



## Stop “Winning Too Much.” Instead, LEAD Your Company to Massive Growth.

Steve Sanduski:

Hello everybody and welcome. This is On Your Mark, Get Set, Grow. The podcast of CEO Coaching International, and I'm your host, Steve Sanduski. On this podcast, we have conversations with the world's leading entrepreneurs, CEOs, and business thinkers. Today we are thrilled to have with us as our guest, Dr. Marshall Goldsmith.

Dr. Goldsmith has been recognized as one of the top 10 business thinkers in the world. He's also the number one rated executive coach in the world. He's a multiple best-selling author of books called Triggers and also, What Got You Here Won't Get You There. He is the leading expert on leadership and coaching for behavioral change. Dr. Goldsmith, welcome to the show, it's great to have you here.

Dr. Goldsmith:

Thank you so much for inviting me.

Steve Sanduski:

Why don't we go back 40 years in time. Let's go back to 1977, you are a newly-minted PhD from UCLA, and from that point in time to today, you have written multiple best-selling books, you are number one executive coach, one of the world's leading business thinkers. I'm curious, what would you say are the behavioral traits or principles or just things that you did that enabled you over that period of time to reach such a high level of achievement.

Dr. Goldsmith:

Well, you know, a lot of it is who your teachers are. I've been blessed to be around very, very, very wonderful teachers. I'll tell you how I got started. Many years ago, back around when you mentioned, I met Dr. Paul Hersey. Now, Dr. Paul Hersey, along with Kim Blanchard was the founder of Situational Leadership. He was the probably most highly paid consultant in the world at that time in our field.

He was kind enough to let me follow him around to kind of learn what he did and to try it out for myself. Then, one day he became double booked. So he

said, "Can you do what I do?" I said, "Well, I don't know." He said, "I need help, can you do this?" I said, "I don't know." He said, "Well, you know, I'll pay \$1,000 for one day, if you can do it." That was 39 years ago and I was 28 years old and I was making \$15,000 in one year. You know what I said? "Paul, sign me up, buddy."

Steve Sanduski: Yeah. I'll do that all day, every day, all day long.

Dr. Goldsmith: I'll do that every day. I did a program for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. They were incredibly annoyed when I showed up because I wasn't him but I got ranked first place of all the speakers. After that they called Paul and said, "While we were angry, but Marshall did great, send him again." Paul said, "You want to do this again?" I said, "Paul, sign me up." That's how I got into this business of executive education.

Since then, I've done two things. One is I teach classes like I did then. Professor of Management Practice at Dartmouth. I travel all around the world. I've been to 97 countries and have over 11 million frequent flyer miles just on American Airlines. I teach and I enjoy that the most. I coach executives, which I'm the most famous for.

I've been the coach of the CEO of Ford, and Pfizer and Blackstone, President of World Bank, and all kinds of wonderful people. Coaching is really where I learn most things. The final thing I write books and articles and make videos. I give away all my materials. If you go to my website, [marshallgoldsmith.com](http://marshallgoldsmith.com), go to LinkedIn, tens of millions of people have read stuff that I've done, or looked at stuff I've done online.

Steve Sanduski: If you think back, and so you mentioned one of your mentors here. What are some other things that you've learned from mentors? I know a lot of us in the business world that's been one of the ways that we've been able to accelerate our growth is that we've learned from other folks. What are perhaps some specific things that maybe you learned early in your career that really have helped steer you and are really still relevant today?

Dr. Goldsmith: Well, there's one bit of advice I use almost every day. I was privileged to be on the advisory board of the Peter Drucker foundation for 10 years, I got to spend about 50 days with Peter Drucker, the world's greatest authority on management. Again, all those who worked on one, compared to Peter Drucker, I have the intellect of a 10-year-old. That guy was really smart. Peter Drucker taught me some great lessons.

One lesson he taught me was this: "Our mission in life is to make a positive difference, not to prove how smart we are, not to prove how right we are. Well we go wrapped up in proving how smart we are and how right we are, we forget, that's not what we're here for." Then he said, "Every decision in the world is made by the person who has power to make the decision. Make peace

with that. Not the smartest person, the prettiest person, or the fairest person, it's made by that person."

