

# ***The Leader's Legacy***

*Learn From the Great Ones and Build Your Lasting Legacy*

***By Scott F. Burns***

## **About the Author - Bio and Background**

I've had the good fortune to work with Leaders for 30 years and in a Senior Leader role for 22 years, gaining a deep understanding of what's important and what's not in a leadership role. I've worked in corporate roles and on local senior teams for several Fortune 500 companies, including Arthur Andersen, Hewitt Associates, and ADP. I have extensive experience in Leadership Development, Organizational Development, and Human Resources. As a trusted advisor and business partner to leaders and leadership teams, I provide the tools to help deliver insightful solutions that empower leaders to take their leadership to the next level.



### ***Leadership Coach***

As a Certified Leadership Coach, I help leaders drive better results. I utilize powerful questioning, deep listening, and practical feedback to act as a sounding board, thinking partner, and collaborator. I draw on targeted leadership development resources to help leaders discover the best of their strengths. When they do, we get to work to find the best ways to leverage those strengths to achieve and exceed their goals.

**Coaching is a Forward-Moving, Goal-Focused Investment in You**

**I Help You Achieve 3 Leadership Outcomes**

- 1) You can find the most impactful solutions to your most important goals**
- 2) You can take your leadership to the next level**
- 3) You can make a difference and make your part of the world a better place - because you've led it**

### ***Leadership Development Consultant***

I partner with leadership teams to design broad talent strategies that drive the critical aspects of their business. These teams are able to deliver better results when we invest in comprehensive Leadership Development programs and targeted seminars for leaders and leadership teams. I take a strength-based approach to leadership development. I empower each leader to discover their most vital strengths and find as many ways as they can to leverage these strengths to drive better results.

***I help leaders and their teams to be more successful***

**Reach out to me to discuss how we can take your leadership to the next level:**

**[leadership.sfburns@yahoo.com](mailto:leadership.sfburns@yahoo.com) (630) 432-9138**

**Visit *The Leader's Legacy* Website: [LEADERSHIP-SCOTTFBURNS.COM](http://LEADERSHIP-SCOTTFBURNS.COM).**

**to find leadership development resources that will help you make an impression**

As a Leadership Coach and Consultant, I Partner with Leaders and Organizations  
To Deliver on a Variety of Leadership Strategies:

Executive Presence	Transition and Transformation	Succession Management
Mission and Vision	Strategy	New Leader Coaching

Talent Development	Leadership Communication	Change Management
Leadership Influence	Leadership Impact	Leadership Confidence
Career Pathing	Team Building	Employee Engagement
Other Leadership Strategies Tailored to the Needs of Your Leaders		

## Chapter 1:

As a leader, you are invited to make your part of the world a better place. You get to make a difference for your organization, your clients, and those you have the good fortune to empower, develop and lead. As you leverage the best of your talents to make an impact on your world, what would it mean to you to build a leadership legacy you can be proud of?

One powerful way to begin building a legacy is to think about what may be waiting for you at the end of your journey. Take a few minutes to envision a scene ten years or thirty years down the road, after you've given every ounce of your heart and soul, and you're able to enjoy a well-earned retirement. Think about how rewarding it will be to sit back and reflect on what you've accomplished in all those years as a leader.

The scene might be a wood-paneled study next to the fireplace, a hammock in the backyard of your summer home, or a corner seat at the neighborhood coffee shop. As you slowly allow the morning to unfold, the faces of a few of your favorite colleagues make their way through the steam rising from your second cup of coffee. Your memory takes a short journey. Without much of your own effort, you have a front-row seat to watch a short feature starring you in a few of your favorite career moments.

What scenes will be playing as you think about your most memorable accomplishments? You have the opportunity to choose how you'll create those memories. And you can start right now.

How would you like to build your leadership legacy?

I have an early memory of a story that made a significant impression on me. Sitting in class one day during my junior year in high school, our teacher was reading a short story narrated by an 80-year-old man riding a train. He was reflecting on the life he was coming to terms with, reminiscing about all the things he wished he could have, wished he would have done.

Listening to the story, I had a visceral reaction. I remember thinking, defiantly, there was no chance I'd be sitting on a train at 80 years old, cataloging my regrets, asking myself why I didn't take better advantage of

all I'd been given. I decided right there that I was not going to arrive near the end of my life with a lingering epitaph of – I wish I woulda.

