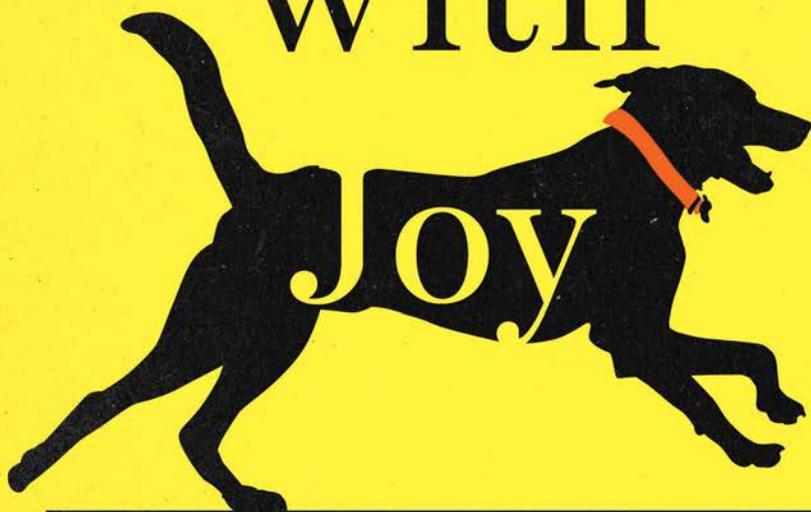


Running

with



LEADERSHIP AND LIFE LESSONS
MY DOG, BENTLEY, TAUGHT ME

Robb Hiller

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Pam, without your incredible ability to watch over the details of the business and be a wife, mom, and friend, I would never be able to do what I am called to do. Love you!

Contents

INTRODUCTION I

- CHAPTER 1: **The Joy of Knowing Who You Are** 5
The first step toward becoming a true leader is to discover your hidden talents and find the real you.
- CHAPTER 2: **The Joy of Being Who You Are** 27
Talent is like raw material; you need to make something out of it through practice.
- CHAPTER 3: **The Joy of Unleashing Your Talents** 51
Life is full of change, and you are always learning.
- CHAPTER 4: **The Joy of Shaking It Off and Picking Up Your Poop** 73
To gain control of yourself, you need to acquire emotional intelligence, take personal responsibility, and learn the art of forgiveness.
- CHAPTER 5: **The Joy of Guiding Others** 93
Just as others have coached you, you need to learn to coach others.
- CHAPTER 6: **Running with Joy** 115
Success in life follows when you take on the attitude of a leader.
- NOTES 129
- ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 133
- ABOUT THE AUTHOR 135

Introduction

AFTER NEARLY EIGHT YEARS as the CEO of a high-tech company and twenty-five years as an executive consultant, I can honestly say that the biggest problem all businesses face is *people*. The day after I sold my company, I felt a huge load lift off my shoulders. I had been weighed down with people problems. Sure, I struggled with strategy and marketing and sales, but the most widespread challenge was people. Virtually every business leader I've met agrees.

But I've noticed something else. I've looked at successful businesses and wondered how they became so successful. It's the same answer: people! How can a company's biggest problem also be its biggest asset?

It took me years to figure out, but once I did, the solution seemed rather simple and obvious. *The difference between problem people and successful people is that successful people have tapped into their God-given talents and are in positions where their talents can flourish.* Unfortunately, only 35 percent of people are engaged at work,¹ which makes me conclude the remainder don't know their own talents—or, for some reason, they are unable to unleash them. What a waste!

Running with Joy

Think what a difference it would make in total productivity if those 65 percent could be plugged into their natural talents. What if managers were able to select the right people and put them into appropriate positions to maximize their potential? They'd have a team full of self-motivated leaders.

What we have now, however, is the opposite. Not knowing one's own talent or that of others results in huge personal and business costs for everyone. The general symptom is that of being *stuck*. The sales department gets stuck, and growth suffers. Customer service reps aren't wired to be calm, helpful, and empathetic problem solvers, and a company's reputation is negatively impacted. New products are delayed and miss a window of opportunity because the team misses deadline after deadline. People feel stuck, and their morale seems to dry up and blow away. The company goes through burnout, lack of personal accountability, lower sales, and decreased profits. Everyone is dissatisfied.

