to future generations**

Perhaps we have to consider measuring success differently. E.g. my friend and his son abroad. Usually when you reach a certain age you begin to think differently. What skills do you have that you can pass on to your children. I remember a guy who I coached. He was in internal audit but would work on a solar project with his son at home. He was mentoring his son. Often there is a shift in values. For example, relationships begin to really matter. You no longer think short-term. You want to leave a mark. You want to impact lives. McKinsey did a study they called centred leadership. In this study on women who were successful and healthy they discovered that one of the common denominators was "meaningful work". There is a God-given need in all of us to leave a legacy.

What does the Bible say about leaving a legacy?

- 1. How you live your life will affect future generations**

Ps 112:1-2 Praise the Lord. Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find great delight in his commands. 2 Their children will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.

- 2. God is multigenerational and covenantal**

Gen 26:24 That night the Lord appeared to him and said, "I am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bless you and will increase the number of your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham."

If God thinks generationally and created us in His image then we ought to also think generationally.

- 3. Christian goodness involves thinking about the next generations**

Prov 13:22 A good person leaves an inheritance for their children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous.

We don't just pass on money, we also pass on wisdom and godliness.

Leave your children with a heritage not just an inheritance. Dennis and Barbara Rainey Heritage is a person's unique, inherited sense of family identity: the values, traditions, culture, and artifacts handed down by previous generations. Sunny Jane Morton

4. There are things we can only leave behind

1 Tim 6:7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

5. Leaving a legacy will result in accelerating the effectiveness of the next generation

Prov 22:7 The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the lender.

Many of us are in bondage to repayments which end up controlling our decision-making.

Don't be selfish and don't desire that your children suffer like you did.

Someone once said, **Our children are messengers we send to a time we will not see.**

6. Jesus had a long-range view into future generations

John 17:20 – 21 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one.

People have a Time Perspective Bias:

Past Negative; Past Positive; Present fatalism; Present hedonistic; Future Danger; Future Positive

A number of these time perspectives can drive one to leave a legacy. For example, some do so because they see future opportunities and view the world positively whilst others do so to protect the next generation from anticipated danger.

So which personality type tends to leave a legacy? I am not sure it is about personality, rather it is more about values.

It is more to do with knowing that our purpose in life, when fully lived out, involves touching generations.

Servant leaders: the people who follow them GROW as people. Is your goal as a leader just to do with getting results through people or is it to do with growing people? What or who do they become after being with you?

World stats around leaving a legacy

How many African businesses do you know that have been passed down from generation to generation? Are we passing on wealth to the 3rd generation? The affluent seem to be spoiling their children and these children are not learning how to create and manage wealth.

PWC family business 2021 survey - family business owners want, above all, to create an enduring asset for future generations. Legacy is top of mind for 81% of African respondents.

Similarly, only 19% of families have a family constitution/charter, which links strongly to not having a succession plan in place.

Family values matter, but less than half of survey respondents have put them in writing and only half have codified governance policies.

In South Africa 68% of family businesses are prioritising sustainability, compared to 63% in Uganda, 47% in Nigeria and 46% in Kenya. Many family businesses are also contributing strongly to their local communities: South Africa (72%), Uganda (56%) and Nigeria (50%), with Kenya (41%) lagging somewhat.

What is the aptitude of someone who leaves a legacy?

- **Could it just be a self-esteem issue? Some people have positive blind-spots where they don't believe they have anything to pass on to the next generation. Others see it as conceit to think like that.**

What is the prevalence of various types of legacy? Charity, money, education

Is leaving a legacy something only done by the wealthy? A few days ago I gave some books to a gentleman who is starting a mission-base. He was so excited and said to me, "Paul, I love books. The thing I want to leave for my grandchildren is a library." Some people start small foundations for the next generation but that next generation takes these entities to another level. Could it be that you are the one called to start this process?

Which countries and cultures do it well?

US stats from score.org:

- 30% of family businesses survive the transition from first to second generation ownership.
- 12% survive the transition from second to third generation.
- Only 13 percent of family businesses remain in the family over 60 years.
- And 47% of family business owners expecting to retire in five years DO NOT have a successor.

If we want a culture of leaving a legacy then we need to know how to create culture in the first place. Leaders are social architects. Culture is created by what we teach, model, measure, inspect, celebrate, reward, promote, punish and the symbols and artefacts we have. It is also created by how leaders respond to crises.

What do we need to do in order to create a culture that is multigenerational in its thinking?

In which industries is it more prevalent?

How good are we at succession planning? Eg question I was asked by potential funders

According to a study conducted by PwC South Africa in 2016, the key potential failure of family businesses was succession planning, with only 17 percent of family entities having a succession plan in place compared with 13 percent in the 2014/15 survey. Internal family conflicts have been noted to be a hindrance and undermining future growth, profitability and ultimately the existence of the business. The lack of a succession plan has been seen to adversely affect most African businesses especially those that are family businesses.

This is not easy as it involves acknowledging our mortality.

How do we create a culture that values leaving a legacy?

Do you have an execution mindset around success alone, not the legacy mindset around significance?

The goal is to carve your name on hearts not on tombstones. A legacy is etched into the minds of others and the stories they share about you. Sharon L Adler

What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others. Pericles

What is the mindset of someone who leaves a legacy?

1. They have a long-range view of life – multigenerational vision
2. They keep redefining themselves so that they finish strong

In SA some legacy companies were negatively affected by COVID eg Edcon, Musica, Greyhound, COMAIR

How do you leave a legacy?

1. Do what you were born to do

You don't leave a legacy by being average. Mediocrity doesn't inspire anyone. **If you're giving to live, leave a legacy. Make a mark on the world that can't be erased. Maya Angelou**

It is your responsibility to figure out what your "IT" is and to pour yourself into it. Why were you born? Most people are known only for what they are average at.

One of the keys to leaving a legacy is learning how to function from your high leverage activities. Some of the questions to answer on this journey are: *For what do you receive the most complements? For what are you the GO TO person? What comes to you easily where others seem to struggle? What do you do that is high impact yet requires relatively little effort on your part? What do you get so absorbed doing that you lose track of time? If I were to phone you at 2am and ask you to do this, you would quite happily do it without complaining or grumbling.*

Leaving a legacy involves excelling at what you have been called to do, and also imparting this greatness to others.

On this continent we are high on collectivism. The result of this is that people choose careers based on fear of banishment from their in group as opposed to individual preference and conscience. **We define ourselves too much by our profession and too little by our purpose.**

2. Decide what legacy you want to leave behind
3. Start living how you want to be remembered.

People will do what they see you do not what they hear you say.

4. Assess your use of time, talents and money and ask how the next generation is benefitting from these.
5. Picture your 80th birthday or eulogy at your funeral

Who would give the eulogy?

What will they say about you?

What positive attributes will they state?

Questions to ask when deciding on the legacy you will leave

- 1. What do you want your life to stand for?**
- 2. For what will those beyond your family remember you?**
- 3. What would you like your impact to the community to be?**
- 4. How will the world be a better place because of you?**
- 5. What lessons do you want to pass on to the next generation?**

Practical things to do to leave a legacy

- 1. Be quotable**
- 2. Add knowledge to your field**
- 3. Write a book**
- 4. Mentor people**
- 5. Set aside money for specific causes**
- 6. Endow a scholarship**
- 7. Write a legacy letter capturing who you are**
- 8. Identify your strengths and demonstrate how your success is replicable**
- 9. Develop material for future generations eg me writing a lot before I sold anything**
- 10. Invest in their businesses**
- 11. Be vulnerable by sharing your real story**