

# The Blueprint For High-Performing Leaders

Self Study Course



McCAULEY & COMPANY

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HELPING  
GOOD LEADERS  
BECOME GREAT

# Session 8: The Ins & Outs of Commitment

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of Session 8, you'll be able to:

- Identify and get true **Commitment from yourself and your team**
- Use commitment to set standards and hold people accountable to their, and your expectations for success
- Practice conversations and behaviors necessary to evoke commitment

## Reality Check

1. What did you learn from **Session 7: Get Clear**? Also note any successes, updates, and challenges you've encountered from the previous session. Jot down any improvements you'd like to make.



2. Now that you have refreshed your vision and expectations for success, what is the one thing that needs your attention to positively impact your results?

3. How will you make sure you get what you need to make and sustain your shift in attention? *Remember everything in your world is currently designed to support your old way of doing things.* The only way to succeed is to redesign your world to support your current goals and your teams' objectives.

## Session 8 Lesson – The Ins & Outs of Commitment

- Watch the video

Have you ever been frustrated by someone who enthusiastically starts on a project or goal with great intentions only to drop it and start another new project with just as much enthusiasm? Until they lose interest again, beginning something new with a spirited announcement, “This time it’s different!” And predictably it turns out exactly the same as the others: in a graveyard of never finished ideas, goals and projects.

Of course, personality type comes into play here, but more often than not, we find that people pick projects or goals because they think their boss, spouse, or the world would approve - versus doing something that is meaningful to them. Or sometimes, they just pick things that sound fun in order to distract them from their current situation.

Your objective as a leader is to help align what matters to them with the right actions that will get them there. You can’t pick what they are committed to and expect them to be truly committed. With commitment, almost anything is possible. Without commitment, it’s impossible to have an engaged, inspired, self-motivated team that consistently delivers results.

*I worked with an influential, high potential young executive who was asked to be part of a prestigious corporate task force to solve the problem of helping the sales force increase their prospecting activity. The ten-person team (handpicked from all over the country) spent a day working on ideas that could positively impact the prospecting pipelines.*

*A senior executive kept introducing ideas that were completely opposite of what the task force was designing, and he was pushing hard to get the task force to accept and endorse his ideas. At the end of the day, the senior executive pulled aside the young executive and told her, “Listen, this has already been decided by corporate. We just need you to endorse it, so just get the team to go along with it.”*

*The program was launched, with no “real” endorsement from the task force and it failed miserably. It was doomed by lack of commitment from the influencers – they just parroted what the senior executive and his executive team wanted to hear.*

Each person has a different definition of commitment based on their *beliefs, assumptions, emotions* and *ways of thinking* that govern their actions. It's important for you to help them say what commitment means to them, remembering that it may be vastly different from your own definition of commitment.

Commitment is tricky because it can appear to be sparked in the moment, yet without taking any real action or changing behavior, it is not true commitment. How many times have you had a person talk about something excitedly, and then walk away only to do nothing about it? Moving back into the day-to-day world often causes commitment to fade into the background and get lost. An important thing to consider is, does the environment support the new or old behavior? More often than not, your company culture is supporting or reinforcing team members' commitment, or lack thereof.

Without commitment, your people will have no traction and you'll see "wheel-spinning" rather than results. You'll see them saying they are committed to success, and yet get stopped dead in their tracks when they get resistance, or you'll hear of them doing things that sabotage that success. That's when you know they are not committed to the same outcomes or behavior you are expecting from them. Or maybe they're struggling with unspoken ***competing commitments***.

Do you remember the **Power of Competing Commitments** from **Session 5: Influence People to Change?**

People are often not aware of this behavior, so as a leader who is also coaching your team, it's your job to help people examine exactly what commitments they are actively serving. Ask them:

- What are you committed to on this project/goal/deadline?
- What will it mean to you if you achieve it?
- What will it mean if you don't?
- What are you doing that is working towards achieving your objectives?
- What are you doing or not doing that's working against it?
- What else might you be committed to?



Review the **Competing Commitments Worksheet** by authors Robert Kegan & Lisa Laskow Lahey in the Bonus Section.

As an example, imagine someone on your team says he is committed to innovation and creativity, but is only suggesting traditional solutions. Unbeknownst to him, he may have a competing commitment of not rocking the boat. He may secretly assume that taking a risk will have a negative impact on his job security and therefore his commitment to innovation is in direct competition with his hidden and unspoken commitment to security.

There are two places to be looking:

- 1) Is it truly safe for people on your team to be innovative and fail without consequences? The answer is “no” for most companies!
- 2) Competing commitments are deeply embedded within us. When you get to this stage of coaching someone, you are in transformational, game-changing territory.

Be patient, keep asking them to observe what they are doing, how that is serving or not serving their commitment, and what else they may be committed to!

### Values and Commitment

Values are the filter through which a person perceives and judges the world. If a person’s values are reflected in the workplace, they will more likely be engaged and give extra effort to being a top performer. As a leader, if you understand what motivates people, you can design a conversation that ties into their values, which also ties into their personal version of right action and increases their capacity for commitment.