Then he says, "You need to influence that decision-maker to make a positive difference. That decision-maker has the power. One word to describe you, salesperson. One word to describe that person, customer. They don't have to buy, you have to sell. Sell what you can sell, change what you can change. Make peace with what you cannot sell, make peace with what you cannot change."

This was such great advice, you would be shocked. How much money I have made just sharing this seemingly obvious advice with people. For example, I'm working in one company that's owned by KKR. Do you know KKR? It's a private equity firm in New York?

Steve Sanduski: Sure.

Dr. Goldsmith: Anyway, this young kid, they appoint him to be CEO. He's 41 years old. Never been a CEO before. It's about a billion dollar company, which in their stakes is not that big. He's says, "Well they can't tell me what to do." Referring to KKR. So, I figured how much it would take to fire him, you know, a couple of million bucks and kind of a pain in the butt, they just hired him. They said, Marshall, go talk to the lad.

I'll say his name is Joe. I said, "Joe, let me help you." I told him that Peter Drucker knowledge about the decision-makers. I said they're the customer. Now, I said, now Joe, you're the CEO. Oh, that's a big job, CEO. That's important. They're the owner. CEO — good, Owner — better. Better. He said, "Well they can't tell me what to do." I said, "Joe, I would help you. It's their money you moron. Of course, they can tell you what to do." I said, "Now, I'm going to tell you what to do. If you do what I tell you, you may save your sorry butt. If not I got to go back to New York and tell them you're hopeless, so what's it going to be son?"

Well, the guy was a good guy. He got better. He's been with the company now for five years. He has great relationship with the owners. He just didn't understand this basic human point, that we all have bosses. Sometimes it's called stockholders. Sometimes it's called the Board of Directors, sometimes it's called the CEO. We all got bosses and you need to understand that if you don't have the power, you're the customer. They don't have to buy, you have to sell. So few of us ever deeply understand this point. Every day, I thank Peter Drucker for sharing that.

His wisdom was ... In my book, Triggers, I have one chapter, I talk about a question to ask before you deal with any topic. "Am I willing at this time to make the investment required to make a positive difference on this topic?" If the answer is, "Yes," go for it. If the answer is, "No," take a deep breath and let

it go. Make peace. Let it go. Really focus your energy on what you can change, don't waste your life on what you're not going to change anyway.

Steve Sanduski: Now, you've worked with so many CEOs over the decades and what have you found are some of the top characteristics of these CEOs and are these characteristics that can be learned? Are these characteristics that some of them that you're born with, because for what ever reason, but what are some of these important characteristics that you've seen the leading CEOs exhibit?

Dr. Goldsmith: Well, that's a common question, are leaders born or are they made? I can say with 100% certainty, I've never worked with a leader in my life who has not been born.

Steve Sanduski: You got us there.

Dr. Goldsmith: Yeah, they're pretty much all born. Now, the only question is can leaders get better? The answer there is a definite "Yes." I did a study called, Leadership is a Contact Sport. Any of your listeners want it, send me an email, [marshall@marshallgoldsmith.com](mailto:marshall@marshallgoldsmith.com), I'll send them a copy of it. 86,000 participants and basically it shows very clearly if leaders get confidential feedback, they pick an important thing to improve, they talk to people about what they learned. They follow up on a regular basis. They put in the hard work, they get better. Not as judged by themselves, as judged by everyone around them.

Leaders need to have the courage. The courage to look in the mirror and want to improve. It's hard. They need to have the humility to admit they can improve because it's very hard to help anyone improve if they're already perfect. Then they need to have the discipline to do the hard work that's required to get better. If they do, they pretty much always get better. If they don't, they probably won't.

Steve Sanduski: I had the pleasure of hearing you speak back in 2014, and you talked about some of the fatal flaws of top achievers or top executives. I'd love for you to maybe go through two or three of these flaws, I think is what you called them, of these leaders, and ...

