

The Law of The Big Picture

-- Rod Williams

Good morning, everyone!

(Enthusiastic "Good Mornings")

How did you enjoy the reading for this week?

(Not quite so enthusiastic)

On your table you should see peanuts, three balloons, some military/firemen/whatever, and an envelope. Do not open the envelope until you're done with everything else; that will be the last thing you'll do.

The object is to build three pyramids: two with peanuts and one with your toy men. The three pyramids should be the same height, just like this drawing. In front of each pyramid, you should place one balloon. On your plastic men, you should see a strip of tape. That is to hold down the balloons.

(Carrying around the drawing for everyone to see)

Questions?

Do we have to use all the peanuts?

No.

Do we have to blow up the balloons?

If you're allergic, I'd rather you didn't. Get someone else to blow them up for you.

Do we have to use all the plastic men?

Yes, you do.

Is there a time limit?

There is no time limit, but we don't want to be here all day.

Go ahead and start.

(Lots of activity, punctuated by "Old MacDonald Had A Farm", "B - I - N-G-O!", and "We Wish You A Merry Christmas!")

Is everyone done? Go ahead and put your plastic men back in the bag, and wait for Todd to come and collect them. You may keep your balloons, but please don't pop them during training.

-- Pastor Paine

Did you get a chance to read chapter two?

(Scattered chorus of "Yes!")

Look at your teammates; look at the people at your table. I know that you have different levels of how well you know each other. I'm going to give you a few minutes and ask you to share a strength; something positive; a characteristic about the other one that shows something they bring to each team they're on, no matter where it is.

- When Sherry has a task to do, she makes sure it gets done quickly and efficiently.
- Bill Griffith is a very joyous person; he brings that spark to the team and helps motivate and minister to his teammates.
- Charlene brings a lot of dedication.
- Bob brings knowledge and know-how to the team.
- Clarence is very motivational.
- Connie is very focused when there's something set in front of her to do.
- Pat is young and fun to be around.
- Aaron is very encouraging for his desire to be a part of the team.
- Bill brings a lot of experience and knowledge and helps us with guidance.
- Carlton is very easy-going and has a good sense of humor.
- Jeff Linger brings his willingness to teach and share what he's learned.
- Tod is very enthusiastic.
- Pastor Taylor brings dedication for every event he's in; he's always available.
- Shelly brings knowledge; the job is going to get done no matter what.
- Jo-Ann brings level-headedness and keeps focused on the goal.
- Ron is excellent at following instructions and doing tasks that are tedious.
- Jay is a natural leader and a great teammate.
- Bill Presher has a healthy sarcasm; he makes a light reference to everything.
- Patrick is very excited.
- Ken is patient.
- Dwight is energetic.
- Josh and Jeff are both encouraging.
- Hilberto is cooperative and willing to work with the team.

Have you noticed that everybody brings something to the team? When you take time to look at people and what strengths they have, it's interesting. Some may be more fun-loving, and someone else may be more focused. Which one do you want on your team?

(Equal responses of "Fun-loving!" "Focused!" and "Both!")

When you're in a time-crunch, you appreciate the fun-loving person because they help keep up your morale, and you appreciate the focused person because they help you get things done.

As we have the privilege to be on a team or assemble a team, we realize that everyone can bring something different.

If you had the authority to delegate tasks on a team, how many of them would you delegate? One of the important benefits of studying teamwork is that we learn about ourselves. Once we do, we can be more effective as a team-member or a team-leader. Let's say you have ten tasks that you're responsible for getting done. If you have ten tasks, how many do you delegate and how many do you do yourself? Are you quick to delegate those tasks or are you slow to delegate those tasks? How many of you find yourselves delegating all of them quickly?

(some hands)

How many of you hang on to those tasks and delegate them slowly or not at all?

(some hands)

That's not good or bad, right or wrong. But if that's how you're wired, maybe you should think about who you should delegate tasks to; who can do them better than you can yourself.

I'm going to share a scene from a TV show called Seventh Heaven:

The pastor is in the study. The secretary says, "Mrs. Smith is here to see you again." As the story opens, you realize that Mrs. Smith is a faithful parishioner who lost her husband and teenage daughter in a terrible accident a year ago. A couple times a week she comes to the pastor and asks him the same questions. Do you feel the weight on the pastor's shoulders? He's already told her everything he can tell her, and now he's about to do it again. So he says, "Give me a minute." Then a little later the secretary buzzes again, "Nancy is here to see you." "Nancy?" "Your daughter's friend from school? You know, the one who got pregnant, and her parents kicked her out, and your daughter told her if she ever needs to talk to someone, she can talk to you?" He says, "Give me a minute." Then he prays for a while, and you can see it happening. Then he buzzes the secretary and says "Send them both in."