Managers try to compensate by adding more heads, hoping to get unstuck, or they work harder to handle more tasks. Is that what's happening to you? Are you so busy in back-to-back meetings that you have forgotten or are ignoring your many natural-born talents? *People today are so busy with overloaded schedules that the inevitable hamster wheel just keeps going round and round.*

My solution? Don't be like that hamster. Try to be like my wonderful Lab, Bentley.

You've no doubt heard about Robert Fulghum's book *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. For me, it's

Robb Hiller

more like *All I Need to Know about Leadership I Learned from My Dog, Bentley*. Don't laugh. It's true!

My British Labrador Retriever is a role model because he is perfectly in tune with his natural talents, and he is happy to be himself. He isn't full of existential angst or worry over whether he's doing the right thing. He is not misplaced, and he doesn't try to be something he is not. He is friendly and warm to everyone he meets, and every situation is brighter and happier when he is there. He simply runs with joy on instinct, and he has a good time doing it.

Are you tired of feeling stuck? Do you remember the passion, energy, and joy you had as a kid or early on in your career? Are you longing to rekindle that fresh excitement? Are you eager to run with joy, bringing that energy and hope into every situation?

Maybe it's time to take a look at where your talents are today. The greatness of YOU lies in discovering and using *your* God-given talents. When you know and learn how to activate this incredible set of riches—your talents—you will naturally head down a path of true meaning, and you'll realize better and more dynamic results. In fact, when you are in your “talent zone,” you can do almost anything.

And, yes, I do mean anything! Which brings me to this question: *Which type of person in the world do you want to be?* There are two types: those who lead from their values and beliefs and those who are led by others. Which one are you now? Don't assume you have to be an executive or a manager at a company to be a leader. All self-directed people deserve

Running with Joy

to be called leaders if they believe they have much to offer the world, they know and actively express their talents, and they want to grow and make a significant difference through what they do every day. (I know of some executive assistants who are so skilled at their positions that the CEO would be lost without them. Conversely, the CEO could be gone for two weeks, and everything would run smoothly because the executive assistant is always on top of things.) In other words, *leadership is not a title but an attitude with a commitment to be personally accountable.*

I believe you can change if you open up and discover the greatness within you and within others on your team by following the lessons that Bentley has taught me over the years.

That is why I wrote *Running with Joy*.

If you're struggling to be effective in your role today, as I did for years as a CEO, this book is for you. In it, you will see the simplicity and beauty of what Bentley can teach you about leading. First, he'll help you rediscover your talents, and second, he'll show you how to help those on your team rediscover their talents by following the five-step process I have presented in the chapters you're about to read. We need to know who we are, be who we are, unleash our talents, shake off our worries, and learn the joy of being a guide dog for others. These important lessons will uncomplicate both your business and personal lives so that you can achieve greater success. You'll watch the clouds lift and the sun shine in when you and your people do what Bentley does every day—be who you are!

The Joy of Knowing Who You Are

*The first step toward becoming a
true leader is to discover your hidden
talents and find the real you.*

WHEN I SAY, “HELLO, BENTLEY,” my British Labrador Retriever knows I’m talking to him. He opens his eyes, turns his head toward me, and smiles (as much as a dog can smile) to say, *I’m glad to see you!* Bentley is our one family member who will never have an identity crisis. He knows he is the kind of dog who really likes people and is always eager to meet new humans so he can share the love. He will run to you, looking up and wagging his tail, ready to cherish your attention. Bentley instinctively knows how to connect.

Running with Joy

I was at the auto dealership the other day to have my car washed. With his usual smile, Bentley—without a leash—sauntered beside me into the lounge so we could wait together. A young woman who worked there saw him and flashed a smile of her own. She shouted from across the room, “Can I pet your beautiful dog? What’s his name?”

“Sure,” I replied. “You can pet Bentley.”

She rushed over and started to pet him. It was just for a minute or two, but all the while, she couldn’t stop smiling or talking to us. Once again, Bentley was working his magic.

An older lady waiting for her car chimed in, “What a beauty!”

“You mean me?” I quickly said.

She saw that I was kidding and laughed.

Thanks to Bentley, everyone there was happier than they had been. How does he do it? It’s simple. He was born that way. You could say it’s in his DNA, or it’s his instinct, but I like to view it as his God-given gift or talent. Bentley was born to bring people pleasure and joy, and that’s exactly what he loves to do. He doesn’t try to be a guard dog. He doesn’t even pretend to be one. He is a loving Lab whose goal is to make people happy by being who he is.