Dr. Goldsmith: Well, number one, I was interviewed in the Harvard Business Review and asked a question. "What is the number one challenge of all the successful leaders you've worked with over the years?" My answer, "Winning too much." What does that mean? If it's important, we want to win. Meaningful. Win. Critical. Win. Trivial. Win. Not worth it? Win anyway. Winners love winning. It's hard for successful leaders not to constantly win.

I'm going to give you a list, there's a case study and I'm going to predict they'll almost all fail. Almost all my clients fail this case study. When I say fail, they fail themselves. You want to go to dinner at restaurant X. Your husband, wife, or

partner wants to dinner at restaurant Y. You have a heated argument. You go to restaurant Y. It was not your choice. The food tastes awful and the service is terrible.

Option A, you could critique the food, point out our partner was wrong, and this mistake could have been avoided if only you had listened to me, me, me. Option B. Shut up. Eat the stupid food, try enjoy it and have a nice evening. What would I do? What should it do? Almost all my clients, what would I do? Critique the food. What should I do? Shut up.

Steve Sanduski: That's for sure.

Dr. Goldsmith: An even worse example. You have a hard day at work. You come home, your husband, wife or partner is there and the other person says, "I had a hard day today, I had such a tough day." We reply, "You had a hard day? You had a hard day? Do you have any idea what I had to put up with today? You think you had a hard day?" We're so competitive we have to prove we're more miserable than the people we live with. I gave this example to my class at Dartmouth. A young man in the back raised his hand and said, "I did that last week." I asked him, "What happened?" He said, "My wife looked at me and she said, 'Honey, you just think you had a hard day, it is not over.'"

Steve Sanduski: I know another one you had on your list was starting a comment with "No, but, or however."

Dr. Goldsmith: I fine my clients \$20 every time they do this. If someone talks to you and the first word out of your mouth is "No," what's that mean? "Shut up, you're wrong." But, what is better? How everybody disregard everything you've ever said? This is a classic problem of stubborn people. One of my clients is stubborn and opinionated. I'm reviewing his 360° feedback report. He said, "But Marshall ..." I said, "That's free." If I ever talk to you again, and you start sentences, "No, But or However," I'm going to fine you \$20. He said, "But Marshall ..." "20." "No." "20." "No, no, no," "60, 80, 100."

He lost \$420 in an hour and a half. At the end of the hour and a half, he said, "Thank you." He said, "I had no idea I did that 21 times with you throwing it in my face. How many times would I have done that had you not been throwing it in my face? 50 times, 100 times?" He said, "No wonder think I am stubborn. The first thing I do when people talk to me is I provide them more than when they're wrong, over and over, and over again." He got so much better being a good listener just by learning this one very, very simple technique.

Steve Sanduski: Another couple here that you talked about that I think are somewhat related are failing to give proper recognition, and then also claiming credit that you don't deserve. I know that can be annoying for people when you're on the end of that conversation and you're not getting the credit that you think you deserve. What are your thoughts on that?

Dr. Goldsmith: Well, I'm going to give every a check me to do better at those two. This is something that was taught to me by one of my clients. One year he was running to six percentile on giving people recognition and the second year he got up to a 94. I said, "What did you do?" What he did was very simple. He made a list of all of the important people in his life. Friends, families, direct reports, co-coworkers, et cetera. The, he'd look at that list twice a week, once on Wednesday, once on Friday and ask himself, did anyone on this page do something I should recognize? If they did, he sent them an email, voicemail, said thank you. Nothing too time-consuming. If they did nothing. He didn't say anything. He didn't want to be a hypocrite. In one year he went from a six to a 94 percentile. That's all he did.

You don't have to do that much, you just need to do something and stick with it in a disciplined way. This is an area where people's scores can go way up without wasting a huge amount of time.

Steve Sanduski: If you take a look at the CEOs that you typically work with, is there any commonality to how them spend their time? What does their day look like? What are some of the major categories of work that they're involved in, in terms of how they're allocating their time to really get the best result for their company?

