



Rubber Bracelet

Based on our current cash position combined with our Accounts Receivable, Accounts Payable and a host of other financial and social factors, I believe The Program has enough money to pay our teammates' salaries for the next few months. We will then become insolvent if normal business does not resume. As the leader of The Program, I have already communicated that to my Program teammates. What we do know is limited and sobering. The "unknowns" are countless and even scarier. I have chosen to not use that as an excuse for communicating everything I do know though.

At the start of every *Judgment Day* (athletic teams) or *Leadership Challenge* (corporate teams), our Lead Instructor stands in front of the group and asks for a volunteer. We love to see who the



first person is to do so. People are standing on-line. They don't know what is going to happen. There is confusion and unknown. They don't want to "step up." They are nervous.

Our feedback after the event to any team captain or business director (if they didn't volunteer) is that they wasted a great opportunity to prove that they were a true leader and not just a "Captain," or "Director of ...". Those are titles. A title does not make you a leader. A leader has influence and an ability and desire to use it. Everyone is a hero when it is seventy degrees and sunny. We are all great teammates and great team leaders when things are going well. Unfortunately, that is not when you need them. We need great teammates and great team leaders when it's not!

I don't know the extent of the negative impact that this virus will have on our economy, our company or on my ability to support my family. I'm nervous. However, as we discuss with Team Captains or Directors, if, as the leader, I am nervous, that 100% means that my teammates are nervous too. If in a position of authority, this is a great opportunity to prove that we are actual leaders and not just holding the title of one. This is when we not only *should* step up, we must! How? Be 100% transparent with your team. Communicate and then over-communicate everything that you do know. And not knowing something is, in fact, something that you know. Admit it to your team. Trust is the foundation of every relationship. Transparency builds trust. Clear, effective communication provides transparency. A lack of it, destroys it.

So much concerns me, but I control very little. Thankfully, the little I do control includes my attitude and my effort. Specifically, this virus and the adversity it is creating throughout our society is a great opportunity for The Program! I must have that attitude and then I must instill it in my team. Second, I must then give 100% effort to ensure that we do the things we need to do so that our response to these challenging times makes us better as a team. We are not going to "just maintain." We are not going to just "get through," this challenge. We are going to attack it! We are going to get better. As the leader, I must have this attitude and give the effort required to get better, and then, I must demand and help my team to do so, as well.

This past week, I forgot that. Thankfully, I have great teammates. One of them, Omri Rachmut, a former Israeli paratrooper and our newest team member (he joined our team two months ago), reminded me of the opportunity we now have; to strengthen our relationships with every coach and business leader in North America (our battlefield). In times of adversity, most individuals and corporations will turn their focus inward in an effort to *survive* it. Don't! We are not trying to *survive* this period. We are going to grow from it.



We must have the attitude that this is a great opportunity for us and then give all our effort to confirm it. Coaches and business leaders, you have the same opportunity with your own teams on your own battlefields.

A rubber bracelet around our wrist shows that we *support* a cause. It has very little impact on that cause though. To make an impact, we must actually *do* something! A quarantine need only be physical. We will call all our clients and past clients, call all our prospects, and call all coaches and business leaders who may never work with us. We will offer and provide our assistance to them and their teams by setting up webinars, phone calls and video conferences with their team to discuss how they can be the best team leaders and teammates that they can be right now during this challenging time. We will call all of them and most importantly, we will listen. We are all nervous...

Coaches, this is a great opportunity for you to call your recruits. It is also a great opportunity to call your players and call their parents. It is a great opportunity to call your alumni and to call the recruit you lost five years ago to a different school. Business leaders, it is a great opportunity to call your clients and call the prospects you lost to a competitor. Listen to understand. Offer help. Provide it.

The Program has been telling our clients for years that we *care about them*. Business leaders, coaches, teachers, members of our government, you have been saying the same. Now is an opportunity when we can all prove it.

Clear, effective, transparent communication combined with a positive attitude and relentless effort will allow us to do so.

At the very least, let's wash our hands!

Eric Kapitulik
Founder and CEO

"Letters on Leadership" are published periodically by The Program, a leadership development and team building company that works with the nation's leading corporations as well as professional and collegiate athletic teams.

For information on developing better leaders and more cohesive teams at your organization, visit <http://www.theprogram.org/corporate>.