

Hi, this is Wayne Rivers at FBI, and *We Build Better Contractors*.

This week, I want to talk about the seven traits of companies who build great leaders. And first, I want to thank Arlin Sorensen, who's the source of this. He's our peer group member and friend. You've heard Dennis and I both reference Arlin quite a bit. He does a daily blog. I don't know how he does it. It's amazing. Second, I want to shout out to Neha. Neha is our head of marketing, and she normally does the videos and the production of all that stuff. But she's at home with a new baby boy. So, congratulations to Neha. That's a great thing. And the circle of life continues.

So, this week, I want to talk about the seven traits of companies who build great leaders and what about this is important to you. Well, golly, all of us are thinking about what's next. Well, all of us who are 60 or older, anyway, are thinking about what's next. And there's not going to be a next. If you don't build that next group of leaders out, there's really no way for you to gradually exit your company and your responsibilities gracefully. So, it's key that you start thinking about now how are you going to build your next generation of leaders if you haven't started doing so already.

So, number one, they develop leaders by plan. So, they have plans for how they're going to develop their current managers and also their younger developing people. Don't forget Boot Camp, by the way. Dallas, November 3rd and 4th. We're down to 12 seats remaining. So, get your folks signed up for Boot Camp. So, they have plans for developing their next generation, their next levels of talent. They have all other plans to budgets, capital budgets, all kinds of different things. And that's all embodied in the company's overall strategic plan.

Brings me to the next point, which is companies that build great leaders focus on their mission, vision, and values. And they transmit the mission, vision, and values down to that next generation of leaders. It's not just some pretty anthem or language placed on the company wall somewhere. This is how they make decisions. They make decisions based on their values, their mission, and their vision.

The third thing is great leaders need to be around other great leaders. Iron sharpens iron. And so, CEOs and also next generation folks get into peer groups of one type or another, whether it's a local peer group or whether there's some national peer group, like what we do, and some other folks do. Iron sharpens iron. And so, creating leaders in a vacuum is pretty hard to do. Being around other leaders who are also learning and growing is a great tool.

The fourth thing, they invest time. Senior leaders invest time in their people. That is a priority for them. It is on their schedules. They schedule time to meet with other leaders, build those people up on a one-on-one basis.

The fifth thing, they run their companies transparently. Companies who build great leaders tend to be open book, or open bookish, let's say. I'm not sure anyone really profits from looking at your P&L and your balance sheet because they probably wouldn't understand them. But having a means of communicating and being transparent about where the company is financially, where the company is in terms of its overall state, where you're headed as a company, all those things. That's another trait.

The seventh thing is that they celebrate and appreciate other people. Wins are attributed to the team. You guys did a great job. Losses, mistakes, troubles, ah, I should have seen that coming. That's my fault. What are we going to do next time? And you build from there.

So those are the seven traits. Now, Arlin says in his blog that the biggest excuse he hears for why companies don't invest in, and train great next gen leaders is because if I invest all that money in them and then they leave the company, then I'm out all of that time, effort, and money. That is so lame. That is so weak. I can't believe anybody in 2022 would even say that anymore.

First of all, if you don't invest in those young next gen leaders, that means you've got a bunch of untrained people in your employ and that makes it harder to be the leader. If you have to be everywhere every day with your hand on everything

continually, that doesn't make any sense to me. I want a great company and a great life. I want you to have a great construction company and a great life. You can't do that with a bunch of untrained people. Invest in your folks.

The second reason that excuse is so lame is that you failed to demonstrate your commitment to improving their lives. And in today's world, that's got to be a piece of it. You've got to demonstrate that you have your heart in the right place and you're going to invest in these rising leaders so that not just you, but they can have a better life. That's got to be a part of the equation. And that's just... In case you couldn't tell, that really gets under my skin. Arlin says leaders are made not born. Can you quibble with that? I'd like to see what you have to say in the comments. So let us know what you think. This is Wayne Rivers at FBI and *We Build Better Contractors*.