

# USER MANUAL

Clint Rusch



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**Clint Rusch**

Greetings!

If you're reading this, it means we might get a chance to work together, and so before anything else, let me say this:

**Thank you for allowing me to potentially call myself your teammate.**

The word teammate is staggeringly important to me – as you'll see in this document. I take the responsibilities of a teammate seriously, and they weigh heavily upon me, but I also believe the word teammate is a great honor to be bestowed – it means you've chosen to associate yourself with someone for a reason beyond the fun of friendship or the ties of family. We choose teammates out of a mutual respect and a confidence in capability, commitment, and character. So, in that spirit, thank you.

The intent of this document is to make it easier for us to work together. Just as a new appliance comes with a user's manual or an operating manual (and yes, I usually throw them away immediately after opening the box, too!) it's my hope this document can help introduce myself, explain some of the ways in which I think and operate, and provide guidance for the best ways for us to work together.

I built it a few years ago and have been refining it annually – it's something many of my former colleagues have said was helpful in accelerating the smoothness of our working together.

Working together effectively is important for any team, but it's vital in the teams I've had the privilege to lead. I don't bring incredible technical knowledge to the table – my expertise is in assembling the right group and putting people in a position to be successful, and so it's vital that we're aligned, focused, and trusting of one another.


If we're going to work together, please don't ever hesitate to speak frankly and candidly with me. Our success rests heavily upon the confidence and clarity that our mutual transparency will create, and I look forward to building that personal trust with you. I hope that this document can accelerate that process. Now...

**Let's get to work.**

Best,

Clint Rusch

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A stack of smooth, dark-colored stones is arranged vertically in the center of the image. The background is a soft-focus bokeh of light-colored circles. The top-left corner is black, and the bottom-right corner is red, creating a diagonal split.

**‘There are three things  
extremely hard: steel,  
a diamond, and to  
know one’s self.’**

**- Benjamin Franklin**

## Introduction

**What is this thing? What the hell is a user manual for a person?** This document is a look into the way in which I think and operate. It includes insights into my personality, my values, my guiding principles, and my behaviors. It's my hope that by reading this, I can help you to gain a greater familiarity with me, as well as helping to provide some context for the best ways we can interact.

**Is this really necessary?** It's absolutely not something that's required – but I've had great feedback on the way this has helped my teams 'get inside my head' and speed up the process of us working together in the most effective and efficient way possible. I understand that it might seem pretty egocentric to have a document all about myself, and it sure felt odd to put it together, but I've found the pace of integration for new team members with me (and me with them!) was substantially increased, so I've kept updating it.

**How do I use this?** I'd encourage you to read it and identify areas where you think we might have friction if we don't talk about them in advance. Conflict is a great thing for a business and for an interpersonal relationship...if it's conflict that's built on trust. We can create that trust if we have the candid conversations early about areas where the friction might exist. I'd also encourage you to reference it for guidance for how best to work on a project, initiative, or particular topic. It's my hope this document can help shape that effort, so we get the best result possible!

**What if I don't want to read it?** Then don't! I certainly didn't put this together as a test or a textbook or a requirement – instead, I put it together after a former teammate of mine said 'I wish there was a way I could just get inside your head and understand how you think about this stuff.' Don't feel any pressure to read it – it's truly a tool for your use at your discretion.

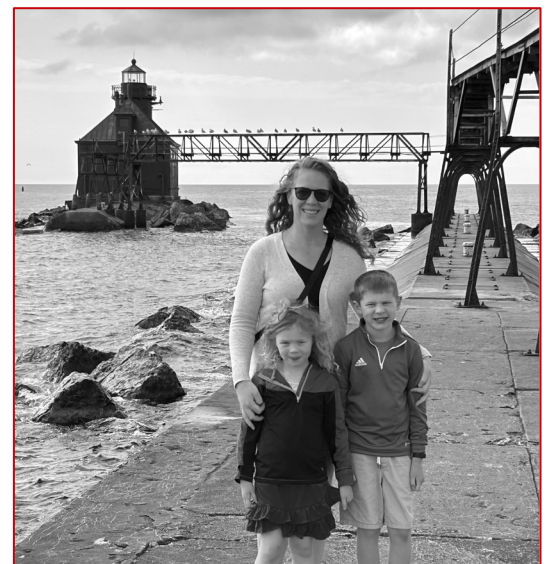
## My Background

I grew up in Minnesota, went to college at the University of Wisconsin, and dropped out of school to join the Army the day after the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. Over the next eight years, the Army sent me back to college, commissioned me as an officer, and sent me all over the world, including Iraq from 2007–2009. After my time in the Army, I worked in operations, consulting, finance, business development, and executive roles in and with industries as diverse as logistics, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, government, aviation, mining, power generation and distribution, hospitality, and telecommunications. I've lived all over the US, and now call the Kansas City area home, where I live with my wife Molly, who's a project scheduler for a major construction company, and my two kids (my son, Jack, is 9 and my daughter, Reagan, is 6).

I think it's important to share my background because it influences how I think and operate. We're all a product of our experiences, and mine have had a tremendous breadth over the years. It's given me a lot of experience to draw upon, but not a lot of depth in any one area. As a result, I'm always going to be biased to have trust in the domain knowledge of my team, knowing that my value comes from bringing outside ideas to the table.

What does this mean for you? It means I expect you to bring that domain expertise, but to be ready to be challenged from an angle you might not have previously contemplated. It means I hope you'll understand my passion and intensity flow from having spent time in an environment where 'getting it wrong' can mean people die. And it means I have a fanatical obsession with creating great teams, cultures, and processes, because I've seen their success across industries, geographies, and functional areas.

One of the most transformative events in my life was the loss of two of my soldiers, on March 17, 2008, to an IED in Baghdad. Losing



**Molly, Reagan, and Jack**

Chris and Mike changed the arc of who I am and what I believe, and imbued in me two driving forces that have stayed with me for the last decade and a half:

- **An incredible commitment to live more, do more, and cherish more every day; and**
- **An acute awareness of the consequences of failure and its impact on those around me.**

It's something to be celebrated that the decisions we make don't have the gravity of that day, and I'm profoundly appreciative of that fact. But I also know how much that moment has influenced who I am, how I operate, and how I think. I know – viscerally – the difference between bringing 98% of my guys home and 100% of my guys home – and that difference is material. It's also very much at the root of my desire to find solutions that are 100% executed, my innate resistance to the idea that something incomplete can be termed 'good enough,' and my bias for accuracy over precision.

## **My Personality**

More personality indices exist than there need to be – to be sure – but I want to share with you the insights three of them have brought me, because I believe these to be an accurate descriptor of how I'm wired.

### **Enneagram**

I'm a Type Eight (The Challenger) in the Enneagram typology. From the Enneagram Institute:

- Eights enjoy taking on challenges themselves as well as giving others opportunities that challenge them to exceed themselves in some way. Eights are charismatic and have the physical and psychological capacities to persuade others to follow them into all kinds of endeavors—from starting a company, to rebuilding a city, to running a household, to waging war, to making peace.
- Eights have enormous willpower and vitality, and they feel most alive when they are exercising these capacities in the world. They use their abundant energy to effect changes in their environment – to 'leave their mark' on it – but also to keep the environment, and especially other people, from hurting them and those they care about. At an early age, Eights understand that this requires strength, will, persistence, and endurance – qualities that they develop in themselves and which they look for in others.
- Eights do not want to be controlled or to allow others to have power over them (their Basic Fear). They are the true 'rugged individualists' of the Enneagram. More than any other type, they stand alone. They often refuse to 'give in' to social convention, and they can defy fear, shame, and concern about the consequences of their actions. Although they are usually aware of what people think of them, they do not let the opinions of others sway them. They go about their business with a steely determination that can be awe inspiring, even intimidating to others. Beneath the tough façade is vulnerability, although it has been covered over by layer of emotional armor.