We are offered the opportunity, manifest in our work, to decide what we'll be stubborn enough to make happen and which parts of our best selves we'll offer. When you have that cup of coffee conversation at the end of your career, how would you like to answer when you ask yourself, 'What have I done with this one life of mine?'

Will you be able to say, all things considered, *'I took the best run I could. I'm proud of what I offered. Proud that I made my part of the world a better place because I led it! It wasn't a flawless run, but I had the courage to dive in and take advantage of most opportunities. I took most of the risks I could and threw my best self at it. I explored and tested the limits of my talents and gifts. I polished and honed them the best I could. I left very little on the table, and I had a heck of a good time doing it.'*

It'd be nice to say something like this, wouldn't it? Where would you like that conversation to go?

Maya Angelou

**"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."**

Abraham Lincoln

**"Whatever you are, be a good one."**

### ***The Best Leader I've Ever Known***

I learned most of what I know about leadership from my grandfather. He was our mayor, town grocer, and the best leader I've ever known. Allow me to introduce you.

Fred Thwaites was born in the small town of Ionia, Michigan, in 1920. He was the youngest of 8, who lost his father at age 5. Not a family of means, his mother struggled to maintain the family's dairy delivery business after the death of her husband. Restless by nature, Fred wasn't the best student in school. When I asked him about his school days once, he said, "Your grandmother was smart enough for the both of us.

Always at the top of her class. Why do you think I handed the books over to her? She's a master at keeping the store profitable."



While he didn't excel in the classroom, he more than made up for it on the athletic field. He was chosen as captain of his high school football, baseball, and basketball teams. After serving in WWII, he came home and seized the opportunity to purchase the town's grocery store. He launched a successful business and embraced the privilege of taking care of his town for the next 55 years. He served as a member of the City Council for most of those years and was proud to have served as mayor of Ionia for 16 years. He laid the foundation for his leadership early in his life and continued to show his commitment to building on it to become the best leader he could be.

I was inspired to write this book when I realized how much of a legacy my grandfather left. He was an incredible leader who accomplished a tremendous amount in his time. What's more impressive is *how* he led. His leadership was defined by how deeply he cared for the people who worked with him, for his town, his store, and his family. He did leadership the right way and was motivated to make a difference every day. He made his part of the world a little better in the time he had the chance to lead it. We can all learn from his success as a leader and learn from the way he led.

My own lifelong passion for learning about leadership was set in motion by watching this man. He exemplified leadership. Over the past 30 years, I've had the good fortune to learn from and advise some of the business world's most outstanding leaders. The leadership attributes my grandfather lived by have been confirmed over and over as I've watched these leaders practice leadership in much the same way he

did. It's amazing to see the common and not-so-common leadership attributes that run through the most successful leaders.



The best leaders certainly work hard and work smart. They also care deeply about their customers, their business, and especially the people they lead. They do everything in their power to empower and develop their people. They find ways to lift them up and make them stronger, better, more driven, and more accomplished. The very best leaders make every person and every organization better for having had the chance to work with them. They also care enough about themselves to invest in being the very best leader they can possibly be. These leaders bear witness to how much they care in all they do. This allows them to build a leadership legacy they can be proud of.

*The Leader's Legacy* captures much of what I've learned from my grandfather and from working with and coaching some of the world's most influential leaders. I've captured stories about leaders who create their own legacy as they continually search for ways to become more effective. And when they find these leadership advantages, they take advantage of them in extraordinary ways.

Extraordinary leaders:

- Act with integrity
- Lead with a leadership intelligence
- Claim their leadership brand to leave their impression
- Lead with loyalty and inspire a followership

And extraordinary leaders aspire to achieve a whole lot more. As you read *The Leader's Legacy*, you'll learn about leadership done right. The kind that would make my grandfather proud. And you might just enjoy a story or two along the way.

### *The Power of Stories*

In *The Leader's Legacy*, you'll find that many of the lessons on leadership are told in the voice of stories, because stories are powerful. Stories help us make sense of essential leadership lessons and empower us to apply them to our leadership journey. They have the power to teach us how to be the best leaders we can be. So, in addition to the leadership traits that define each of the lessons on leadership in this book, you'll find stories that bring those lessons to life.

