

Hello? This is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thanks for tuning in. Please click on our social media icons, and please give us the benefit of your thoughts in the comment section, we always enjoy that.

This week I want to talk about four keys to leadership in uncertain times. And why is this important? Well, it is uncertain. One of the things that business thrives on is trust in the future, confidence in the future. And right now, the future is very murky and uncertain, and that rubs us business folks the wrong way. We want to be able to predict what's going to happen in 21 and 22 and 23. And right now that's a little harder than it may have otherwise been. So, these four keys, I think, will help us persevere and push through these uncertain times.

The first key is having a clear mission, vision and values. And I know every time I say this, people in the audience groan and they say, "Wayne, this is some consultant mess. Don't waste my time with that. It's so nebulous." I don't think it is. For us at FBI, our team, I think this is really helping us right now, as we make decisions about what to change, how to modify and all those other things. We talk about our mission, vision and values exhaustively. I'm sure the rest of my team is tired of me wearing them out on quizzing them. Everyone on the team knows our mission, vision, and values, and everyone on the team can recite it. And how do I know this? Because they do. We call on them and they do.

And it sounds silly. And it sounds like an old-fashioned schoolmarm trying to teach little kids, but it's so important to us, as we have to make decisions on the fly, we have this touchstone of our mission, vision and values that makes decision making so much easier and clearer. That's the value that it has.

The second part is living by those convictions. If you're going to do these things, if you're going to have these noble sounding mission, vision, and values, you have to live by them. There's a company called Sandler Sales Institute, and I have a lot of respect for those folks. And I remember they were talking to me one time, they were actually making a proposal and they talked about price. And the price was staggering, and it was a lot, and they made no apologies for it, they were not willing to negotiate one dime on that. And they said, "That's just part of our convictions. That's our methodology for how we teach people in sales. And so, we don't break price. And when I go to the car dealership, I look at what's on the sticker and I pay it. We don't negotiate our prices. Why would we expect the automobile dealer to negotiate his prices? Why would we expect the person at the farmer's market to be willing to haggle over their prices? Because we don't do it."

And I thought that was terrific. That's probably the first example that I can remember clearly back in the early 2000s of somebody living by their convictions so aggressively, you might say. I thought it was terrific.

Integrity. I've heard this definition. Integrity is how you behave when no one's looking. And I think these guys from Sandler behaved that way. I think they really did when they went to the car dealership or the farmer's market. I really do think that they did what they said they were doing, and they lived by those convictions.

The third thing is, be courageous and resolute. I'm a total nerd and I love Star Trek. I remember being sick as a little boy, I think I was seven years old, and an episode of Star Trek came on TV, and I was there alone able to watch the whole thing. Was it a half hour, an hour? I don't even remember, but it was amazing, and I was enthralled and here I am, many, many years later and I still love Star Trek and I still love that part in the beginning when William Shatner's voice comes along and it says, "To boldly go where no one has gone before." I still get a thrill when I hear that. And that's where we are now. We don't know exactly how we're going to come out of this uncertainty in a year or two years' time. But we do have to be

courageous, we have to be resolute, we have to have that mission, vision and values, we have to live by those convictions, and we have to be courageous and bold as we step off into this uncertainty.

Your mission in your company. Our mission here is too important to be derailed by current events. You've got to find a way to make your mission stick and make it apply so that you can continue to make a difference in the lives of your customers. That's too important to go away just because of current events, over a period of a few short months.

And finally, the fourth tip, we need to continually seek out new information and then be flexible as we adapt and react to new information. This is a perfect time when we may be faced with a little bit of a slowdown, to work on yourself, to get some training, to educate yourself, to rub off some rough edges, and also to train up your team. When things are a little bit slower at work, and people have a little more free time, they won't look like it, they won't say they have free time, but it's a perfect time to build that team, try to require some new talent potentially. And at the very least, get your current talent trained up so that they can perform even better during this period, but especially after we come out the other side.

So, I'd love to hear your comments. This is Wayne Rivers. Thanks very much.