I love the next part. He says, "Mrs. Smith, this is Nancy. Nancy, this is Mrs. Smith I've got a meeting to go to; I'll be back in an hour."

Sometimes it looks like you have two problems but what you really have are two solutions.

I'm going to tell another story. Dog-whisperer. There is a family that has a problem training a big dog. He meets with the family and says, "The problem is that this dog is wired to do work, and he doesn't know what his job is." So they put a small saddle-bag on the dog and gave the dog a pouch to carry. And now the dog has in its mind, "This is my job. This is what I do." And the behavior issues were gone.

Sometimes you get someone on your team and you've got to find them a purpose. As we talk about an individual's strengths, that can tie in to their purpose. Sometimes we have what looks like two problems, but really we have two solutions.

What happens when one person insists on holding the ball? You can think of a literal ball in a game, or as a metaphor. What happens when one person is a control-freak?

- Bottleneck
- Team loses
- Resentment
- Slows down the team
- Nothing gets done
- De-motivates the team
- Pretty soon, you've got a team of one
- Lose the big picture

Every team has a goal. It's important that we understand that the goal is bigger than the role.

In this chapter, John Maxwell tells a story of President Jimmy Carter. He's done with his job as president, and he gets invited by Habitat for Humanity to do some jobs, and he doesn't pick the jobs to do. He says, "I'll do everything you ask me to do." They expect him to show up with a hammer and pose for a photo-op, but he swings a hammer all day. It wasn't about him and his role; it was about the team and the team's goal. Almost every one of us will occasionally fall into the trap of seeing us instead of the team. We are each the center of our own universe. If you don't believe me, try this out: In a class photo, who do you see? How many look for yourself in the class photo? I do. I've never looked at a group photo that I didn't look for myself in the group. If we all understand that's our tendency, then as a team leader, we have to guard against that being our

focal-point. It's important to get back to the big picture.

What's a movie that really illustrates teamwork over individualism?

- Miracle
- Remember the Titans
- 300
- Unstoppable
- Ninja Turtles
- The Mighty Ducks
- Rudy

I like that. He was part of the team, and in his own way, he *was* the team. When he put on that jacket, he wasn't just himself. He was Notre Dame.

How about the movie "We Are Marshall"

Let's fill in the blanks. My role as a team member is to always submit to the goal of the team. Even if you're the leader or the C.O., it's still not all about you. Is that good? The advancement of your career is important, but there is a balance there.

I hope that you'll hear this as a healthy admonishment. You're going to have to keep this in check throughout your journey. If you don't have a little bit of an ego, you probably won't ever be a great leader. Does anybody want to challenge that? But if you don't keep that in check, you won't ever be a great leader.

My son Adam came over and we were sitting at the kitchen table reminiscing. He remembered a family rule in our home. I came in with a guest, and Adam just sat in his chair and waved from across the room. We had a little talk. I said, "That's not how we do it here. I brought in a guest. I want you to get up, walk across the floor, shake hands, and introduce yourself. And when you bring in a guest, I'll do the same for you. We're a team." About a week later, Adam brought in a buddy from school, and I was sitting in the same chair. Adam said, "Dad. Eric's here." I waved and said, "Hi, Eric." I can picture it now. Adam said, "Dad." and motioned for me to get up. I think he was like eleven years old.

Did you get up?

Oh, yeah, I got up! Because I meant it when I said that we're a team.

Let's fill in some more blanks:

A servant-leader serves the mission and leads by serving those who serve the mission with him. Successful teams look up at the big picture. On page 21 it says, they size up their situation.

Can anyone give an example of leading by serving?

- A pastor
- I can tell someone to help me with tables and chairs, but if I stand there and don't do anything, it's not helping.
- If you were doing a task like that, and you knew there was something else they needed, you go and got that thing they needed.
- Where I work, working supervisors are called "leads" and they make sure you have what you need to do the job.

- In the book, Jimmy Carter was a perfect example of leading by serving.
- When you delegate a bunch of tasks to various teams, you have to keep a pulse on what's going on. When you see someone struggling with their delegated task, you come alongside of them and bring what they need to continue.
- When your team messes up, you in and help them correct it instead of complaining.