Dr. Goldsmith: Well, there are two issues: One, how do they spend their time, and how do they wish they could spend their time. Unfortunately, too many spend their time answering emails and dealing with just day-to-day almost trivial interactions as opposed to how they would like to spend more of their time, which is typically focusing on the big picture, strategy. Where are we going? Not focused on the details. The ones that are more successful are the ones that can really back away and don't do that work that anybody in the company could be doing. Really focus their job on the larger picture, strategy. Where are we going as a company? Communications, inspiring people. The unique things a CEO can do to make a positive different that everyone in the company doesn't have the opportunity to do.

Steve Sanduski: What are some of those unique things and what can leaders do to really clear the deck so that they can have the time to focus on these bigger picture items? I think I read an article one time, and maybe it was an article that you wrote that talked about the plumbing of the business versus the poetry, and CEOs really need to focus on being the chief poet, so to speak, of the company.

Dr. Goldsmith: I like that analogy. Not the plumber, the poet. I think the important thing is write down the two or three most important mission-driven goals or strategies that you have as CEO. What are the two or three most important things I want to accomplish. Then, before you do anything, ask yourself a question. "When I do this, is it going to help me accomplish this larger goal?" If the answer is "yes," fine, go do it. If the answer is "No," then you ask yourself, "Why am I doing it? Is it really that important?"

Especially in the new world with emails, voicemails, text messages. It's easy to get barraged in a sea of stuff and just forget about what really matters in life. By the way, I'm probably the only teacher your listeners have ever heard who has collected feedback from tens of thousands of people who went to my courses. I measure do they do what I teach, do they get better? Now, the good news is, people that do this stuff get better. The better news is people who don't do anything don't get worse. They stay about the same.

I got to interview ... Years ago, my biggest client was Johnson & Johnson. A wonderful company. I had the privilege of working with their CEO at the time, Ralph Larson, all the way down to person number 2,000. They all talked to give some feedback, talked to people. They learned how to work on a regular basis, you measure improvement. 98% of the leaders said, "I'm going to do what Marshall just taught me. 98%. A year later, 70% had done something and 30% zero. Not even one minute. I'm not ashamed of these numbers, I'm proud of these numbers. 70% of 2,000 people is 1,400 people getting evaluated by 10 co-workers each. 14,000 people had a little bit better life. That's pretty good.

I got to talking to the people who did nothing. I said, "Why did you do nothing?" The answer had nothing to do with ethics, values, or integrity. They won an award that year, Most Ethical Company in the World. They're good people. I'm sure your listeners are good people. It had nothing to do with intelligence. They're smart people. I'm sure your listeners are smart people. The reason people did nothing had to do with the dream. The dream I've had for years, and I'm going to make a prediction.

Many of your listeners, perhaps even you have had the same dream on a recurring basis for years. This dream describes how we don't do in life what we know we should. Some people are thinking, "You guys don't know my dreams." Don't bet against me. What's the dream sound like? "You know, I'm incredibly busy right now. Given pressures of work and home and new technology that follows you everywhere and emails and voicemails and global competition. I feel about as busy as I ever have.

Sometimes I feel over-committed. I do not tell others this, but every now and again, my life feels just a little bit out of control. But, you know I'm working on some very unique and special challenges right now and I think the worst of this is going to be over in about four or five months. I'm going to take two or three weeks to get organized and spend some time with the family and begin my new healthy life program. After that everything is going to be different and it will not be crazy anymore.

Well, how many people have had a dream that resembles that dream? Pretty much all of us. The thing I learned is there's not going to be any two or three weeks. Sanity is not gonna kick in. There's a chance tomorrow it's going to be just about as crazy as today. If you want do something, you pretty much have to have the discipline to say, "I better start doing it now." Better start doing it now.

Steve Sanduski: Along those lines, what are some of the habits you see CEOs exhibit that enable them to actually get the results. Whether you want to call them habits, or maybe you call them systems, personal systems that they follow. For example, I have a system, I get up at 5:00 in the morning and I pray and meditate for the first 20 minutes and then I read and write for the next, from 5:20 to 6:30 then I exercise from 6:30 to 7:00 and so on and so forth. I make a pot of coffee in between there, which is something I really look forward to, so by the time I get to the office, I mean, I've already nourished myself spiritually, I've read something and I've sweated, so I'm hitting the ground running by the time I get to the office. Have you found other habits or routines that the people that you work with typically exhibit?

