



Focus

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Belief Statement

If you're a leader, you are responsible for your followers, and they have expectations for your behavior. Foremost among these expectations is consistency.

Consistent behavior by an authority figure is necessary to establish boundaries, and we all need to know our boundaries to feel secure. Moving through life without boundaries is like walking through a minefield; you never know which step could be your last.

A leader needs a belief framework to behave consistently. Life is full of dilemmas, fads, and intense passions of the moment; it is easy to go astray without a moral compass. That's where writing your personal Belief Statement helps – it clarifies your most important values.

I recommend the following simple process.

- Write short, declarative sentences. Most should begin with "I believe."
- Limit your values, or beliefs, to five or fewer.
- List your items in a logical order.
- Edit your final Belief Statement to 100 words or less.

Your values may include business guidelines, spiritual beliefs, roles for organizations in society, how people should be treated, and any other enduring principles.

A well-crafted belief statement is simple, brief, and relevant to its author. You need not share it with others – although that's fine – but you *should* read it once a month. After this monthly reading, ask yourself if your behavior has been congruent with your values.

I challenge you to get started now on your first draft. Begin by writing freely without concern for length or limits. Don't rush, but instead let your thoughts evolve over a few days. As you become more comfortable with the ranking of your core values, begin the editing process – again, without haste. You will recognize when you're done.

So, what do you believe?

Tom Wagner

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develop employee management skills, and solve strategic problems.

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