As you get to know me more, you'll see...this is pretty much dead on, for better or for worse. I've learned – with help – to identify when I'm slipping lower in the Levels of Development in the Enneagram model (if you haven't read about this model, it's a great read!), and to take action to reverse that trend. My success in this effort isn't universal – there are plenty of days where I can't get it right, and I hope by understanding a little more about how I'm wired, we can find a way to muddle through them!

### **Myers-Briggs (Jungian) Type Indicator**

In the MBTI world, I'm an ENTJ-T (Extraverted, Intuitive, Thinking, Judging, and Turbulent). Statistically, it's one of the rarest personality types in the US, so yes...I'm odd! From the 16Personalities description:

- ENTJs see inefficiency not just as a problem in its own right, but as something that pulls time and energy away from all their future goals, an elaborate sabotage consisting of irrationality and laziness. They will root out such behavior wherever they go.
- ENTJs exemplify the difference between moment-to-moment crisis management and navigating the challenges and steps of a bigger plan. They are known for examining every angle of a problem and not just resolving momentary issues but moving the whole project forward with their solutions.
- ENTJs are natural leaders, and their ability to formulate a strategy and to identify the strengths of each member of their teams, incorporating those abilities into their plans so that each individual fills a unique and important role, makes them able motivators.



- Sometimes all this confidence and willpower can go too far, and ENTJs are all too capable of digging in their heels, trying to win every single debate and pushing their vision, and theirs alone. They respect quick thoughts and firm convictions, their own qualities, and look down on those who don't match up. As leaders, they are confident, charismatic communicators, and they communicate but one vision: to get the job done as efficiently as possible, and to the highest standard of quality. All else is subordinate to that objective.
- But while these efforts boost morale and satisfaction among ENTJs' likeminded subordinates, they are still crafted to achieve that ultimate goal of timely and exceptional work. Those seen as inefficient by their ENTJ managers, or who demonstrate themselves to be lazy or to produce shoddy work will know in no uncertain terms of their failure to impress.
- Armed with a powerful intellect and strategic thinking, ENTJs can overcome or outmaneuver obstacles that seem unbeatable to most. At the same time, their many quirks, such as often unconstrained rationalism, lead to many misunderstandings.

I'd like to think I'm not quite as unyielding and hard-hearted as this describes, but there's no question that timely, exceptional work in the service of our ultimate goal is what drives me. I am demanding – my expectations are high – but I believe fervently in the concept of 'high bar, high investment.' We'll drive to success – but I'm here to help, and we'll absolutely have a good time on the way.

### Five Factors Model (Big Five Model)

The personality theory most widely accepted by psychologists today is the Five Factors Model, which assesses personality on a continuum (from zero to 100) on five different factors:

- Openness to Experience, measuring whether one prefers spontaneity or routine, their flexibility, etc.
- Conscientiousness, measuring one's impulsiveness, organization, carefulness, perfectionism, etc.
- Extraversion, measuring how reserved vs. sociable one is, how much they seek attention, etc.
- Agreeableness, measuring cooperation, trust, skepticism, competitiveness, etc.
- Neuroticism, measuring calmness, stability, anxiety, enthusiasm, evenness, etc.

These factors vary far less than the Enneagram's levels or the individual traits of the MBTI – with an estimated heritability of 50%, they are very 'hard coded' to the way a person operates. My Five Factors scores are:



What do these mean? My high ratings on Openness, Conscientiousness, and Extraversion point to a personality that is outgoing, sociable, curious, talkative, disciplined, enthusiastic, imaginative, efficient, hardworking, creative, assertive, and open-minded.

My lower ratings on the factors of Agreeableness and Neuroticism indicate a personality with competitiveness, skepticism, anxiety, an openness to conflict, a willingness to express opinion, and potential moodiness.

In looking at these models, I find consistency – and accuracy(!) – in the insights that I'm fueled and driven, focused on efficiency and disciplined execution, open-minded in finding solutions, willing to engage in disagreement and conflict to achieve the ultimate goals, and can often be plagued by worry or anxiety that I'm doing enough to win, or to take care of my team.

### My Values

I'm a strong believer in the VABR model of personal interaction, where Values drive Attitudes which influence Behaviors that deliver Results which either reinforce or challenge Values. In short, it's a cyclical movement from what we value most to the outcomes we see in our lives. Alignment of values is essential for success – and you'll see that it's something in which I'm unyielding in my expectation. I believe that understanding our



personal values is the key to this, and here are mine:

- **Honesty** *Without being truthful, forthright, candid, and forthcoming, we cannot possibly achieve any meaningful or long-lasting success. I am fanatical about being able to rely upon the people around me – it is the antidote to my low agreeableness and high skepticism – and to create that trust requires honesty.*
- **Loyalty** *I have no patience for those who cut and run when challenge arrives, nor for bootlicking, obsequiousness, or self-interested using of others. Loyalty, more than all else, defines my feelings about interactions with those around me. Loyalty is difficult – it means sometimes placing the greater good above one's own feelings. But it matters. It means you're in it together, and that you can trust each other.*
- **Growth** *I know I'm imperfect and that my flaws create problems for myself and others. I know I fall short in my commitments, my performance, and who I am as a person. But I also know I'm better today than yesterday, and it's because of my zeal for growth, improvement and learning. This value clearly drives my focus on efficiency and on learning.*

When I've found great professional success, it's been when my personal values align with organizational values. As we work together, if you find areas in which our values conflict, let's talk about them – after all, that's a terrific way for us to show some loyalty to one another and be honest so we can grow.

## **My Guiding Principles**

I grew up during the Reagan presidency, and as a child of that era, Reagan's calm, charismatic confidence set the tone for how leadership looked and sounded to me. Years later, I traveled to California, where I visited the Reagan Library, and as I walked through the incredible exhibits and immersed myself in the challenges and triumphs of the 1980s, I found myself reflecting upon what made Reagan such a transformational leader.

While I share many of Reagan's political views, his real and lasting greatness, in my estimation, was apolitical. Instead, his greatest gift to Americans during the 1980s was a restoration of hope – an infusion of confidence and optimism that served as an inspirational antidote to the malaise and disappointment of the 1970s. Reagan helped Americans to believe, once again, that they could win – that it truly was Morning in America. That's the charge of any leader: to instill and inspire confidence, hope, and optimism, and to impart meaning and value to that which must be done.

Sitting next to his grave, I reflected upon the conviction and principle required to fuel such an unrelenting optimism and realized the answer lay in the inscription upon his memorial. Twenty-eight words that profoundly articulated the foundation for such an impactful philosophy. As I contemplated the core of my own philosophy, seven of Reagan's words stood out.