That trait was evident the first time we met.

When my wife, Pam, our son, Ryan, and I first went to pick out a British Lab, our hearts were open. Our old dog, Chamois, had recently died, and we really missed the joy and happiness that comes from a British Labrador. The way they greet you with a big smile (their tail wagging so fast you

Robb Hiller

can feel the wind blow by you), you can't help but smile in return—regardless of what has happened that day. Labs love to play, too. If you throw any object out for them to retrieve, they love to run, pick it up, and bring it right back to you. Then the real fun begins. They sit beside you and ask, as only a Lab can, *Do you want to play some more?*

The breeder pointed out two puppies for us. She invited us to take both cuties over to an open meadow to let them show off. The black puppy ran off instantly. Ryan had limited success coaxing her over to play and cuddle because she was so full of energy. We could hardly touch her, and we could see she wanted to be independent. She was truly an adventurer. The yellow Lab, on the other hand, came to us to be petted. Then he started playfully flopping down on the grass next to Ryan, rolling over and over. How fun! And what an entertainer.

I had brought an old sock along. As I had done in a game I'd often played with Chamois, I threw it. The yellow Lab immediately fetched it, then ran back and dropped it at my feet. He was a true-born retriever all right, running everywhere with joy. Pam, Ryan, and I beamed. It was an easy decision, and that's how we came to adopt Bentley.

Even as a little puppy, he aimed to please. He was born with it. He's added immeasurable joy to our household, and he takes joy with him everywhere he goes. That's why I describe his way of life as "running with joy."

Why can't we all be like Bentley? Why can't we be happy just by expressing our natural-born talents? Why can't we

Running with Joy

make everyone smile just by entering the room? *The sad truth is that most people have lost touch with who they are or have never discovered their valuable gifts in the first place.* Such people seldom experience the joy of fulfilling their potential in a challenging environment; instead, they feel the frustration of trying to be somebody they are not. They even begin to doubt whether they can be truly successful at all. Others may have a sense of their talents, but they remain forever hidden in the wrong field or in the wrong position. It would be like locking Bentley in a kennel; he would no longer have the opportunity to share his gift of joy. If we want to be like Bentley, we need to start exploring our inner selves to discover our true gifts. That's step number one: Know who you are.

A Xerox Experience Not to Copy

After I graduated from St. Olaf College, a small liberal arts school in Northfield, Minnesota, I took a job in sales with the group insurance department of Washington National out of Evanston, Illinois, calling on school districts. What is ironic about this job choice is that my studies in college were focused on history, economics, and singing in the St. Olaf Choir. Hardly a recipe for selling group insurance! However, after one year of success, I had the opportunity to join the sales team at Xerox Corporation.

They recruited seven of us at the same time and spared no expense in flying us first-class to Leesburg, Virginia, for

Robb Hiller

six weeks of training. They called our boot camp the Xeroid School. We were all excited because Xerox (along with IBM) was widely known to have the best training in the world for salespeople and leaders. (It became such a big deal that they started a division of Xerox focused on learning and development, which is still going today.) We learned all about xerography (a dry photocopying technique), products, speeds, paper types, applications, and—of course—we all enrolled in Sales 101.

After a few weeks of learning everything about the products and applications in our branch location, it was time for the big test. Our manager/professor assigned each of us a small geographic territory and told us to visit every business in person and “sell them a Xerox copier.” Those were his exact words: *Sell them a Xerox copier.*

That particular advice didn't strike me as being quite right. That's not the way the Schwan's salesman did it when I was a kid. While I was growing up in a small town in southwestern Minnesota, the Schwan's man with his truck of frozen food would drive right up to our house and greet my mom. He always smiled and asked her what the kids were eating these days. (He was referring to my two brothers and me. Our poor mom was a saint—her ministry was cooking for three hungry boys and a husband.) That way, he found out where there might be a fit for his products. My mom always called him “our Schwan's man.”

Needless to say, we ate a lot of Schwan's products and a

Running with Joy

ton of ice cream. I was able to see that he, first of all, established a friendly relationship. Then he went on to serve our needs, instead of pushing a product that his manager had told him to sell. We didn't see him as a salesman but as part of our extended family. He was "*our* Schwan's man."

