



What's in a name?

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I am often asked what is purposeful leadership, and why is it the focus of my institute? Based on my work with executives and the review of some of the best thinking on the subject, it has become clear to me that purpose is central to effective, principled, leadership. For successful leaders, defined purpose is the real source of their energy, focus and power. A leader's creative spirit is renewed when they reconnect to their genuine professional and personal values, and to their unique talents. Purpose inspires their spirit to believe that their vision of the future is worthwhile and attainable. It enables them to articulate this vision clearly and passionately. It lets them explain complicated issues in simple terms, and then to address them easily. It inspires others to reach for their dreams too. These dreams ignite the spark of renewal that enables them to move towards the future they desire with optimism and confidence. Purpose gives them a new sense of control over their destiny. In recognizing their true talents and values, they gain the self-knowledge, the awareness, they need to be a purposeful leader.

Purposeful leaders are the antithesis of the stereo-typical executive who is driven, overbearing, and ruthless. The most successful shun the tyranny of ego in their quest for meaningful and truly rewarding professional careers and gratifying personal lives. They do not compromise their ethical standards for the sake of expediency or financial self-interest. They have learned the painful lessons of repeating the same actions over and over again, expecting a different result. Effective leaders stop the rush to activity; they distinguish the unimportant from the important and urgent. By being true to themselves and to others, they have the ability to inspire trust in their stakeholders (employees, bosses, board) to make manifest their vision of the future. Aristotle is reputed to have said: "Where the needs of the world and your talents cross, there lies your vocation."

So why is purposeful leadership the focus of the Bonar Institute? In a word, it's because successful leaders are purposeful leaders.