Dr. Goldsmith: Well, I do one thing. I have a series of question, I'll teach your listeners one such sort of a routine that really works. I'm now going to teach people something takes three minutes a day, costs absolutely nothing to help people get better at almost anything. People are skeptical. "Three minutes day, cost nothing to help me get better at almost anything? Sound too good to be true." Half the people start doing this quit within two weeks. They do not quit because it does not work, they quit because it does work. It's very easy to understand and very hard to do.

This is called a daily question process. The way it works is, get out an Excel spreadsheet. On one column you write down a series of questions to represent what's most important in your life. Friends, family, work, customers, whatever it is for you. Seven boxes across, one for every day of the week, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday. Every question must be answered with a yes or no or a number. Yes is counted as one, no as zero or a number. End of the week, the Excel spreadsheet will give you a report card.

I always warn people in advance, if you do this every day, that report card at the end of the week might not be quite as beautiful as the corporate values plaque you have stuck up on the wall because you do this every day you learn life is just incredible easy to talk. It's just incredibly difficult to live. When you do this every day, you don't learn about your talk values, you learn about your live values. Those are tough. I've been doing this for years, actually pay a woman to call me every day to listen to me do this.

Somebody said, "Why do you pay a woman? Don't you know the theory about how to change behavior?" I wrote the theory about how to change behavior. That's why I pay a woman to call me every day. My name is Marshall Goldsmith. I'm the world's number one executive coach. I pay a woman to call me on the phone every day just to listen to me read questions I wrote and provide answers I wrote every day. Why do I do this? I'm too cowardly to do it by myself and too undisciplined. I need help and it's okay. Well, we all need help. Once we get over the macho, willpower nonsense, "I can do it on my own," life is a whole lot better.

Steve Sanduski: Yeah, I think you have an article out on your website on [marshallgoldsmith.com](http://marshallgoldsmith.com) where you talked about this daily question process, so we'll make sure that we link to that in the show notes because I think that's a great process. You just mentioned here that you have a woman that you talk to every day and you go through this, which brings up this idea of accountability. If a person is the CEO of the company or they're the Chairman of the Board, who do they turn to? Who is the person that they can confide in? I know it's the executive coach, but what do they do to help hold them accountable when their executive coach is not there 24 hours a day?

Dr. Goldsmith: Well, what I do is I get feedback from everyone around them and they have everyone around them hold them accountable. They go back and talk to each one of their key stakeholders and they say, for example, "I got feedback. I feel great about this, one thing I want to do better is be a great listener." It's been two months. Based on the last two months, give me ideas how I can be an even better listener for the next two months." It's been four months, six months, eight months, ten months. The leaders that do this ongoing follow up almost invariably are achieving good positive lasting change in their behavior.

Steve Sanduski: Would that be one of the key techniques then, this 360 feedback idea?

Dr. Goldsmith: Yeah, feedback and follow up, that's what I do.

Steve Sanduski: Okay. Are there any other things that you're able to share with us in terms of helping people achieve lasting behavioral change?

Dr. Goldsmith: One thing I teach is something called Feed Forward. Now, Feed Forward is a very positive and upbeat way to help yourself get better. In Feed Forward, you learn to ask people for ideas. You treat the idea like a gift. You learn to ask for the idea, listen, think about it, thank people. Don't punish them. Then. You never promise to do everything they said. Leadership is not a popularity contest. You just promise to listen, to think the ideas and do what you can. It's such a positive process. I've done this with hundreds of thousands of people.

When I do it, I'll tell the group, give me one word to describe this exercise. People say, "Positive, useful, helpful, or even fun." I say, that's the last word you think you'd describe any feedback activity as fun. Anybody ever call you on the phone and say, "I have feedback I'd like to share with you," and you say, "Fun, fun, fun?" Fun is the last word you'd think of. People say this is "Positive, useful, helpful, or even fun." So, I talk about why. Well it's focused on a future you can change, not a past you can't change anyway.