I recalled these memories as I knocked on doors all day.

At the end of our first day making cold calls on unsuspecting businesses, we all met back at the Xerox School for debriefing. I had made twenty sales calls and found one business whose office manager was sick and tired of the office's old, smelly electrostatic paper. She ordered a small Xerox 660. No other students had any prospects or orders from going out and trying to "sell a Xerox copier."

My colleagues—and even our manager—should have seen how our Schwan's man had handled the process of finding out what our family needed and wanted. I was struck that one of the new sales recruits, Bernie, had made only five calls, and none had been successful. Although he gave many reasons for this lack of activity, the bottom line was that he really was not a salesperson. We confirmed that again later when we all took an hour-long aptitude test. Bernie and two others didn't score the minimum seventy-two points, so they were driven to the airport and put on the next flight back to Minneapolis. The four of us who passed were put on the fast track, but it sure didn't seem like a good percentage of success to me. And I was amazed that the others didn't study or take our training seriously. You could tell they really didn't like the role they were put into.

Robb Hiller

It is clear to me now that these three did not know themselves—and the company didn't know them either. The Xerox managers didn't take the time to dig in and assess people thoroughly, instead hiring based on college grades and whether or not they liked the person. If only they had followed their noses the way Bentley follows his! After a few sniffs, they would have learned that those three didn't have the right stuff to become salespeople. Bentley embodies what our Schwan's man knew: *The secret to sales—and business in general—is to build genuine human relationships. It isn't that hard if you are simply yourself and follow your instincts.*

But what if Bentley had been placed in the wrong job? What if he had been bought by a junkyard dealer in order to scare away intruders, thieves, and other dogs? I doubt that Bentley would have been successful. He would have welcomed people who weren't supposed to be there, let the thieves pet him, and played with the other canines. The junkyard dealer would have concluded that Bentley was a terrible dog—and probably would have taken him to an animal shelter. But I would disagree. Bentley is an excellent dog. He's just a lousy watchdog because that isn't his calling, and he doesn't have the right stuff for it.

All in all, my Xerox incident left me with two indelible lessons. First, my fellow recruit Bernie did not know himself. What made him think he could possibly be a salesman? It seemed obvious to me that he wasn't cut out for it. Second, why didn't our managers detect that earlier in the process? This could have easily been done by using more effective

Running with Joy

interview questions and a better assessment. The pain of regret would never have taken root—not to mention the expense of the first-class tickets, three weeks in Virginia, and six weeks back in the branch training.

Bernie was not a fluke, either. In conversations I've had with leaders, they agree that job satisfaction is often low. According to the results of a 2019 study conducted by the Lumina Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Omidyar Network, and Gallup, more than 50 percent of people are dissatisfied with their jobs.¹ Wow! It is obvious to me that many are unhappy because they are in the wrong jobs. No wonder we can personally feel stuck or we see people on our teams who are not excited about their jobs. That is sad and soul sapping! Their true talents can't shine in the junkyard.

Talent Defined

A talent is an inborn capacity that makes people highly successful in certain skilled activities. Some people are natural athletes, others are virtuosos at the piano, and yet others are born to sell. Tapping into your talent and expressing it through your actions is the recipe for self-fulfillment and a fruitful career. The key here is taking action. It reminds me of when the sales rep asks, "When will I get my raise?" And the boss quickly replies, "Your raise is effective when you are!"

If you don't identify your talents and exercise them, you won't develop your skills. The best athlete in the world had to

practice many hours to go from good to great. Talent is not something you sit on; it atrophies if you don't use it.

Philosophers and religious leaders in the ancient world knew the importance of finding talents and developing potential. When Greeks sought wisdom, they went to the oracle at Delphi, where the inscription read, "Know Thyself." Socrates upped the ante and said, "The life which is unexamined is not worth living."² And in his teaching on ethics, Aristotle advised that the way to achieve *eudaimonia*—the state of human flourishing—is by performing one's "characteristic function,"³ or what I call developing your inborn talent.

