

Let me ask you a question. What's the difference between someone with a great idea and someone who gets that great idea done? I mean, a lot of people have ideas. A lot of people can see what should happen, but great leadership begins when someone says, "Let's make this happen. Let's do it together." They quickly realize something important. They can't do it alone. You know, a while back I tried to move a couch by myself. Now, in my mind, this was a great plan because in my mind I'm stronger than I actually am. I grabbed one end of the couch, I started dragging it across the room, and about halfway through the process, two things became very clear. First, the couch was much heavier than I thought. And second, I had wildly overestimated my abilities. I mean, at one point I was pinned between the couch and the wall thinking, "This was a really dumb way to go."

Now, the obvious solution would have been simple – just call someone for help. I mean, two people could have moved it in about 30 seconds. Instead, I spent the next 10 exhausting minutes trying to do something that was never meant to do alone. And honestly, leadership sometimes looks exactly like that – trying to carry something by ourselves that was never meant to be carried alone. Because at some point, every leader discovers this. You might start something on your own, but you will never accomplish anything significant on your own. At some point, you need a team, which means you need to build a team.

So, what is a team? A team's a group of people moving in the same direction for the same reason each playing their part and owning the result together. It's not just people gathered. It's not just people who show up. It's not just people who like each other. A crowd gathers, but a team moves. So, let me ask you, is that what your team actually looks like right now? A group of people moving in the same direction for the same reason, each playing their part and owning the result together?

Or do you just have people involved? And let's make this really clear. Teams don't just happen. They are built. So, who's responsible for building a team? The leader is. Not the organization, not when we get the right people – the leader builds the team. A team doesn't just happen; it is built intentionally by a leader. Which means, if you have a team, you are responsible to build it and you are responsible for what that team becomes. And that's not pressure, that's empowerment because it means you're not stuck. You can build something better.

And so, think about this. What kind of team are you building right now? Because great leaders don't just carry the vision; they build great teams that carry it together. And when you study great leaders, you start to notice something. They don't just build teams randomly. They build them really intentionally. And they tend to do the same four things over and over again. They see people, they invite people, they align people, and they develop people. They see, they invite, they align, and they develop. If you get those four things right, you won't just have people, you'll have a team.

So, let's start with that first one – seeing people. You see, everything starts here. You can't build a team if you don't see people. And I don't mean just noticing they're there. I mean actually seeing them – seeing their giftings, their dreams, their desires, who they were created to be, who they're called to be, how they're uniquely wired. Because people don't step into what you need, they step into what you call out in them. And great leaders understand something important: not every person belongs on every team. Just because someone is available or even capable, doesn't mean they're the right fit. So, great leaders don't just see people; they see what's right for them. And over time, you start to notice that strong team members often share three qualities. They're hungry, they're hustling, and they're humble.

Hungry means they want to grow. Hustling means they take initiative. And humble means they're teachable. And when you find someone who combines those three qualities, you've probably found someone with real leadership potential. And you see this in great leaders throughout history. Like Steve Jobs was known for his ability to identify exceptional people and then surround himself with them. But someone who was even better at this was Jesus. He didn't choose the most obvious candidates. He chose ordinary people, but He saw who could they could become. Great leaders don't just see who people are; they see who people can become.

And so, let me ask you, do you know who you want on your team? Do you know the type of person you're looking for? Do you actually see people around you? Or are you just using the people around you? Are you building a team or are you just filling spots? Like who around you right now has more potential than anyone has recognized yet? Because before you build teams, you have to learn how to see people.

Once you learn how to see people, the next step becomes clear. You don't just notice them; you move towards them. And so, that's our second thing is inviting people. You see, once you see people, you invite people, because nobody accidentally becomes part of a great team. They're invited into it. But this is where a lot of leaders hesitate. They worry about bothering somebody. They worry about hearing no. They worry about making things awkward, and so instead of inviting, they talk themselves out of it. And they say things like, "They're probably too busy. They probably wouldn't want to do this anyways. They probably wouldn't be interested." Which means they end up saying no for someone else before that person ever had a chance to respond. Stop apologizing for seeing potential in people. Some of the most encouraging words you can hear are simply this, "I see something in you." And when you invite someone, you're not inviting them to their final destination; you're inviting them to their next step.

And their ability to take that next step depends on the clarity you provide. Clarity of things like, "What is the team? What is the role? What's the mission? What's the win? What have we committed to do?" I mean, clarity creates confidence, and confidence helps people say yes. So, let me ask you, would someone clearly know what they're saying yes to? I mean, who might

be waiting on an invitation that you haven't given yet? Or who might be stuck on an invitation they aren't clear about? Because an invitation can change someone's trajectory.

But getting people on the team is not the same as building a team. And that's where most leaders stop. But this is where the real work actually begins with the third thing, which is to align people. You see, once people join the team, this is where teams are actually formed. Because you can have great people, but if they're not aligned, you don't have a team. You have a crowd. And a crowd gathers, but a team moves. I mean, think about an orchestra. Every person on an orchestra is talented, every person is capable, but if they're not aligned, if they're not following the same direction, the same tempo, the same vision, it doesn't matter how gifted they are, it's just noise. Because talent without alignment doesn't create a team. Alignment is what actually turns talent into a team. Alignment turns activity into momentum.

So, great teams know three things. They know where we're going, they know why it matters, and they know what their role is. So, does everyone on your team know where they're going, why it matters, and what their role is? Do they know what your role is? I mean, let me ask that again. If I were to ask the newest person on your team and the longest tenured person on your team, "Hey, where are we going? And why does it matter? And what is your role?" Would their answers sound the same? Could they even answer it at all? Because teams are not built by collecting people; they're built by aligning people. And if there's confusion on a team, it always is a leadership issue first. And even when a team is aligned, that doesn't mean it's growing.

And that's where the final step comes in – the fourth thing – which is to develop people. You see, this is where teams become great. Because great teams are not found, they are developed. There's a story about John Wooden, who's one of the greatest coaches of all time. And the first thing he would teach his players to do is how to put on their socks. Seriously. Seriously, like seriously, he made no assumptions and started with the basics. He didn't assume they knew how to do it. He didn't assume someone else had taught them. He didn't assume talent would cover it. He started with the fundamentals because great teams aren't built on assumptions; they're built on intentional development. And a lot of leaders skip this. We assume people know. We assume people understand. We assume people will figure it out. And then we're frustrated when they don't. But what you don't develop, you can't expect.

And so let me ask you, where are you assuming instead of developing? Because this is a shift; it's not just building a team that can perform. It's not just developing people who can lead with you. It's developing people to become their best – the very best version of themselves – even if that means they eventually outgrow your team and need to move somewhere else to keep growing. Because great leaders don't just build teams for themselves; they develop people for the kingdom.

So let's bring it all the way back to where we started. A team is a group of people moving in the same direction for the same reason each playing their part and owning the result together.

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And let's be clear again. Who's responsible for the team? The leader. Who builds the team? The leader does. And so if you're disappointed with your team, you get to decide to change that. You get to build a great team that does great things by doing four things. Seeing people and calling out what's inside of them. Inviting people with clarity into their next step. Aligning people so everyone knows where we're going, why it matters, and what their role is. And developing people intentionally – never assuming the basics – because teams don't accidentally become great. And great leaders don't carry it alone. They're not a one-man band. They don't try to carry the couch by themselves. They build great teams that carry it together.