I learned about the power of stories a few years ago during my final visit with my grandmother. I read her a story that day. I needed to share this gift with the one who first inspired my love for reading, and we found ourselves sitting in a rose garden on the outskirts of the small Michigan town we were both born in. Who says life isn't rich with full, round circles? I hoped that the visit to the small garden would help her become accustomed to the foreign place she was now asked to reside in. And might also bring back a bit of her lost memory.

Sitting together in the garden, I read aloud the first two chapters of Toni Morrison's *A Song of Solomon*. She sat content, rapt in listening to the flow of words. She was with me that afternoon, as fully and completely as she had ever been. She allowed the story to bring her back one more time. She selected this, I am sure, as her final gift to me. In doing so, she offered a compelling lesson on the power of stories.

The stories I share in this book can help you personalize and apply what you learn. And that's what it's about - how we can take these lessons and bring them to our leadership role. As you think about what you've been able to contribute as a leader, what stories define the most critical aspects of your career?



I hope you enjoy getting to know my grandfather and all the incredible leaders I've had the chance to work with. These leaders will impart a little leadership wisdom, brought to life by their stories. And life is all about stories, isn't it?

**Quotes From Those Who Knew Fred Thwaites Best**  
**“Fred Thwaites was an honest man. How do you know he was honest? He wasn't superfluous, didn't elaborate, or honey coat. He told it like it was. No such thing as a white lie. He tackled things head-on. Didn't put on any airs. Never changed his story or got confused. And he never, ever turned his back on you. I know one thing for certain, you could always count on Fred.”**

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### ***Leadership Difference-Makers***

In *The Leader's Legacy*, I capture much of what I've learned about leadership in the 30 years I've spent working with and coaching some of the most influential leaders the business world has ever seen. I shine a light on those traits that make the great leaders great. And I offer the lessons on leadership I've refined and extended to hundreds of leaders in my career as a Leadership Advisor, Human Resources Executive, and Leadership Coach.

*The Leader's Legacy* provides you with a front-row seat to learn from a set of remarkably successful leaders who show you what it takes to remain influential in today's ever-changing world. Our best leaders just get it. They cultivate a wide variety of essential leadership qualities. But some of these qualities consistently rise to the top. These are the building blocks that can empower the best leaders to make the impact they're capable of. And you can learn a great deal from the best. These key leaders have built their success on what I call “Leadership Difference-Makers.” They provide an essential perspective on the very best leaders have to offer. Read on to learn more.

### ***10 Leadership Difference-Makers***

*Impactful Leaders Create a Legacy When They:*

- 1) *Lead with Integrity and a Distinct Leadership Intelligence*
- 2) *Demonstrate How Much They Care*
- 3) *Invest in Their Leadership*
- 4) *Lead with Their Values*
- 5) *Communicate with Purpose*
- 6) *Keep It All in Perspective*
- 7) *Influence with Intention*
- 8) *Lead with a Leadership Presence*
- 9) *Take Their Leadership to the Next Level*
- 10) *Make Their Part of the World Better – Because They've Led It*



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**Leadership Difference-Maker #1**

**Legacy Leaders: Lead with Integrity and a Distinct Leadership Intelligence**

*Your Integrity is the Foundation for Your Leadership*

I encourage you to apply what you learn about these difference-makers as you navigate your own leadership journey. Every journey has a starting point. When you begin yours with a commitment to yourself and your personal integrity, you will launch from a place of strength as you build your leadership legacy. This commitment to integrity is a theme that will run through everything you do as you bring the best of yourself and your leadership every day. You'll also find that your integrity is a consistent theme that runs through each of

the essential leadership difference-makers highlighted in this book. Keep your integrity top of mind as you apply these lessons and build your leadership brand. It's a good place to start and a good way to keep yourself grounded.

I was swapping stories with my cousin Jason recently. We do this every time we get together, and the stories never get old. I asked Jason what he thought made our grandfather the leader he was. Without hesitation he replied, "He was authentic, and people saw that. For our grandfather, authentic meant keeping integrity and character front and center. He knew that these are what define you as a leader."