The importance of nurturing personal talent was even the topic for one of Jesus of Nazareth's famous parables. In the Bible, Jesus tells the story of a man going on a journey who entrusts his wealth to three of his servants. The distribution depends on their abilities, so one servant receives five bags of silver, another gets two, and the person with the least ability gets only one bag. When their master returns, the servants report what has transpired in his absence. The first two servants used the money and invested in various enterprises with good results. The first servant returned ten bags of silver, and the second returned four. The master praises these industrious servants and welcomes them to share his happiness.

The third servant feared for the safety of the money, so he buried his lone bag and returns it to his master intact but unused. The master scolds this servant for not realizing the

Running with Joy

value he possessed—and has him thrown out into the street to cry, forlorn, in the darkness.⁴

The beauty of any parable is that it can be understood at different levels. At the literal level, this is a story that praises investment. You must use money to make money. But this parable can also be understood at a metaphorical level. The value of the silver is the inner potential we have as human beings. That's the deeper lesson that Jesus was teaching. In other words, our talents are precious gifts, innate abilities, which we are meant to use. If we don't, we become lost in the darkness with no direction.

Plato used the same metaphor when he attempted to construct an ideal society in his multivolume work, *The Republic*. The key, he said, was to give every person a different role based on their natural talents. He explained that there are gold people (rulers), silver people (government officials), and brass people (laborers). A harmonious society emerges when they all do work that fits their natural talents.⁵

I think the same holds true in any organization. Your chances of success increase substantially if you have people with the right talents in the proper positions.

The Search for Your Talents

When was the last time you sat down and wrote out a list of your key talents, putting them out in front of you? We tend to take our talents for granted and forget about them, but we should, instead, take inventory of them often.

In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, when Laertes is about to embark

Robb Hiller

on his journey to the university, Polonius, his father, gives him this advice:

*To thine ownself be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.*⁶

If some of the greatest minds of Western civilization agreed on the importance of self-discovery and self-actualization, why aren't we better at finding and realizing our talents?

Said another way, why can't we be more like Bentley?

When Bentley was a puppy, we discovered early on how much he loved retrieving objects. I never had to teach him to chase after a bone, a ball, a shoe, a newspaper, or a Frisbee. He knew he was a retriever, and he was true to his genetic makeup. He was simply designed to retrieve with ease. The title of the Robert Redford baseball movie, *The Natural*, says it all. Can't we learn to return to our natural instincts?

After all, it's a travesty when people ignore their actual talents because they think they should do something else—something they aren't really gifted to do. How many people have you known who had a lot of innate talent that never seemed to blossom? While simple ignorance of their natural gifts can prevent some people from expressing them fully, others are in denial for various reasons. These are the really tough cases—people who have an inkling of their gifts but

Running with Joy

don't follow through. They often have a fear of failure, a lack of personal accountability, or a negative experience from the past holding them back.

Various factors can cause people to lock themselves in kennels, where they promptly feel trapped because they have forgotten that they have the keys to get themselves out. This book's job is, first, to remind you that you possess the key and, second, to show you how to unlock your kennel. Regardless of where you are in your career, it is never too late to learn to appreciate your God-given gifts.

Leadership Is Not a Title—It's an Attitude

Ideally, every employee at a company can become a leader and learn to be a positive influence in every situation they encounter. Such a business is bound to be successful. If, on the other hand, you are holding back on your talents or are locked into an ill-fitting position, you can feel inside that something is wrong. This friction between the real you and the false you sometimes results in a growl or a bark—or maybe just frequent whimpers. You are on someone else's leash, and it irritates you.

The most profound result of using your natural talents is that you become a leader. Your self-confidence motivates your actions, and you don't need to follow a script written by someone else for a part you were never intended to play. You are an actor, a playwright, and a director, free to create your own destiny. Otherwise, you are stuck and can only follow.

As Bentley would say, “Stop barking, and start leading.”

The Rise and Fall of Jane

What about seasoned business executives who have been around the block? Do years of experience make that big of a difference in knowing oneself? In my twenty-five years of working with executives and managers, I would say mostly *no. Business people who have some level of success often get so busy that they stop growing and learning.* They are swallowed up in the daily grind of meetings, travel, and the pressure to get it done *now!* If they have a moment to stop and think, they ask themselves, *When will I get the time to reflect and learn how to be more effective?*

That’s what happened to Jane, a charming and friendly director of marketing who was key to her company’s growth for its first seven years. But then her department stalled, she no longer got results, and her people started missing deadlines. The grumbling grew loud enough that management reached out to her so she would get back on course. However, nothing worked.