**'I know in my heart that man is good, that what is right will always eventually triumph, and there is purpose and worth to each and every life.'**

I've always believed the greatest wisdom comes from the words of those who have come before us, and I combined that belief with President Reagan's profound words to assemble my own Guiding Principles.

### **GOOD**

My strength as a leader is rooted in my commitment to not only do well, but to do good. The deep, foundational impetus to do good in the world is a hallmark of my leadership style, my interactions with others, and the organizations with which I have chosen to associate myself.

**The heart is the chief feature of a functioning mind.** **Frank Lloyd Wright** Our lives do not require a choice between doing that which is moral and that which is logical – in fact, the greatest commitment to good that we can make comes from our recognition of the place of goodness in the world. I will seek to always operate in a compassionate, morally upstanding manner, and one of which I can be proud.

**It takes twenty years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently.** **Warren Buffett** The long-term value of commitment to doing good is the greatest resource and

asset that any firm will ever have. Businesses compete in a world not often extolled for its integrity; choosing a path of dignity and goodness is a great differentiator. My every effort is dedicated to elevating that reputation.

**Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.** **Colin Powell** There will certainly be difficult days, but my choice to look onward and upward rather than downward and backward defines my focus. Goodness is manifested in our choices toward one another – and I will always seek to choose supportive, optimistic views of others.

**Nice goes much further than mean.** **Mark Cuban** My leadership model rests upon a requirement for debate, a necessity for conflict, and an embrace of tension. Competing priorities fuel effective decision-making; at the same time, conflict and tension should never spill over into harshness or dismissiveness. Be candid, not cruel.

**I don't put others down; I talk my team up.** **Rex Ryan** We are not successful because others fail; we are successful because we achieve success. Winning business through denigration of others or deflecting critique through pointing out others' foibles is antithetical to my principles. We are not good simply because others are not.

**Truth is the ultimate power. When the truth comes around, all the lies have to run and hide.** **Ice Cube** The central foundation of goodness is honesty. A dishonest person cannot do or be good. I will strive to be truthful and candid in all my dealings, both internally and externally, and will respectfully but ruthlessly hold my team members to account when we fall short.

**A pessimist is one who makes difficulties of his opportunities and an optimist is one who makes opportunities of his difficulties.** **Harry S. Truman** Our economy is a cyclical one – every two or three years, a pundit talks about how they've 'never seen a situation like this before.' We can choose a positive view in such a situation, or we can choose a negative view – by choosing to view challenges as opportunities, my positive approach will create prolonged success. I choose to see the good in the world, for it is present in all things.

**You can disagree without being disagreeable.** **Ruth Bader Ginsburg** Passive-aggressive agreement in the service of tranquility is no virtue. Disagreement – the spirited debate which fuels improvement – is the heart of creating good outcomes, and to recoil from disagreement out of fear of disagreeableness rejects my values. I choose disagreement. I choose debate. It is the path to achieving all great aims.

**The supreme quality for leadership is unquestionably integrity.** **Dwight D. Eisenhower** Those who lack integrity will not last long on my team, to be sure. Those lacking it in a leadership role will have an even shorter tenure. Integrity at all times, on all things, in all circumstances...this is not something I strive for. It is something I demand, of myself and of others.

**Whatever is begun in anger ends in shame.** **Benjamin Franklin** Choose to approach life through a curious, not a furious, lens and one will be happier and more successful. Anger obscures good judgment and creates a barrier to growth. When emotions run high, I try to remember – I am surrounded by good people with good intentions.

**It has been my observation that most people get ahead during the time that others waste.** **Henry Ford** The industrious use of time is a great demonstration of commitment to good. To waste others' time, to squander their most precious resource, is to belittle their value. I will endeavor to be a leader who properly values time and its effective use; efforts demonstrate priorities, after all.

**He who stops being better stops being good.** **Oliver Cromwell** There is an inherent challenge in the embrace of goodness as a virtue – it requires constant improvement. Growth, advancement, and change are the watchwords of an individual committed to being and doing good. I focus everyday on my own growth – by addressing shortcomings, I do more for not only myself, but for others. We owe improvement to our teammates, and to commit to it is the greatest contribution to goodness of which we are capable.

## **RIGHT**

A long horizon and commitment to integrity create tailwinds to growth and success, but only if accompanied by accurate projections. Business, like life, necessitates accuracy in the details and a flawless execution of what is not just moral, but accurate, to achieve success.

**Great things are not accomplished by those who yield to trends, fads and popular opinion.** **Jack Kerouac** Our economy is one which has been invaded by 'smart money' chasing the foolishness of 'disruption.' With remarkable regularity, these 'disruptive' companies have been exposed in time to be emperors with no

clothes; the true greatness in business comes from firms – and teams – which do the simple, unglamorous, necessary things with remarkable precision, consistency, and discipline. The greatness of great service is not in its disruptiveness, it is in its inconspicuousness. I will focus upon doing the right things, not the flashy ones.

**If everyone is thinking alike, then somebody isn't thinking. George S. Patton** To be consistently right is to be consistently challenged. My leadership and operating model necessitates the infusion of new ideas, of rigorous self-reflection, and of a decision-making process predicated upon candid, honest, respectful argument. I embrace the necessity of discourse and commit to accurate decisions through debate.

**There are no easy answers, but there are simple answers. Ronald Reagan** I am challenged every day by difficult circumstance, but difficult and complex are not the same. I will seek to create simplicity in all solutions, whether to internal or external challenges, and to relentlessly execute against these simple answers.

**Yesterday's weirdness is tomorrow's reason why. Hunter S. Thompson** To do the right thing is not always to do the known thing. The embrace of the necessary over the disruptive and of the simple over the complex requires a willingness to recognize and welcome the need for change. To be right is to anticipate change – and to live in a mental framework which embodies that anticipation. I want to be right tomorrow, not yesterday.

**Beware of little expenses. A small leak will sink a great ship. Benjamin Franklin** Small mistakes – small departures from what is right – are the root cause of great failures. Whether expenses, data inaccuracies, or process misalignments, few great catastrophes begin as such. It is essential that teams operate with a fanatical emphasis on being right on the small things – the big things are comprised of many, many small ones.

**Intense feeling too often obscures the truth. Harry S. Truman** My embrace of debate, enthusiasm for disagreement in decision-making, and emphasis on finding simplicity requires a willingness to peel back the emotion of circumstance and find strength in the rationality of true root cause. To do this effectively necessitates a commitment to remove the intensity of feeling – positive or negative – from the debate. I will never mute my desire for discourse but must rely upon its rationality in seeking to find the truth. I will lead organizations with the intention of seeking truth, not indulging emotion.

**How many legs does a dog have if you call his tail a leg? Four. Saying that a tail is a leg doesn't make it a leg. Abraham Lincoln** What is true is true – regardless of the desire to evade culpability or to avoid confronting the brutal realities of a situation, I choose to accept that the truth is not a malleable entity, but one which is incontrovertible and universal. I will always adhere to the principle that something may be unpleasant or distasteful, but those qualities do not reduce its veracity.

**If you don't have time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over? John Wooden** Opting for the expedient at the expense of the necessary is a guaranteed down payment on rework. Business and leadership necessitate difficult choices, and my emphasis upon doing the right things in the right way at the right time is not negotiable. Focus on doing work right and doing so quickly, not one or the other.

