

Good morning, everybody. Dennis Engelbrecht with FBI, where *We Build Better Contractors*. Digging Deeper.

Today, I want us to talk about transitioning from being an operational leader to a strategic leader. So, that may be happening to you for either of two reasons. One is perhaps you're getting a position change or looking at a position change where you're moving up in the world. Or, perhaps you just want to change the impact that you have in your current position by becoming more strategic and less operational. So, let's talk about several aspects of that.

One aspect I think is from the book *Time Is Money*. How you use your time. Are you doing \$10, \$20 and \$50 an hour work or are you doing \$1,000, \$10,000 or \$100,000 an hour work? Now, you may be asking, "Well, what is that because, yeah, I'd like to make \$100,000 an hour." Well, just think about it. \$100,000 an hour work. You could be helping shape a team that's going to run a multimillion-dollar project and by creating that better team and getting them to work together, well, they might have results that are well in advance of \$100,000 and you can get a great return. Or it could be you solidify a customer relationship that lasts on into infinity and the three days you spent on that might be worth \$30 million into the future.

So, those are the kind of things. Or creating a new strategy for the company that's going to save you 1% at the bottom line over a number of years. Those are the kind of things when we're talking about thousand, 10,000 or \$100,000 an hour work versus the more transactional day to day stuff. And so, think about that and think about the things that you do today because to do that other work at 10,000 or \$100,000 an hour work, you probably have to give up some of the 10, 20 and \$50 an hour stuff. So, what is there that you cannot do, delegate or perhaps as you move on to another position, you can start with a fresh slate and working on that?

The other thing I want you to think about is where you spend your time in a different way. We've spoken before and many of you know about Covey's sort of 2 X 2 graph of working on what's urgent versus what's important. Well, if you've done that, you know that quadrant two is the quadrant of planning. And planning can't happen when you're in the mode of urgency. So, urgency is really your enemy. The other enemy is doing the unimportant, of course, and hopefully as leaders most of you are not spending a lot of time in quadrants three and four where the more unimportant things are happening. But what we want to do is get you out of quadrant one, operating in the urgent, and move you to quadrant two, the quadrant of planning, because that's really where strategy occurs. And those operational leaders are oftentimes dealing with things that are in that urgent side.

Next thing I want to talk about is how you interact with others. So, as operational leaders, you very much are involved usually in directing people and directing activities as an operational leader. Well, strategic leaders are more involved in building leaders, building teams, making others better, finding ways to add value by making others better as opposed to yourself. And, again, that could be in a company direction. It could be in coaching. All of those things. But, as strategic leaders, you want to get out of... You want to move from just directing people and activities and you got to interact differently with folks if you actually want to help shape people and make them better.

Now, one example of that might be... You know, there's an old saying. If you catch a fish, you feed a person for a day. If you teach a person to fish, you feed them for a lifetime. So, that's kind of the same thing I'm talking about in terms of how you interact with your employees. Try to teach them how to fish so that they will improve and create that food for a lifetime kind of thing.

The other thing in interacting with folks is you want to go from being the problem solver, somebody they come to get their answers and get their problems solved, to being a facilitator of problem solving. Help them figure out. Help them find the answers. Help them figure out how to find the answers. Again, very much like teaching them how to fish.

And number four in going from operational leaders to strategic leaders. Strategic leaders focus on vision and values. All right? The vision, where you're going. And, the values, how you act while getting there. Not how you get there. How you

act while getting there. So, think about that. As a strategic leader, you want to help create the vision and keep the vision present in everybody's mind. But then you want to be focused on how everybody acts in getting that... Getting to that vision. The how you get there and the steps to get there, that's more the operational leader side. Right? All right.

And, finally, number five. Strategic leaders are responsible for the strategic plan and when I say they're responsible, their job is to inspire the team, hold folks responsible for, again, doing those building blocks, meeting those milestones and then to assess how you're doing, possibly even alter the course as needed as it goes along.

So, again, if you want to grow in your career or you want to see growth from your folks in their careers, see how they can transition from being operational leaders into being more strategic leaders.

Again, Dennis Engelbrecht, Digging Deeper. Hope you have a great day.