When the CEO asked me to help, I met with Jane. Here was a successful, goal-driven woman who had somehow lost her moorings. I asked her a simple question: “Would you like to discover your greatness?”

Jane immediately said yes.

“Tell me why,” I said.

She shared her story and told me all about her current job predicament. She believed deep down that she could

Running with Joy

do better, but she just felt stuck. It was obvious that her leadership skills had weakened because she was no longer self-directed in using her innate talents.

I asked her, point-blank, “Do you want to discover your greatness so you can become the leader and influencer you are meant to be?”

Jane couldn't wait to get started on a process of self-discovery. She took a full set of assessments that revealed her leadership style, motivating values, talents, and emotional intelligence. As we went over the results, Jane was surprised to learn that she had been unaware of both her strengths and her weaknesses. The more we talked, the more she could see that she had lost control of her situation because she hadn't been in touch with herself. But now she had taken the first step toward getting unstuck. She was getting to know the real Jane. For years to come, she flourished in her role and really made a difference in the company.

Jane's case is far from unique. Nine times out of ten, when a company finds projects are not getting done, it's because team members are not getting along. They don't function as a team because some key people simply are not good at what they do. Usually, these people were promoted, but they were dropped into slots where they didn't fit. You can solve two problems at once by pulling them from those slots and putting them in new ones that better fit their talents, giving them a much better chance to excel.

Your Behavioral Style

The good news is that even though many people have lost touch with their true talents, psychologists and social scientists have conducted a lot of research in human personality and our inborn skills. They have created various maps and charts in the form of tests and self-discovery assessments to explore the human psyche. It is a lot easier to embark on this life-changing journey if you have a map.

So let's begin your voyage of discovery and follow Bentley's idea of leading by better knowing who you are. I will ask you the same question I asked Jane: "Do you want to discover your greatness so you can become the leader and influencer you are meant to be?" If so, let's begin.

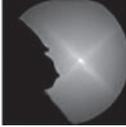
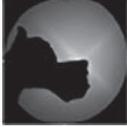
The following pages include a mini starter assessment that you can conduct yourself. Page 20 shows Bentley's responses, and page 21 has a blank assessment for you. This tests your behavioral inclinations and is far simpler than the full battery of assessments available for more intensive use.*

Step 1: Of the four words in each numbered row, circle the one that best describes you. Then count the number of circles in each column and write your totals at the bottom. Check which style has the highest total and take another look at the attributes of that style.

* If you want to take the full assessment and see fifty to eighty detailed pages about your values, acumen, and emotional intelligence, email Robb@performancesolutionsmn.com.

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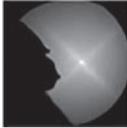
BEHAVIORAL STYLE EXERCISE (BENTLEY)

	GORILLA	HOUND	CAMEL	DEER
				
1.	DIRECT	CHARMING	PATIENT	ACCURATE
2.	DOMINATING	OUTGOING	EASYGOING	NO-NONSENSE
3.	DARING	PERSUASIVE	LOYAL	FACT FINDER
4.	DEMANDING	EMOTIONAL	TEAM PLAYER	SYSTEMATIC
5.	ADVENTUROUS	INFLUENTIAL	COMPLACENT	CONSCIENTIOUS
6.	INQUISITIVE	SOCIABLE	RELAXED	HIGH STANDARDS
7.	QUICK	DRAMATIC	SLOW	OBJECTIVE
8.	RISK-TAKER	SHOWCASING	LOW RISK	EVALUATING
9.	BOTTOM LINE	PEOPLE PERSON	STEP-BY-STEP	ALL THE FACTS
10.	EGOCENTRIC	ENTHUSIASTIC	PASSIVE	PERFECTIONIST
11.	COMPETITIVE	JOVIAL	CONVENTIONAL	CONTROLLED
TOTAL:	1	8	2	0