**Pursue one great decisive aim with force and determination. Carl von Clausewitz** Find the right answer, then run at it with all enthusiasm. Few problems have ever been able to withstand the concurrent forces of accuracy, force, and determination – and this principle has held true in my experience almost universally. Once the right answer is identified, do not 'sell past the close.' move instead to executing with force and determination.

**He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else. Benjamin Franklin** Excuses are simply elaborate methods of denying that which is right – that there was a failure or that something must be done. I will embrace the commitment I make to my team, will recognize the weakness a chronic excuse-maker brings to the team, and will exit that person immediately.

**Fear is stupid. So are regrets. Marilyn Monroe** I will be wrong – this is one of life's truest certainties. When wrong, I must not spend thought capital wallowing in self-flagellation and regret. Rather, my focus must immediately shift to what must be done to address the shortcoming, and to what can be learned from it. At the same time, this likelihood of failure should not reduce the speed with which I sprint toward my desire to execute. I will have failures. I need not have fear or regret.

**In business, if you realize you've made a bad decision, you change it. Richard Branson** Again, I will be wrong, and I will make bad decisions. What will mark any team as a great one is the willingness to change those decisions when the circumstances have changed. By and large, most people's decision-making is good. It requires strong feedback and proactive insight to be successful. We must embrace those two burdens – feedback

and proactivity – in order that we might be right more frequently and more quickly.

## **EVENTUALLY**

Success does not come with an immediate timeframe, nor occur on the timetable which we often demand. It is instead the product of a relentless drive toward the right outcome, the accretive result of hundred and thousands of small actions, and the willingness to defer easy outs to pursue tough gains.

**If you're going through hell, keep going. Winston Churchill** Adversity is inevitable, and we must never allow the difficulties of our short-term situation to define our long-term positioning. The question of whether we should stop when things are difficult is a question of whether we seek to have perpetual difficulty. I have learned, painfully at times, that to continue is the right choice in this situation. I must remember this.

**There is nothing in a caterpillar that tells you it's going to be a butterfly. Buckminster Fuller** Many of life's challenges have come in circumstances which are devoid of clear signs of the path ahead, or of the viability of that path. Our trust in one another and in our processes is vital to create the trust in our path, but we must have that trust. The team relies upon it. We are all substantially better when we have a broad-based trust that caterpillars will become butterflies.

**There are risks and costs to action. But they are far less than the long-range risks of comfortable inaction. John F. Kennedy** Eventuality of outcome does not reduce the necessary immediacy of action. To the contrary, reliance upon accretive activity requires constant and immediate action – and a wholesale rejection of the long-range risk of comfortable inaction. Take action. When in doubt, take action. When not in doubt...take action.

**All the things that are worth doing take time. Mos Def** Immediate action is essential for every team, business, and industry, but will not necessarily always yield correspondingly immediate results. All that is worthwhile takes time to achieve. I will simultaneously embrace the immediacy of activity and the eventuality of outcome – and the different timetables of each.

**I never threw an illegal pitch. Trouble is, once in a while I toss one that ain't never been seen by this generation. Satchel Paige** Change will come to us as well. Eventually isn't just a word that we use to define our favorable outcomes relative to an uncertain timetable – it is a word which defines the expiration of the advantages or capabilities we enjoy. All things – whether competitive advantage or pitching – will eventually change, and I will be a leader who embraces their impermanence.

**Work ethic is important because unlike intelligence, athleticism, charisma, or any other natural attribute, it's a choice. Mike Rowe** As a species, we choose hard work. We may hire for intelligence, we may value charisma, we may seek to acquire talent with other natural attributes, but we choose hard work. The choice to 'work harder' may not always be the most efficient solution, but ninety-nine times out of one hundred, it will contribute to the answer.

**The mode in which the inevitable comes to pass is through effort. Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.** Many constraints teams face are rooted in long-term or external limitations. These constraints are often waved away as permanently present, and when their expiration occurs, that change is viewed in retrospect as inevitability. It is notable: without effort, without dogged determination, that inevitability never would or could have shifted from inevitable constraint to inevitable change. I will never look backward and discount the value of hard work.

**If you're walking down the right path, and you're willing to keep walking, eventually you'll make progress. Barack Obama** Maintain a positive attitude in the face of challenge. Little good has ever come of giving in to discouragement or of permitting negativity to creep into one's thinking. I will be a leader focused upon resilience and adherence to the right path – I will be willing to keep walking.

**I don't know how many times I've been 114 yards from the hole and made double bogey. Well, I hit a great drive, but it doesn't matter. It's only the next shot that matters. Nick Saban** The promise of eventual success can easily lull one into the sense that the work has been done, the hay is in the barn, and it simply requires time to achieve the desired outcome. Eventuality is not inevitability. I will always be a leader who recognizes and embraces the continued excellence required to achieve my team's goals. Focus upon the next thing to do, not simply that which has already been done, in the service of eventuality.

**Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time. Thomas Edison** Never give up. Quitting is an illness which once contracted is surely fatal. A relentless focus on getting

up, trying once more, and never giving in to failure is as valuable as it can be initially difficult. Once done, however, it becomes habitual – and that gives way to eventual success.

**When everything seems to be going against you, remember, the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it. Henry Ford** Eventual success does not mean the absence of intermittent failure. It does not ensure a smooth, linear, direct path from origin to destination. It does not imply that difficulty will not be present, nor that difficulty will not seem overwhelming at times. Rather, it means that endurance – and excellence in the face of adversity – will eventually result in long-term success. In all activities, I will maintain a long-term focus, remembering the impermanence of circumstantial adversity and the eventuality of long-term favorable outcomes.

## **TRIUMPH**

I exist as a leader to succeed, and to support others on their journey to succeed. Success takes many forms, but each is rooted in triumph. I never seek to lead a team exalting seniority or mediocrity – I do not strive to create an easy place to work, but one in which we commit to the shared victories of our team.

**Accept the challenges so you may feel the exhilaration of victory. George S. Patton** The feeling of winning can be the most addictive and rewarding feeling a person can experience – but the root of meaningful victory is the embrace of difficulty. Winning when things are easy carries little of the reward of winning amidst adversity – so chase the hard things, as overcoming them will carry greater triumph.

**The key is not the will to win. Everybody has that. It is the will to prepare to win that is important. Bobby Knight** Few victories start out with easy activities, and few people can see the preparation, diligence, hard work, and dedication that fueled the victor. Being willing to doggedly pursue the often mundane or discouraging work that is necessary to drive the eventuality of achievement – that is the mark of a true winner.

**Once you say you're going to settle for second, that's what happens to you in life. John F. Kennedy** Choosing to forgo victory is not a one-time choice; it is a realignment of priority that creates inevitability. As a leader, I will never settle for 'good enough' or second-best – it is the rapacious hunger for winning that defines great culture.

**Be thankful for problems. If they were less difficult, someone with less ability might have your job. Jim Lovell** Each of us is in our role for a reason. I was selected because I have the ability and the mentality to contribute to the team's shared triumph. I have selected my teammates for the same reasons and will remember they're counting on me, too. That it's hard is why I'm here – and why I was chosen.

