

Momentum is the Key to Resurgence

Momentum. Every leader needs it. If you've been stationary for any period of time you know you need to generate some. Generating it takes incredible energy. Stepping out of a maligned past is a challenge. Overcoming the barriers and generating healthy momentum is not for the faint of heart. Momentum is the key to leading a resurgence.

Resurgence takes skilled and determined leadership. Are you up for the challenge?

- Do you see a better future in the face of overwhelming obstacles?
- Are you living among a group of people you are called to lead who see nothing but the current realities?
- Is your leadership malaise stifling hope and burying opportunity?

Take courage from Cleveland's Resurgence!

Last weekend I was in Cleveland for a family gathering. We spent time in the much misunderstood Rust Belt City. As we walked around the city once famous for its great river fire of 1969, I was struck by its radical turn around.

And while it is certain that this great city is not perfect, and that Cleveland still has economic and social issues to overcome, I was struck by the vision and relentless execution that has this beacon of hope on Lake Erie moving in the right direction.

Here are leadership lessons from Cleveland's resurgence I took with me as I made my way back home to Madison.

Cleveland, Ohio in the United States. City skyline.

Visionary Leaders...

Choose Catalytic Language

Vision has two components: macro and micro, moutaintop and milestone, qualitative and quantitative.

Both components of vision must be compelling.

By compelling I mean that we want to repeat it. We want to share it.

Hope springs when we utter the phrase.

Language has the power to paint a picture. Words create worlds.

Consider this from Cleveland:

The macro Vision launched in 2009 was “Green City on a Blue Lake”

Consider the radical nature of this vision for a city that was nicknamed “Mistake on the Lake”!

“...Cleveland is well on its way to achieving its vision of a ‘green city on a blue lake.’” [Read the Entire Article Here.](#)

The micro Vision followed. The mountaintop “Green City on a Blue Lake” would become a reality only by hitting **clearly articulated milestones** along the 10 year journey.

“In 2009, the city created **Sustainable Cleveland 2019**, a **10-year action plan initiative** devoted to addressing environmental issues and raising awareness.” [Read the entire article here.](#)

Sustainable Cleveland 2019 helped the city...

Condense Their Focus

Pursuing vision can be daunting. We have daily reminders of our current position. There are voices all around us that remind us of all the reasons we can’t and won’t. Few people can see beyond the horizon.

So, an effective visionary leader knows that he/she must **condense their focus**.

One step at a time. The next hill to take. Steady, methodical, patient...all the while holding onto the dream.

Holding onto the inspiring “**Green City on a Blue Lake**” (like a post card of the dream) Cleveland took the next step pursuing the next initiative.

“Cleveland is building a new reputation of a sustainable ‘green city on a blue lake’ by promoting **nine sustainability initiatives**. Each initiative serves as the year’s theme for addressing environmental issues in the city. The nine themes are:

- 2011: The Year of Energy Efficiency
- 2012: The Year of Local Foods
- 2013: The Year of Advanced and Renewable Energy
- 2014: The Year of Zero Waste
- 2015: The Year of Clean Water

2016: The Year of Sustainability Mobility

2017: The Year of Vibrant Green Space

2018: The Year of Vital Neighborhoods

2019: The Year of People” [Read the entire article here.](#)

It's 2016. You can see the progress as you walk the streets of Cleveland. Not finished, 10 years is a long time. The vision is a long pursuit in the same direction.

So along the way, the visionary leader realizes that he/she must...

Celebrate Their Progress

“Cleveland has come a long way in the 50 years since the infamous Cuyahoga River fire, even hosting a sustainable celebratory Burning River Fest every year in the summer to help Clevelanders celebrate just how far the city has come....Cleveland is well on its way to achieving its vision of a ‘green city on a blue lake.’” [Read the entire article here.](#)

A visionary leader like you can bring others with YOU as YOU...

- Choose Catalytic Language
- Condense Your Focus
- Celebrate Your Progress

Back in 1969, who would have thought that Cleveland would be described like this?

[“Hipsters battling to rent warehouse lofts. Trendy bars, espresso shops and music venues. A funky, celebrity-chef-owned restaurant serving bone marrow and crispy pig ears.”](#)

Someone in 2009 who loved Cleveland enough to pursue a “Green City on a Blue Lake”!

- What vision is stirring in your heart right now?
- What's your catalytic language?
- What's your condensed focus?
- What opportunities can you create to celebrate your progress?

If you would like to learn more about vision and momentum, [start a conversation with our team.](#) We're glad to offer our input. Your vision is at stake, so let's talk.