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BEHAVIORAL STYLE EXERCISE

	GORILLA	HOUD	CAMEL	DEER
				
1.	DIRECT	CHARMING	PATIENT	ACCURATE
2.	DOMINATING	OUTGOING	EASYGOING	NO-NONSENSE
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4.	DEMANDING	EMOTIONAL	TEAM PLAYER	SYSTEMATIC
5.	ADVENTUROUS	INFLUENTIAL	COMPLACENT	CONSCIENTIOUS
6.	INQUISITIVE	SOCIABLE	RELAXED	HIGH STANDARDS
7.	QUICK	DRAMATIC	SLOW	OBJECTIVE
8.	RISK-TAKER	SHOWCASING	LOW RISK	EVALUATING
9.	BOTTOM LINE	PEOPLE PERSON	STEP-BY-STEP	ALL THE FACTS
10.	EGOCENTRIC	ENTHUSIASTIC	PASSIVE	PERFECTIONIST
11.	COMPETITIVE	JOVIAL	CONVENTIONAL	CONTROLLED
TOTAL:				

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Running with Joy

Step 2: Consider your behavioral style score. The highest number is your primary behavioral inclination, and the second highest is your secondary behavioral inclination. (Bentley's are Hound first and Camel second.) These descriptors give you guidance as to the primary talents of your style.

Step 3: Based on your primary style, ask yourself, *How can I use my talents more each and every day, both personally and professionally?* Write down some key ideas now.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Your Mini-360

Eighteenth-century Scottish poet Robert Burns yearned for the ability to see himself as others saw him.⁷ It can be unsettling to think that other people may know you better than you know yourself. At the same time, that's a remarkable resource for you. As you embark on your journey of transformation into a leader, get a little help from your friends, family, boss, coworkers—people who can be objective and sincere in their appraisals of you. A 360 analysis, as its name suggests, sets out to look at a situation from every angle. For your mini-360, you begin with at least two important perspectives: your subjective viewpoint and someone else's objective viewpoint. If you get more than one person to give an assessment of you, so much the better!

Robb Hiller

Change is scary for many people, and it is often more comfortable to stay cozy in bed like Bentley does sometimes—but those are times he misses the joy of finding the treats that are just outside the door. Once you overcome this fear, it is exciting to think you can make a change for the better. The same internal energy that drives your concern gets rechanneled to drive your passion for improvement. It's all a matter of attitude, and with the right mindset, it becomes easy to make the switch.

When I speak with executives about the need to find the hidden talents of their employees, many get the idea right away. Its truth is obvious, but they needed someone to point it out. That's all it takes for most of us. When you begin to know the real you, you get excited and refreshed. There is a lot to like about the real you, and it will feel good to get started.

Here's how you do it. Email the following questions to coworkers (with whom you have a good relationship) and at least one good friend. Preface the email with this short introduction as to why you are asking for their feedback.

Dear _____, I am reading a book called *Running with Joy* by Robb Hiller, and the first lesson is gaining a perspective of how people view my talents. Would you take a moment and respond back today? Thanks so much, as this will be of real value to me.

Running with Joy

1. What do you feel are my strongest talents?
2. The book defines leadership this way:
“Leadership is not a title—it’s an attitude!” Do you see my actions as evidence of wanting to get better and having a strong desire to make a difference?
3. Do you feel I am personally accountable?
Coachable? Any examples?
4. Do you have any suggestions that would encourage me in my development?

Thanks so much for sharing.

Knowing who you really are and becoming aware of your true talents are the first steps on your path. But, as I mentioned above, following up with action is essential. Raw talent doesn’t mean a thing if you don’t run after the ball to retrieve it. Having discovered your talents, it’s time to manifest them by engaging in activities where they can flourish.

PAW PRINTS TO REMEMBER

- 🐾 Knowing more of who you are is the key to finding your passion and purpose in life; self-knowledge can help you be more genuine and successful at whatever you’re doing.

Robb Hiller

- ❧ When you actualize your natural talents, customers are more likely to appreciate you and want more of you. Do your customers affectionately refer to you as “theirs”? Do all the members of your team know their talents and feel the same way about yours?
- ❧ Don't let your soul be sapped. Knowing your talents will allow you to develop a vision. Increase your self-awareness by using scientific instruments, along with a process that includes assessments based on behavioral types. These tools will enable you to pursue the goal of getting the right talent in the right job. If you don't have the authority to hire, use scientific talent assessments to help you match your own passion and talent.
- ❧ Don't be like the servant in the parable who buried his bag of silver and became lost in the darkness! Know your talents so you can use them in the ways they are meant to be used.