**Earn the right to be proud and confident. John Wooden** Nobody respects or likes the preening individual who calls attention to the wins they have not yet achieved. Modesty – especially amidst great triumph – is the greatest demonstrator of integrity imaginable. I will be a leader who underpromises and overdelivers, and whose pride and confidence is the reflection not of what will someday come, but of victories my team has achieved.

**There is at least one point in the history of any company when you have to change dramatically to rise to the next level of performance. Miss that moment – and you start to decline. Andy Grove** It's often cited that 'what got us here won't get us there,' and while this is true, what got us here won't keep us here either. Triumph is a byproduct of relentless improvement and of constant self-reflection. I will endeavor to be a leader of individuals who sprint toward that necessary change, recognize its scope, and seek to become better versions of ourselves in the service of shared victory for the team.

**Bad news isn't wine. It doesn't improve with age. Colin Powell** The surest way to prevent victory is to refuse to daylight the issues we observe – a lack of feedback and transparency will doom any team to perpetual and repetitive failure and mediocrity. Conversely, daylighting issues with alacrity and urgency fuels a culture of growth and a path to triumph. I will be a leader who creates a culture which recognizes the value of radical candor, shares good and bad news in a timely manner, and embraces shared triumph.

**Predicting rain doesn't count. Building arks does. Warren Buffett** Victory isn't a product of knowing the right answer – it requires action to achieve success. The triumphs of my team – and our pride in them – will not be reflective of sitting on the sidelines offering insight, but of being those 'in the arena' who deliver results.

**People think that at the top there isn't much room. They tend to think of it as an Everest. My message is that there is tons of room at the top. Margaret Thatcher** I will always seek to create win-win results for my team, my customers, and my business, and will avoid a zero-sum mentality to my activities. Growing the size of the pie is always a better approach than squabbling over the size of the slice, and my efforts will reflect this priority for mutual success.



**Mediocre people don't like high achievers, and high achievers don't like mediocre people. Nick Saban** Many spend their energy tearing down those who are high achievers – this usually sounds and feels like gossip. Avoid gossip at all costs, as it is inextricably linked to mediocrity. I will strive to lead a team comprised of high achievers, intolerant of mediocrity, and whose rejection of gossip is a daily reminder of their commitment to triumphant achievement.

**When I'm ready to fight, my opponent has a better chance of surviving a forest fire wearing gasoline drawers. Mr. T** The greatest path to ensuring victory is to show up, go all out, and possess a confidence and drive unmatched by others. I take pride in my – and my team's – intensity, our shared commitment to results, and the degree to which that vigor cannot be stopped.

## PURPOSE

To focus upon that which is right and good is laudable. To commit to winning, even if it takes time to achieve, is commendable. But none of these can succeed without a defined purpose or direction. To run hard without a destination in mind is simply to tire oneself, not to achieve one's desired aims or objectives.

**Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing. Theodore Roosevelt** To have great purpose – finding worthwhile work and the chance to work hard in its execution – is a gift like no other. I am privileged to have worked in roles with such incredible links to global commerce, to human health, to the enablement of so many others to earn a living, that I can often lose sight of the good fortune I have. I am fortunate to be a person who works hard at work worth doing – and I will remember that.

**The entrepreneur searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity. Peter Drucker** Our sense of purpose must always be an intentional act; it cannot be a purpose which is thrust upon us, but rather one which we intrinsically seek out and see the opportunity within. I will strive to lead a team of naturally curious individuals, focused upon a core purpose rooted in the tenets of entrepreneurship, and never slackening in our desire to find and exploit change.

**It was taken for granted that we had to make something of ourselves. Not much was said about it; it was just in the atmosphere of the home. Thurgood Marshall** A sense of purpose may require intentionality, but its impetus must be intrinsic to each of us. Creating in another a desire for purposeful work and focused direction is not a task with a strong return on investment; rather, I will seek to surround myself with individuals who are innately driven to find purpose and to create achievement – this is at the core of my talent selection approach.

**When you're surrounded by people who share a passionate commitment around a common purpose, anything is possible. Howard Schultz** The ultimate power of a shared purpose is the ability to unite efforts, and to create breakthrough outcomes from the multiplicative efforts of many individuals. I will create teams which endeavor to share this passionate commitment around their common purpose, and which will be intolerant of those who are not appropriately aligned or adequately engaged – the team deserves this.

**Regard it as just as desirable to build a chicken house as to build a cathedral. Frank Lloyd Wright** Business is often populated by the mundane and the ordinary tasks, and it can necessitate substantial discipline to remain focused upon one's purpose. I will seek to create a team in which every member will embrace the disciplined purpose of the seemingly mundane – after all, usefulness should never be confused with loftiness. A business serves its clients, who in turn serve their employees or their communities. Few purposes are greater than this.

**The best time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining. John F. Kennedy** Our circumstances must never define or moot our aims. Our purpose, and our objectives, are universal, and while situational factors will always influence the targets, I will remain a leader with a long view, and one who yearns to grow and to improve.

**Rank does not confer privilege nor give power. It imposes responsibility. Peter Drucker** The term 'servant leader' has become so buzzwordy in recent years as to have lost its true meaning and value, but the principle that a leader is not anointed as much as burdened is one which is core to my beliefs. Every member of a team has placed their trust and confidence in their leadership – at every level – and it is the purpose of those leaders to act in the best interests of the firm, not in service of their own interests. I will be ruthless in my expectations of leaders – for they set the purpose for the organization.

**He has a right to criticize, who has a heart to help. Abraham Lincoln** Critique and criticism are inherent to my desire to improve and grow; they are intrinsic to the culture of teams I have led, and I have sought to surround myself with those with thick skins and a desire for this enrichment. I will always be mindful of the relationship between criticism and compassion in both my receipt and dispensation of the former, as well as

demonstration of the latter, and will ensure that all leaders around me do the same.

**Big jobs usually go to the men who prove their ability to outgrow small ones. Theodore Roosevelt** Purpose may evolve, and it is likely to do so in a way which reflects the direction of the individual. Escalating responsibility is reflective of proof of excellence, and I will seek to lead teams which ask more of those who have shown the ability to bear it. I will note these evolutions and create a team which embraces new responsibility and purpose.

**Clock watchers never seem to be having a good time. James C. Penney** Purpose gives meaning to our work and creates joy within it – few people have ever been compelled to endure that which has noble aim or engaging action. I embrace my work, defining my value not by the time I expend in pursuit of my goals, but by the purpose and value that time creates.

**Man who invented the hamburger was smart. Man who invented the cheeseburger was a genius. Matthew McConaughey** It can be easy – and tempting – to allow adequacy to define one's purpose, but we must never lose sight of the fact that our goal is to find greatness, not simply adequacy. Greatness may come in many forms, and may not initially seem lofty, exceptional, or dazzling – but like the simple addition of a slice of cheese to a hamburger, greatness is undeniable. I will be a leader who inspires others to seek greatness in all that they do, even in the mundane, and to execute with enthusiasm in the service of that exceptionalism.

## WORTH

It is not enough to labor in the service of purpose, oriented in the right direction – we must operate in an impactful and meaningful way, and do so to create value from our work. Each of us is given our own individual gifts – it is our shared use of these gifts as a team which makes our labor worthwhile.

**We need to internalize this idea of excellence. Not many folks spend a lot of time trying to be excellent. Barack Obama** The world is filled with those who labor in an inefficient manner toward a misaligned goal with limited ability to create impact. I will not join them. I will create a team which focuses on its worth, spends its time in service of excellence, and shares its gifts in the delivery of that commitment.