Jimmy Carter: good leadership or bad leadership, when he spends the day swinging a hammer? Can anyone give me an example where that could be bad leadership?

- If he's supposed to be doing something else.

There is a pastor whose congregation puts together thousands of Thanksgiving food-baskets to distribute to the community. He comes in and helps with that endeavor. Now, if he worked every day in the kitchen, he wouldn't be able to do his job as a pastor. But he chooses to spend that day in blue-jeans, working on food-baskets.

The CEO of Southwest Airlines used to help load baggage on Thanksgiving morning. Nobody wants to work on Thanksgiving. It wasn't a photo-op. He spent about six hours on the line, loading baggage with everyone else.

Successful teams:

- Look at the big picture.
- Size up the situation.
- Line up their resources.

When your team knows that you will use your position of authority to get them resources to do their job, how does that make them feel?

Successful teams:

- Call up the right team members.

That was where you started, when you listed the strengths of your teammates. You might want both the fun-loving and the focus-oriented people

Successful teams:

- Give up their personal agenda.

If your personal agenda ever gets bigger than the team's agenda, it's out of balance. I didn't say that you shouldn't have a personal agenda. If you're an E-6 in the Navy, there's nothing wrong with working toward E-7. That's not a bad agenda. But it'd better not be bigger than the team agenda.

I read about a guy who became a foreman at a plant that had equipment in it. He decided that he was going to boost the numbers and look good by eliminating preventive maintenance on all the equipment. And he did. He boosted productivity so much that they gave him a promotion. And the guy who came after him looked terrible by comparison, because he had to have the equipment down for twice the time to catch up on all the maintenance.

Successful teams:

The Law of The Big Picture

- Step up to the next level.

What struck you in this chapter?

- Jimmy Carter's contribution to Habitat for Humanity. It really helped get that program off the ground.
- It made me realize how much we are all part of a big picture.

Seeing the big picture is not a natural thing. It's something you have to learn how to do. Look at riding a bicycle. If you look down at where the front tire is touching the ground, what happens? You run into something, don't you? And we all make that mistake when we first start riding a bicycle. Teamwork is like that.

- Winston Churchill's ability to make the coal-miners see the big picture. It's okay as a leader to see the big picture, but what's important is to make other people see the big picture.
- Sometimes we look at a leader's success and we say, "Oh, look at them", but we don't think of the sacrifices they made to get where they're at.

Leaders have to make a sacrifice to lead, but when you see the team is bigger than yourself, it doesn't feel like a sacrifice.

- Looking at Habitat for Humanity, we have a mission that is relatively simple.
- Titles should not make you super-human; we're all common people; we all should get involved.

Rod said something to me that I think of often. When we were remodeling this building, I was in the hallway, painting. He looked at me and said something very sincere and very important. He said, "If you were my C.O., I wouldn't let you hold that paintbrush." I said to him, "I won't be able to hold this paintbrush for long. But for now, everyone needs to know that we're all doing what it takes to get this building ready."

The question we should all ask ourselves is, "Do I place the team above myself?" The answer should always be "Yes."

1. What's the big picture? Where are you going, and what is your organization's purpose? What is your team's goal within that goal?
2. What is the current situation as it relates to the Big Picture?
How many see the glass as half-empty? How many as half-full? You need both people on your team. When Jim Ottoson served on our International Board, he was always my ballast. I would say, "We can do this!" And he would come to me afterward with a checklist of why we can't. Sometimes you need someone on your team who is your opposite, personality-wise.
3. Identify the resources necessary to accomplish the goal.
4. List the team members necessary to reach the goal.
This is one that I haven't naturally been good at. Go looking. Go recruiting. Go looking for the people
5. What personal sacrifices will have to be made in order for the team to work together toward the Big Picture?
6. What is the level of achievement when the ingredients listed above are in place?

Spend some time on those questions, then go down to the bottom and list five ways to communicate the Big Picture to other team members.

Closing Comments

-- Rod Williams

I want to thank everybody for showing up today. Read the next chapter, "The Law of the Niche," and really pray about the opportunity to invite your friends and co workers.

Did everyone see how the exercise applies to the lesson today?

("No!" from Bill Preshler)

We had a big picture up here. Each piece was a part of the big picture. You have a big picture as a business, it's called "making a dollar." What things are a part of that big picture?

(Discussion about how the "Big Picture" in terms of running a business relates to the exercise.)