



Point of View

Dear Marketplace Friend,

Buckle your seat belts: we're going on a reading road-trip this summer. Remember: *leaders are readers...* and though they out-source lots of things, they cannot delegate the development of their intellectual prowess. I'll do some scouting for you, but you need more than my one-page footnotes to be sharpened in your leadership wisdom. *Open an account at Amazon...*

Consider this insight: *"The very essence of leadership is that you have to have a vision. It's got to be a vision you articulate clearly and forcefully on every occasion."* (Theodore Hesburgh, President of the University of Notre Dame). In **The Master's Program**, we build on a foundational premise: leaders are very different than managers. Leaders bring two essential contributions to any system: **vision**, which gives *direction*, and **strategies**, which give *directions*. Managers direct and supervise to pursue the vision and actualize the strategies, but without leaders, they can only *maintain the past...* they cannot *create the future*.

Most leaders are charlatans (*"a person falsely claiming to have a special knowledge or skill"*). It isn't intentional; they just observe the actions of successful leaders and bring them into their sphere of influence hoping to replicate their way to success. With a *vision vacuum* and *counterfeited strategies*, they



realize a minimal level of effectiveness... and proceed through life as stillborn (*"failing to develop or succeed"*) leaders.

Run - don't walk - to your nearest internet access point and order your own copy of **The Power of Vision: Discover and Apply God's Plan for your Life and Ministry**, by George Barna (Regal Books, 2009, available in paperback and as a Kindle download).

Though framed for leaders of churches and ministries, the principles Barna outlines are equally applicable to the Christian leader of a for-profit enterprise, if they recognize that, for the serious believer, there is no bifurcation - for them - between business and ministry.

George never speculates when he can, instead, conduct a study and report the results. So, when he says that *"Although they are good people and have been called to ministry, most senior pastors do not have an understanding of God's vision for the ministries they are trying to lead... Not even 1 out of 10*

senior pastors of Protestant churches can articulate God's vision for their church," he knows what he is talking about. Let me add my blunt editorial to that observation: that means that only 10% of senior pastors are leaders; the rest are managers - at best - and cannot be the change agents that we need at this mission-critical moment.

Before you join in my challenge to senior pastoral leadership, examine your own: *can you articulate God's vision for the business enterprise where you are deemed the "leader?"* If you have no clarity of vision - God's vision - for your business activities, the best you can do is a *"monkey see; monkey do"* replication of *"best practices"* imported from *"the industry."*

Tell me: *do you really believe that the visions of godless competitors will birth strategies that you should be mimicking to "succeed" in your professional life?*

So, are you a *provider (of vision)* - or a *pretender?* Is it worth reading 152 pages of challenge from George Barna to find out?

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