**Happiness is neither virtue nor pleasure nor this thing nor that but simply growth. We are happy when we are growing. William Butler Yeats** Worth is a byproduct of growth, not merely of victory or the trappings of success which linger. I will be a leader committed to growth – and by doing so, one which brings worth to the team's work.

**I know of nothing more despicable and pathetic than a man who devotes all the hours of the waking day to the making of money for money's sake. John D. Rockefeller** That a man who had the money of a Rockefeller could recognize the importance of growth in more than a monetary context points to the universality of this truth. In life, our worth is far more than mere monetary gain – and I will strive to create a team culture which will be one which embraces the necessity of fiscal success, but in the service of greater worth – the service of individual and collective growth.

**Use what talents you possess; the woods would be very quiet if only those birds sing there that sang best. Henry Van Dyke** No matter the skill you have in an area, try at what you do. My philosophy on talent acquisition ensures that my team will always be comprised of those who are pushing at the edge of their capability, and it is only through that pushing along the ragged edge of skill that we can create individual – and collective – growth.

**The proper function of man is to live, not to exist. Jack London** Endurance, especially through the avoidance of challenge or rigor, may lead to prolonged existence, but with limited worth. I will be a leader who rejects this approach to life, and embraces the difficult, for it is these hard things that strengthen and grow capabilities, and which impart worth to that which we do.

**Don't be afraid to see what you see. Ronald Reagan** Every individual's perspective has value; while it may not define organizational priority, it certainly influences every decision. I will be a leader who inspires every team member to speak up. The group is stronger when each voice finds its worth and embraces its contribution to the team.

**You can't let praise or criticism get to you. It's a weakness to get caught up in either one. John Wooden** Whether you are successful or fall short, whether you receive plaudits or rebukes, your worth is intrinsic to who you are; it is not tied to your skill or capability. No person is better as a human being because they are better at a task, nor is the converse true. I will embrace the division between these and fill my team with individuals who embody the necessary traits to avoid letting praise or criticism define their worth – in either direction.



**It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference.** **Tom Brokaw** We must never allow our success – or shortcoming – economically to be conflated with the worth we bring to one another and to our clients. It can be easy – and tempting – to tie these together; a greater salary or a greater profit or another economic metric can be quickly seen as the measure of worth. Our true worth to one another comes in the form of the change, growth and improvement we inspire in our teammates, and I will lead a team which embraces this.

**We can't help everyone, but everyone can help someone.** **Ronald Reagan** There will be those for whom my leadership style is not the right fit. Some will reject my approach to conflict, to responsibility, to long-term thinking. When I find those who are not the right fit, it is important to remember that I can't help everyone – that my worth is not the product of breadth but of depth. Our commitment to one another must be sacrosanct, which requires the discipline to ensure the right 'one another' is present. I will be a leader who does not conflate the necessity of commitment with its universality, and who takes a disciplined approach to hiring and firing.

**A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives.** **Jackie Robinson** Self-important individuals have no place on my team. Our worth is defined by our contributions, and our contributions are measured in the impact they have on others. I will strive to create a culture which maintains its humility, never indulging the desire to preen or boast, and which defines its internally oriented worth through its external contributions.

## **LIFE**

I believe strongly in work-life integration, not work-life balance. Our lives should never be worse for the existence of our work; rather, they should be nourished and see growth through it, and our work should benefit from the improvement of our lives. They are linked, not competing, aspects of our humanity.

**The power of imagination makes us infinite.** **John Muir** Having high aspirations and goals is the secret to creating great outcomes. Every action we take in our lives, whether personal or professional, has implications for the future of our lives; be intentional and be imaginative. I will be a leader who enthusiastically harnesses the power of imaginative thinking, while simultaneously remaining focused on execution and evolution.

**Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.** **George Bernard Shaw** The great opportunity in our lives, and one often overlooked, is the prospect of becoming more than we are today. A retrospective of my career is replete with people who have used the opportunities in front of them to grow and evolve and excel. I will be a leader who exalts curious, hardworking people – regardless of the station in life from whence they sprung.

**An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.** **Benjamin Franklin** Continuous reading and learning are core to the ability to grow one's life. Be a 'learn-it-all' rather than a 'know-it-all' and you will go much further than you otherwise might. It is a profoundly cynical view to believe there is nothing to learn from a book, person, or experience; I will be a leader who rejects cynicism and embraces the desire to learn at all times.

**The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.** **Theodore Roosevelt** Technical expertise has value and should be celebrated – but technical expertise alone is no virtue; to the contrary, it is the ability to harness that technical expertise and direct it through effective interpersonal relationships that creates great success and great happiness. I will always remember the importance of not just technical expertise but also interpersonal interaction.

**There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.** **Colin Powell** One of the most common failures of unsuccessful people is the desire to skip steps, or to find a shortcut to the top. The road is long for a reason – if a shorter way existed, it would be the road. Want success? Do the work. I will remember this at all times.

**Whatever you do in life, surround yourself with smart people who will argue with you.** **John Wooden** Life is better with respectful conflict. So, too, is business. The engagement and discourse intrinsic to respectful debate is what sharpens our perspective and focuses our minds – and what avoids mistakes. I will strive to create a culture which remains loyal to the importance of debate and to learning from the smart people we have present.

**We create our own unhappiness. The purpose of suffering is to help us understand we are the ones who cause it.** **Willie Nelson** Each of us has a choice of how to respond to the circumstances life hands us. We can choose to respond with discouragement or optimism, joy or sullenness. We cannot control that which occurs externally, but the happiest and most successful people know that those outcomes are not defined, but internally chosen and embraced and created.

**What worries you, masters you. John Locke** The decision to allow worry to linger unchallenged is a surefire path to unhappiness. To be clear, contemplation and worry are dissimilar things – the former is laudatory, and the latter must be expunged by seeking clarity. I will lead by seeking to eliminate worry through clarity.

**If life boils down to one thing, it's movement. To live is to keep moving. Jerry Seinfeld** Good times and bad will be transitory, and 'tomorrow' always arrives. The key to finding happiness and success – both personally and professionally – is to find the ability to move forward, to take action, to assert one's agency in life's circumstances, both good and bad. Resting on one's laurels is as equally toxic in the long term as remaining mired in the muck of self-pity. I will always choose movement – advancement – in the face of every circumstance.

**Consider the rights of others before your own feelings and the feelings of others before your own rights. John Wooden** There is no cost to being polite. There is no profit in being proactively offended. There is no happiness in choosing selfishness. Every circumstance we face is an opportunity and a decision – it allows us to choose the greater good or take the easier path. I will be a leader who perpetually chooses the long-term good, the benefit of all, and treats others appropriately – even when this requires a difficult choice.

**There is always inequality in life. Life is unfair. John F. Kennedy** Our world is one of scarcity, and scarcity ensures inequality. True happiness does not come from the achievement of equality, it comes from the achievement of mutual gain. I choose to lead in creating a culture which embodies the principles of meritocracy and celebrates the wins of its highest achievers, embracing the reality that 'fair' is a place to get a funnel cake, and that mutual benefit does not inherently mean the same benefit.