It's quick, it's positive, there's no arguing, there's no judging, there's no putting people down. I won't go through the litany of reasons why. So, Feed Forward is a wonderful tool you can use to help yourself and others get better. That's also on the website and you can go to YouTube as well, so I've got lots of videos of Feed Forward.

Steve Sanduski: As you think about some of the popular management strategies from years gone by, are there any that you can think of that maybe were popular at one time that now have been somewhat discredited?

Dr. Goldsmith: Well, I mean, I think a lot of them are popular at one time and just don't get used as much anymore because there's this unfortunate tendency, sort of the program of the week. Sometimes anything that was developed years ago is perceived as not as good, even if it's fantastic. I'll give you an example of Situational Leadership. I don't teach it myself very much, but I'm a great believer I Situational Leadership and that was invented by my old mentors, years, and years ago, it's still just as solid today as it ever was.

Steve Sanduski: Can you just briefly explain what situation leadership is?

Dr. Goldsmith: Well, situation leadership basically talks about task behavior and relationship behavior and four basic leadership styles. Leadership Style One is called Directing. High-task, low-relationship. The leader says, "Here's what I like you to do, here's how, here's when." Leadership Style Two, high-task, high-relationship, could be called Coaching. The leader is providing most of the structure and direction, yet the follower is involved in a lot of two-way communication, dialogue, "Here's where I think you should be going, what do you think?" Kind of a discussion. Leadership Style Three could be called Supporting or Participating. Now, the direct report is doing most of the leading the leader is there supporting participating, being involved. Finally, Leadership Style Four, Delegating, where the leader says, "Look, you're motivated, able, confident that you can do it, do it."

The idea of Situational Leadership is pick a leadership style that fits the readiness level of the person. When people need direction and we all do sometimes, Style One. When people need coaching, use the Style Two. They want to learn, they need to learn, Coaching is great. They don't want to learn, it's a waste of time. They don't need to learn, it's a waste of time. Leadership Style Three, Supporting, by participating, supporting, is good when people lack confidence to do it themselves. Delegating when people are motivated, they want confident, let them do the job.

I just published an article about this with my friend, Alan Mulally, from Ford and Sam Schreiber from Center for Leadership Studies. In the article, we talk about how to use Situational Leadership but in a different way. How to use a model when you manage people who know more technically than you do. Alan was the CEO of Ford, but he never worked in a car company before he went to Ford. He was not a technical expert. He talked about what he did. He learned out to ask people for input and achieved something called situational awareness. He found out what people needed but he didn't have a need to provide it himself. If someone needed coaching, maybe it would come from a first line supervisor or somebody else on the team because he wasn't a technical expert and he didn't

pretend to be. He talked about how to use the same model in a different way when you manage knowledge workers.

Steve Sanduski: As you think about some of these management ideas from the past that were popular, you said a lot of them are still very good ideas, they're just not used much. Can you think of anything that you would say, Gosh, that was a great idea, and absolutely people should be using it a lot more than they do today?

Dr. Goldsmith: Situation leadership is one that immediately comes to mind. I'd say that's a very good idea that people ... a lot are using but should use probably even more are just some basic things like Management by Objectives, that just make a lot of common sense that people don't use as much as they should.

Steve Sanduski: Okay, if, as we look at the world today, we have rapidly evolving technology. Some people might say that technology is growing at a faster rate today than really it ever has. We've got issues in the world, which you know, of course we always have issues in the world. What are some of the big challenges that you think face CEOs today in their business environment that they need to be aware of?

Dr. Goldsmith: I'm not really an expert on macro-level things, so I think I'll pass on that question. My predominant area of expertise is helping successful leaders achieve positive long-term change in their behavior. So, I'm an expert at the micro level. The individual leadership behavior, coaching the team, coaching other people. I try not to make comments on the macro level because I'm not really an expert on that topic and my general theory, if anybody else can answer the question as well as me, there's no use to be talking.