"Growing up, I saw his integrity on display constantly. Especially in his role as mayor. People from town would come up to him with an important question or request all the time. When I was with him, I would stand back and watch how he listened to them, as if they were the only person in the world. Then, he would thank them and let them know he would see what he could do to take care of their request for them. And that's what he did. He always found a way, even when he had to bend the world to his will to make it happen. He knew how to get things done and had influence skills that were off the charts. It was pretty impressive to watch him."

Jason ended his story with, "You know, Scott, that's why our grandfather built the legacy he did. He had character, he never strayed from his integrity, and everybody knew it."

### ***Leadership Intelligence.***

Our understanding of leadership owes a debt to the study of *Emotional Intelligence*, which helps us understand that *how* we lead is just as important as *what* we achieve. Emotional Intelligence is defined by five primary traits: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. The best leaders manage these traits exceptionally well, especially when the heat gets turned on high. How well we respond to the good, the bad, and especially the ugly can determine our leadership effectiveness.

As I work with leaders, I pay attention to indicators of their emotional intelligence. I often ask them to stop and reflect on the emotionally intelligent choices they make that allow them to lead successfully through

specific scenarios. There's nothing more powerful than catching leaders at their best and offering them the opportunity to learn from what they do well.

We recognize those leaders who get it. Leaders who are able to walk into a room draw strength from those assembled and empower the team to achieve far-reaching outcomes. These are leaders who bear witness to a remarkably high level of their own form of emotional intelligence. It's what I call *Leadership Intelligence*, and it's a telling way to frame our perspective on leadership. The most influential leaders lead with a distinct leadership intelligence.

The qualities of leadership intelligence describe how the most impactful leaders embrace challenging situations, keep things in perspective and move forward with thoughtful decisions. The most successful leaders I've known, including my grandfather, all developed remarkably high levels of what I've come to recognize as leadership intelligence.

### ***How to Recognize Your Leadership Intelligence***

To begin with, leaders with high leadership intelligence know themselves exceptionally well. These leaders are keenly aware of what they do best and how to take advantage of their strong points. They can replicate what they do well and showcase their talents in as many scenarios as possible. They also know where their soft spots are. They know where vulnerabilities will show up, and they can usually see them coming. As a result, they can plan how they will compensate for them.

Exceptional leaders know their trigger points, and when the fire gets turned up, they can keep their emotions from getting the best of them. They know which battles to pick, and which are better left alone. They know the inherent value of giving benefit-of-the-doubt, but also recognize that when there is no longer any doubt, the value of the benefit has lost its currency. They aren't afraid to acknowledge when they've come up short and are smart enough to realize how important it is to identify what went wrong and why. This allows them to learn from setbacks and to use this knowledge to steer in the right direction the next time. In other

words, the best leaders rely on self-reflection as a critical tool in their toolkit. *Intentional self-reflection is a clear indicator of leadership intelligence.*

Leaders who possess a high leadership intelligence also operate with strong organizational savvy. They know how their organization works and how to navigate its intricacies. They understand and embrace the culture. They know the unwritten rules, along with those in plain sight. They know which rules can be bent and which ones are sacrosanct. Their judgment tells them when to challenge the status quo or the established norms and when not to go there. They know which buttons to push and when it makes better sense to hold back. They foster relationships with the key players, including the organization's formal and informal leaders. These leaders rely on their organizational savvy to help them become leaders who influence as they help their organization win.

The elements of leadership intelligence provide a guide for formidable leadership. The good news is that these are attributes and traits that you can develop. You can build and advance these by intentionally committing to learning from your experience and sweat, from setbacks and success, from mentors and coaches, and even from well-informed leadership books (*shameless plug*).

Your own leadership intelligence will be impossible to miss when you act with integrity when you dare to care, and when you help your people soar. As you bring your best, you influence with intention, knowing that every action you take will directly and powerfully affect how you lead.

Take a minute to reflect – What are those leadership decisions and actions that you consistently embrace that demonstrate your leadership intelligence?

**If you are interested in learning how to put these leadership lessons into practice,  
send an email to: [leadership.sfburns@yahoo.com](mailto:leadership.sfburns@yahoo.com)  
Or you can reach me at (630) 432-9138**

**As an Executive Coach, I can help you elevate your leadership capabilities  
As a Leadership Consultant, I can help your organization develop talent strategies  
that drive the critical aspects of your business**

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You will find resources to help you take your leadership to the next level.**