## My Expectations

Effectively articulating and clearly understanding expectations are vital to us working together effectively. I have only three expectations of any person who is a part of a team I am privileged to lead, but I am very firm, steadfast, and unyielding in their application:

### **#1: Be Values Aligned**

As I've outlined, values alignment is the core of success for teams. I believe firmly in coaching performance, but not in coaching a lack of shared values. Values alignment is, very simply, a core tenet of our personality and our humanity, and it is a foundational expectation I have for every member of my teams and of those I choose to include in my personal orbit.

### **#2: Be Willing and Able to Learn**

The 'able' half is something we'll find through our hiring process – we won't hire poor learners. The 'willing' half is harder – it's easy to learn on the first day on the team. It only gets harder from there, as it's easy to fall into the trap of 'knowing it all.' Embrace the beginner's mindset and focus on learning and growing.

### **#3: Be Excited about Where We're Going**

Excitement about the destination doesn't mean setting aside insight into challenges or obstacles – it means embracing them as steps on the journey to success. How we feel about obstacles is not just informed, it is dictated, by how we feel about what's on the other side of the obstacle. To give in to an obstacle is to acknowledge misalignment with the desired outcome. Get excited. It'll get things done.

One experience I had illustrates both the degree to which these expectations are foundational and unwavering, and how I think about them. I had an accountant on my team who was logging transactions in the wrong currency (USD vs. CAD), and before we realized this, we couldn't figure out why the numbers weren't netting out. This was important – we were converting accounting systems and had to get things right before switching.

Eventually, we discovered the issue, and I called her to tell her that we had discovered her mistake. While this

was a major mistake and a significant issue, I chose to view it as a coaching opportunity. After all, I believe in growth and in coaching performance. After explaining the problem, she replied, 'oh well, I make mistakes...what are you going to do?'

I called her back 45 minutes later – with HR on the line – and fired her. We didn't fire her because of the mistake – we fired her because she was unwilling to learn, to grow, to get better, or to take responsibility for her error. She didn't believe in our conversion of accounting systems and wasn't willing to be diligent to support its implementation. She wasn't willing to adhere to our values, didn't seek to get better, and was invested in the status quo, rather than our growth as a business...and her team deserved a teammate better than that. (They got one, by the way – we hired an incredible guy right out of college who sprinted at problems, made everyone around him better, and got promoted less than a year into his tenure!)

## **My Work Style**

I suspect as you've read about my personality and how I think – and based on the size and depth of this document – you have started to figure out that I'm more than a bit detail-oriented. That's true. I'll ask about details, and I'll dig into them, but I also have an implicit trust in the subject matter expertise people have about their areas of responsibility. I believe strongly in the three parts of trust: good intentions, capability and competence, and reliability. When I see those things, I'm much more hands-off and willing to trust the details are right. Until I'm convinced, I'll dig into details more often – and more deeply – than you might otherwise have been accustomed.

I think in systems – by which I don't necessarily mean only computer systems, but systems of people and process working together – to solve an issue. When there's a failure, I think systemically about it – not 'did this person do the wrong thing,' but rather 'do we know the right thing and have we engineered the process to ensure that it's done right every time?' I believe in systemic thinking because of a deep, overriding commitment to the meaningful nature of our work, not because of a distrust in someone's capability – I want each person on my team to be thinking about the things that don't have solutions, not trying to remember the solutions we've already devised.

I have a bias to action – few problems are solved without taking action to solve them. That doesn't mean running off half-cocked, swinging sledgehammers at horseflies – it means recognizing we can't talk a problem out of existence...we must implement and execute. I have a great respect for those who are the 'get it done' people of the world – those who take an idea and just turn it into reality.

I believe in the tenets of working big to small (prioritization) but also identifying small problems (issue identification) and recognize that these are not mutually exclusive. It is rare that a pipe does not begin to leak before it bursts, so identifying leaks is an essential practice – however, we should not spend our time patching pinhole leaks while the pipes that have already burst continue to flood us! Working big to small means being able to say, 'that doesn't matter today,' and the last word in that sentence is vital to remember.

I am honest – to a fault – with my teams. When something is bad, I will tell you it is bad. Please never conflate my willingness to identify and honestly call out an issue with my worry about, or lack of confidence in, our ability to solve it. To the contrary! I'm of the opinion that being honest with people about problems can only occur when there is substantial confidence in the ability to fix them – and that fixing them is the only way to get them to get better. In the same vein, I don't have a great deal of subtext to my comments. When I tell you that you did a great job on something, I'm not seeking to play a game or be coy or attempt to get you to see something else – I think you did a great job on it.

One of my former colleagues – and one who has become a good friend – once told me 'Clint, the thing you do differently from everyone else is that you say the thing they're thinking but don't want to say. You just never walk past an issue without pointing at it.'

He's right.

I believe fervently in the idea of working the problem. Sometimes that means keeping it small and focusing

on an individual issue. Sometimes, it means digging deep into it to identify broad themes that may link multiple problems together. When it's the first, I get very resistant to bringing in other issues and will attempt to keep us on task solving the one we're facing. When it's the second, I get equally resistant to what I see as 'band-aid solutions' or symptomatic thinking. The best way to work through both of these is the Issue-Discussion-Solution track EOS teaches, and I use it consistently to do so effectively.

I also use the 10-80-10 model. If you're unfamiliar with the 10-80-10 approach, it's a method of allocating ownership during handoffs of work items. In short, I own the first ten percent, you own the next eighty percent, and together we own the final ten percent. What does this look like in practice? Imagine the creation of this document, and a hypothetical request that you create one for yourself. I might articulate that I wanted a product that outlined personality, working style, background, tips for working well together, and things that will cause issues. I'd like it in narrative form, rather than slides, and I'd like it to be produced in the brand of the organization. That's the first ten percent.

Now, you own the process of creating it. That means writing the content, getting the branding right, figuring out how you want it to look and feel and read, etc., and it means when you bring it back for review and collaboration, it's 90% complete!

Finally, we work together to get the last ten percent done. Maybe we change the order of things, or we add a reading list, or we eliminate your section on 'what's misunderstood about me' because it's duplicative. Either way, it's us working together to finalize the project. I believe strongly in this approach, and use it as often as I can, because I believe it's the most efficient way to work and it's the one which provides my team with the greatest ownership of their work! I also think it's helpful in getting us to work together without stepping on one another or duplicating our efforts. I know it can be different from what people have experienced – so if you have questions, just ask! I'm happy to work through it with you.

Finally, I adhere to a very consistent meeting tempo. When we get into the practice of punting on meetings, rescheduling meetings, or missing them, the meetings rapidly lose their value. A consistent drumbeat of effective collaboration, with intervening periods of individual work, is a remarkable multiplier for team efficacy. My meetings are tough, intense, and fun. We're not going to sit around and jaw-jack. We're going to get work done. At the same time, I expect us to have a good time – humor and fun are a part of good meetings. There's a time for both.

## **How to Get Me to Run Through Walls For You**

As I've said in this document, I take a 'high bar, high investment' philosophy to my teams. Teams are formed not out of obligation or thanks for things done long ago, not because they're made of people who are fun to be around, not because of blood ties – but because people commit to one another and know that they can build more together than they can on their own. As Rudyard Kipling wrote, *'For the strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength of the wolf is the pack.'* And I believe in making each wolf as strong and capable as possible...and commit to being the best wolf in the pack I can be.