Steve Sanduski: Okay, then, as it relates to this behavior change, what are some ways that leaders can energize the rest of their leadership team? If you're the CEO and the team is looking to you, what are some ways that you found people and that you teach to help the leader, the main leader of the organization really be able to articulate that vision and get people to rally around it and perhaps as you're developing that vision, maybe what's a process for how you do that, whether it's the leadership team develops it and then it just kind of is top-down, or how do they work together and get everyone moving in the same direction?

Dr. Goldsmith: The first thing I would do, is I have an article called To Help Others Develop, Start with Yourself. The first thing a leader needs to do is lead by example. Rather than preach at other people about, "Let me help you get better," it's lead by example. Let everyone watch you as the leader try to get better. Let everyone watch you demonstrate some humility. Let everyone watch you solve problems and then that's going to be a lot more important than anything else.

Then, back to my friend, Alan, who was the CEO of the Year in the United States, what he did great, was he didn't make it all about him. When someone had a problem, he would frequently say, "Look there are other people that know the

answer better than me. Let's just all work together as a team and solve the problem." He got out of this ego derby and really got people focused on solving issues and problems not trying to prove, again as Peter Drucker said, not trying to prove how smart they are, or right they are. So, those are a couple of simple things any leader can do.

Steve Sanduski: Let's jump into a few, I'll call them rapid-fire questions here. The first one is, what would be maybe one or two or three of your personal core values?

Dr. Goldsmith: My core values are, number one be happy now. Life is short. Number two, do whatever you can to help people. Just try to help people have a better life. Try to understand the people you meet. Try to help people, and number three, if you have a dream, go for it.

Steve Sanduski: Okay, and who would be one of the leaders that's had the greatest impact on you?

Dr. Goldsmith: Well, two. One is my friend Alan Mulally that I've been talking about and who was the CEO of the Year in the United States right now, which is the greatest leader in the world. Obviously, I'm barely his coach. He taught me far more than I taught him. I mentioned Peter Drucker, who is not a business leader, but certainly a phenomenal thought leader. The third would be Frances Hesselbein, winner of the Presidential Medal of Freedom in the United States, former CEO of the Girl Scouts. Peter Drucker said, "The greatest leader I've ever met in my life." She's a wonderful, wonderful woman, who taught me so many things.

Steve Sanduski: What was one thing that you learned from her?

Dr. Goldsmith: What she calls Circular Leadership. I'll tell you one thing I learned from her, even deeper than that. Circular Leadership is the idea of the leader not as the top-down boss, but Circular Leadership means blending across the organization so people are all helping each other. I'll tell you one story about her that kind of illustrates what a great leader she was. She was CEO of the girl scouts and I was volunteering to help them. She said, "Can you do this program for the head Girl Scouts in all the big cities? New York, Chicago, L. A." I said, "I'd be happy to but I'm pretty much booked all this time period.

The only day I could work would be a Saturday." She said, "You work Saturday, we work Saturday, not the problem, you're the volunteer here." I said, "Frances, it's a little embarrassing for me to bring this up, but I would be on the road every day before I get to your place and I ran out of clothes." I said, "Is there any way in can get my clothes cleaned?" She said, "Not a problem, at the Girl Scout Center we have laundry, get the clothes cleaned, not at all a problem, that's the least we could do to help you." I said, "What do I do?" She said, "Take all your dirty clothes and just put them in a pile on the floor, I'll have somebody pick them up and we'll take them to the laundry and when we get finished working, they'll all be nice, and done." I said, "Well thank you so much."

The night before I get there, leave all my dirty clothes, dirty socks, dirty underwear in a pile on the floor. Next day I'm having breakfast with the head of the Girl Scouts in New York, and Los Angeles and Chicago, very distinguished women. I look walking down the hall. Walking down the hall is Frances Hesselbein, the CEO, carrying my dirty laundry to the laundry place. Now, to me, that's leadership. Every woman saw her. She could have had anybody else carry that dirty laundry. Ut-uh. She carried the laundry. Well, she didn't have to give a whole bunch of speeches about Servant Leadership. She didn't have to give a whole lot of speeches about how you treat volunteers. That is leadership, lead by example.

