



Point of View

Dear Marketplace Friend,

"*Something came up.*" That's a standard explanation, for losers. A growing slice of the populace in our generation - even among those who fancy themselves as "leaders" - is using that phrase as a get-out-of-jail-free card as they careen through life in a lackadaisical fog.

We're living in a strange moment in history; *at least, that's what we keep telling ourselves.* The fact is, *history is populated by people,* and the issues that challenge people haven't changed in a few millennia...

Listen to **The Boss** (not Springsteen; this is the **Big Boss**): *"A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, 'I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.' Another said, 'I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I'm on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.' Still another said, 'I just got married, so I can't come.' The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.' The servant said, 'Sir, what you ordered has been done,*



but there is still room.' Then the master told his servant, *'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.'*" (Luke 14:16-24)

When the Apostle Paul - a man who was originally an enemy of the **Big Boss**, but later went to work for him - crystallized the character of Kingdom leaders, he included this tag line: *"He must also have a good reputation with outsiders."* (1 Timothy 3:7) How do you gain a good reputation with outsiders - the world of people beyond the church?

Dan Sullivan - known to entrepreneurs across North America as "The Strategic Coach" - captures the minimums of reputation for marketplace success: **Show up on time. Do what you said you would do. Finish what you start. Say "please" and "thank you."** Fail on those four essentials, and your reputation *will be - and, should be -* in the tank.

We are a generation - in a culture - that is increasingly allergic to commitment. "I'm coming" has come to mean, "I'll be there... unless something better comes up." Here's a life discovery that you can confirm for yourself: the greatest value additions to your life - a marriage partner, your kids, the business start-up that required your personal guarantees, your decision to bet the farm on Jesus being the only way to heaven - have come to you as a result of commitment. *No commitment; no significance.*

The big question we all must ask - and, answer: "Am I a loser - posing as a leader - or, a real leader?" The biggest single test to apply: *does your "yes" mean "yes," and are you known for your commitments?*

The Master's Program is designed for **leaders**... not **losers**. Losers aren't able to relate to what we do as we prepare the leaders there to *change their world and build God's Kingdom...*

So, how about you? Put yourself into Jesus' story, back there in Luke 14: are you the leader who would *show up on time/do what you said you would do/finish what you start/say "please" and "thank you"*? Or, would you be the guy who would have "something else come up?" **Leader?** or **loser?**

It's your decision, today.

Bob Shank

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