A few tips on how to earn my unyielding loyalty and to ensure that I'll join you on any challenge you face:

- **Put the team above yourself.** I don't take well to self-promoters, selfish people, or those who sell their teammates out to get ahead. And I do worse with those who play politics, try to build empires within the organization, play games, or advance other agendas when we're trying to get work done.
- **Commit to an environment of radical candor and self-reflection.** I'm not a believer in parsing words – I'm a straight shooter, and I want to be around other straight shooters. I also believe strongly in knowing and thinking about my own weaknesses and shortcomings, and I think self-reflection and self-awareness go hand-in-hand with self-improvement and team contribution.
- **Own outcomes.** This isn't third grade gym class, where trophies are given for trying. This is a team where we commit to one another that we get the job done. If you commit to something, own the outcome of delivering against it. 'I tried' is a great thing – effort matters. But get results. That matters a whole lot more.

- **Communicate clearly, proactively, and completely.** If you're not familiar with the Minto method, look it up or ask me to walk through it with you. I don't like jargon, obfuscation, hemming and hawing, or talking in circles. Get to the point, make it fact-driven, and get the facts on the table. We'll win that way, and we'll have a lot of fun doing it.
- **Don't ever quit.** Throwing up your hands and quitting on a project, a task, an initiative...surefire way to find yourself on the outside of the team. You're never out of the fight – so stay in it. Ask for help. Raise your hand. But don't ever quit.
- **Seek growth and improvement.** One of the best hires I ever made was a guy who didn't know a thing about business, let alone our business, when I hired him...but he was all about growth. Probably once a week he would poke his head in my office and ask if we could talk about something. How working capital worked, the way to effectively structure a message on LinkedIn, how to give feedback to his peers, what to wear to a social event with a client, why I interview the way I do...our conversations ran the gamut. And he grew and improved and became ten times the person I hired in a short period of time. Be like him.
- **Engage.** Not quitting is a key step in this. But it's not enough. Weigh in on issues outside your traditional remit. Think about things you can improve within your traditional remit. When I see people pushing, exerting discretionary effort, leaning forward in the saddle...those are my people, and I'm there for them.
- **Do your job.** The world is full of people who want to tell others how to do their jobs. Few of those people actually deliver their own job first. I believe strongly in competence first.
- **Be trustworthy.** I referenced the three components of trust: good intentions, capability and competence, and reliability. Don't think that just because you have one of them you have them all. Show up with all of them, and I'll be in your corner. Give me doubt on one of them...well, not so much.
- **Have strong opinions and hold them loosely.** Mealy-mouthed attempts to avoid taking a stance don't help us get closer to the right answer. A willingness to accept a challenge to a strong opinion? That gets us a lot closer. That's how we get better together. And that's a perspective I respect.
- **Respect time.** Time is the only resource that's finite, and I believe firmly in adhering to deadlines, agendas, schedules, and calendars. If you're scheduled for a call at 9 AM, be there at 9 AM. Arriving at 9:05 without notice is disrespectful to others. If you're going to be late, let your colleagues know. If you commit to delivering a product in a week, deliver it in a week. If it's going to slip, let your colleagues know...and don't do so at the end of that week! Respect time...and I'll respect you.

If this seems demanding, I understand. I have very high expectations of people. I take my responsibilities very seriously – and chief among them is the provision of world-class teammates for the team members who have placed their confidence and trust in me. Let's get better – let's get great – together.

## **How to Ensure You're Outside the Circle**

Just as there's a list of things to do to win, here's the list of things to do to lose. Don't do these things.

- **Hide information.** Finding the information and sharing it with the team – that'll win you my respect. Not finding it? Hey, we all strike out sometimes. But finding it and hiding it? That's absolutely unacceptable, and it comes with consequences.
- **Take the easy way out.** Wanting to find an easier way to do things is a trait worthy of praise. Being unwilling to do the work because it might be hard? Don't do it. Get it done, then find a better way.
- **Dishonor your teammates.** Showing disrespect for your colleagues, whether by disrespecting their time, efforts, opinions, perspectives, or their innate humanity is a surefire way to earn my disrespect.
- **Whine or complain.** I'm a believer in using issues lists to identify the things we need to work on. Don't confuse an 'issues list' with a gripe session. As Sam Rayburn said, 'Any jackass can kick down a barn,

but it takes a good carpenter to build one.' Be a carpenter...not a jackass.

- **Be aloof or impersonal.** We work with people. Don't treat them as chatbots. Don't leave your camera off during a video call. Get vulnerable with one another and be open. Aloof, impersonal, 'too cool for school,' or unpleasant people are just antithetical to great team functioning.

That's it. Do the things on the first list. Don't do the ones on the second.

## How to Help Me

I've got plenty of shortcomings, and I absolutely acknowledge their impact. Here's how to help me overcome them, and how to help me be at my best for you:

- **Bring me information early.** The sooner I have information – even if it's bad – the better. I'm at my best when I have as much visibility into an issue as soon as possible. Statements like 'here's what I know now but I'm trying to gather more info' are some of my favorites! In that context, I can start thinking and reacting, and potentially thinking about what additional info to get. I'm at my best then.
- **Bring options, not just issues.** Don't hold info to wait on a solution idea – but think about the concerns you're seeing and what we can do about them. The sooner we can transition from 'here's a problem' to 'let's do this,' the more my bias to action becomes a strength rather than a weakness.
- **Let me get angry.** When I have it, my anger is short-lived and is just a way of externally releasing the internal tension of an issue. It's rare – to be sure – but when I get angry, it's a quick storm that will pass, and I'll be better for having released the tension.
- **Don't minimize a problem.** If I'm raising an issue, it's because I'm seeing it as a concern. That doesn't mean the world is coming to an end, it means it's a concern. Let's spend our time finding a solution, not discussing whether it's significant or not. If it's significant enough for me to bring up...it's significant enough for us to work on.
- **Ask assertive, rather than tell assertive.** If you need something from me, ask! I'm happy to help. I respond very well to being asked in an assertive way ('Hey, can you help me with X item'). I don't react as well (okay, I react badly!) to being told what to do ('Hey, do X' or 'Hey, you need to do X'), and yes, I absolutely realize the weirdness in that trait being coupled with having spent eight years in the Army!
- **Don't expect me to read your mind.** I operate with the standing rule of thumb that if nothing is mentioned, nothing is wrong. When my wife was pregnant with my son, we attended several 'baby prep' classes. One of them talked about how the dad's job in the room was to check on the mom, asking 'do you need a blanket? A glass of water? Is it too warm? Too cold? Are your feet comfortable? Do you need a pillow?' Molly leaned over to me and said, 'Do that and I'll throw you the hell out of the room...if I need a blanket, I'll tell you I need a damn blanket.' So...if you need a blanket, tell me you need a blanket.

I'm so incredibly excited for us to begin our journey together, and I hope this document, while long, helps to shorten the time required to hit our stride and work as well as we possibly can together. There's nothing in this I'm uncomfortable talking about – so if you have questions, concerns, etc., let's talk about them! I've spent my career enjoying the process of building and leading teams, and I know my style can be a little jarring at first, so don't think you're the first one to feel that way. Now...

**Let's get to work.**