- Steve Sanduski: Yeah, walking the talk for sure. Great example. How about a favorite business book? Let's exclude yours. Yours are phenomenal best sellers. What would be one or two favorite?
- Dr. Goldsmith: Well, when I mention Frances Hesselbein, Hesselbein on Leadership. I highly recommend that one. Great book. Then Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner wrote a book called The Leadership Challenge. Another classic book. It's about 30 years old but I think it's just as relevant today. They keep updating it, so Kouzes and Posner, the Leadership Challenge, Hersey and Blanchard, Management of Organizational Behavior, that's another classic book. Then the other one is my friend Alan Mulally, a book about him called, American Icon, about how he turned around Ford. Just a great book. Those are the four I'd recommend.
- Steve Sanduski: If I walked into your bedroom and I looked at your nightstand, what book might I find that you're reading now?
- Dr. Goldsmith: A book I've read several time, it's called Old Path, White Clouds.
- Steve Sanduski: What's that about?
- Dr. Goldsmith: Old Path ... It's a Buddhist book by Thich Nhat Hanh, my Buddhist monk.
- Steve Sanduski: Very good.
- Dr. Goldsmith: A wonderful book. Yeah, Old Path, White Clouds.
- Steve Sanduski: Okay, how about one more here. What would be a daily behavior that a person who wants to become a better leader can turn into a routine?
- Dr. Goldsmith: Ask for input. Ask for input. Figure out what you want to improve and on a daily basis, ask at least one person to give you a straightforward ideas about. Give me a way to do a great job.
- Steve Sanduski: All right, excellent. All right, well, Marshall, we're going to go ahead and wrap it up here. I always want to give our guest an opportunity here to share one more

thing, if there's something that I haven't asked you that you think would be great to share with our audience, I'd love to hear that.

Dr. Goldsmith: My best advice as coach. Take a deep breath, imagine you're 95-years old and you're just getting ready to die. Right before you take that last breath, your given a beautiful gift. The ability to go back in time and talk to the person whose listening to me right now. The ability to help this person be a better leader. Much more important, to have a better life. What advice would the wise 95-year-old you, who knows what mattered in life and what did not matter. What was important and what not, what advice would that wise person have for the you that is listening to me right now?

My advice for your listeners. Whatever you're thinking right now, do that. In terms of a performance appraisal, that's the only one that going to matter. That old person says, "You did the right thing." You did. That old person says, "You made a mistake," you did. You do not have to impress anybody else. Some friends of mine interviewed old folks who were dying, got to ask this question. "What advice would you have?" On the personal side, three things. Number one, three words, be happy now. Not next week, not next month, not next year. Be happy now. The great Western disease, I'll be happy when. When I get the money, status, BMW that new condominium. I will be happy when. We all have the same when. That old person is when. Learning point for old people, don't get so busy chasing what you don't have you can't see what you do.

Learning point number two, friends and family. I'm sure that all your listeners, their businesses and life's businesses, when you're 95-years old, you look around your deathbed, none of your co-workers are waving goodbye. You realize these friend and family are important. They are the only people that care.

Learning point three, if you have a dream, go for it. If you don't go for it when you're 35, you may not when you're 45, you probably won't when you're 85. Businesses advice isn't much different. Life is short, have fun. Do whatever you can do to help people, and go for it. Do what you think is right. You may not win, but at least you tried. Old people, we almost never regret the risk we take and fail. We always regret the risk we failed to take.

Steve Sanduski: Well, Marshall, I think that's some profound wisdom and I really appreciate your taking some time with us today. I know you have a super busy schedule, and you're so generous in all that you're doing in terms of how you're giving back and making your content and your wisdom freely available on your website, so we'll be sure to link to that at [marshallgoldsmith.com](http://marshallgoldsmith.com), so again, I appreciate it. Thank you, you're a blessing to all of us here in the businesses world with all that you're doing and we appreciate it.

Dr. Goldsmith: Thank you so much for inviting me.

Steve Sanduski: All right, it's been fantastic. Again, thank you Marshall.

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