There are many ways to measure values. Most popular is from William Marston, American psychologist and author from the 1930’s (*Emotions Of Normal People*, republished 2011), who determined there are 6 common values:

<b>Utilitarian/Economic</b>	Values practical accomplishments, results and rewards for their investments of time, resources and energy
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<b>Individualistic/Political</b>	Values personal recognition, freedom and control over their own destiny and others
<b>Social</b>	Values opportunities to be of service to others and contribute to the progress and well-being of society
<b>Theoretical</b>	Values knowledge for knowledge's sake, continuing education and intellectual growth
<b>Traditional/Regulatory</b>	Values traditions inherent in social structure, rules, regulations and principles
<b>Aesthetic</b>	Values balance in their lives, creative self-expression, beauty and nature

Did any of these sound like you? You can find out what you and your team's values are by going to our website; [McCauleyandco.com](http://McCauleyandco.com) and taking the values assessment.

When leading people, understanding which values drive your team will help you design a plan together, one that anchors commitment and makes each player unstoppable.

## Key Principles Associated with Commitment

### 1. Key Success Targets

Identifying Key Success Targets is a powerful method of focusing efforts. Once Key Success Targets are named, they act as a guiding light for what gets your time and attention each day. To determine Key Success Targets, ask yourself and your team, "What are the top three things that need to be attended to every day in order for you to consistently make progress towards your goal?"

#### *The three Key Success Targets for **McCauley & Company***

*The ability to attract clients (you've gotta have clients to have a business!)*

*The ability to keep clients (be exceptional at what you do, create a unique experience in order to have raving fans)*

*Develop systems (it's the only way to have a life while you grow and provide consistent client experiences)*

*All activity during my business day is focused on these key success targets. If something comes up that doesn't fit into these categories, it gets done after business hours, put on ice*

What are your top three **Key Success Targets**? What three things should you focus on every day that will make you wildly successful in your role?

Helping uncover your team's Key Success Targets in a collaborative way will allow them to design an individual and team blueprint for their success. Linking their plan with their top two values will give their engagement and energy an exponential boost. This process gives you a lot of leverage, anchors commitment and supports staying power in the face of adversity.

## **2. Increased Performance**

Establishing and keeping commitments will get your team engaged and focused, thereby motivating and rewarding them to continually improve their effectiveness. Accountability issues disappear.

## **3. Transformation**

People by nature do not want to be mediocre; it happens as a result of getting lost in reactionary behaviors and poor habits. Coaching for commitment can transform a person's beliefs about themselves and the world. Discovering a competing commitment that sabotages someone's ability to be great, once identified, can change everything.

## **4. Motivation**

Surfacing competing commitments provides a huge relief for people. They may not be consciously aware of their competing commitments, but they know something's out of sync with their *right action*. It feels wrong and drags on people's energy. Bringing these underlying

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counter-commitments to the surface creates clarity, awareness, freedom, and energizes motivation!

## 5. Passion

There's nothing more magnetic than passion. Without commitment, a person's passion does not have an outlet for action and they become dull.

### How to Enable Commitment

*"He who has a **why** to live for, can bare almost any **how**." ~ Friedrich Nietzsche*

High-level performers generally already have a good sense of commitment, so with these people, it's not about creating it, but making sure you're not stepping on it. Better yet, you can help them fine tune what gets their attention and efforts. Be sure the systems and climate of your company are not killing commitment or inspiration. For those who are already committed and engaged, make sure their inspiration is nurtured.

I don't like to admit this because I'm an optimist, but often in my work I'm reminded of this quote from management guru Peter Drucker:

*"So much of what we call management consists of making it difficult for people to do work." ~ Peter Drucker*

As any fan of the comic strip *Dilbert* can attest, negative managerial behavior severely affects employees' work lives. As a leader, examine how you can get to the heart of a person's

purpose, or the ‘*why*’ in their world. How can you bring it out, inspire it and connect it to their daily work?

### Techniques and Tools for Commitment

1. Previewing scenarios (the fourth phase of our **C.O.R.E. Performance Coaching Model**) allows you to walk people through and test the scenarios they have considered as a solution. It reduces the fears of messing up when it’s important and gives them the courage to make a commitment.
2. Ask for clarity about their commitment, especially when you suspect you’re getting a standard response just to get rid of you or to end the conversation quickly. Are they acting over-confident or under-confident?
3. Have them establish timelines and steps. Provide a level of accountability through simply checking in on what progress they have made, which will foster personal responsibility. Make sure they write down *who* will do *what*, by *when*.

Who?	
What?	
When?	
Why important?	
How measured?	

4. Ask what they are willing to invest when something really matters to them. For example, if the plan involves late nights and working weekends, are they truly willing to do this to accomplish the goal? Who will support them?

5. Focus on the positive result. Ask, "What do you stand to gain if you achieve this?" Have them paint a picture of what it will be like when the goal is achieved.
6. Be careful not to make your expectations too high, resulting in the person giving you commitments that are inflexible or impossible – this drives people away because they feel like they've failed you and themselves. Give them some wiggle room to succeed.

### **Indicators of Commitment**

- Energy level will increase
- The person will give you an actionable plan
- You'll see milestones and evidence of action towards results
- You will see the person's motivation surface

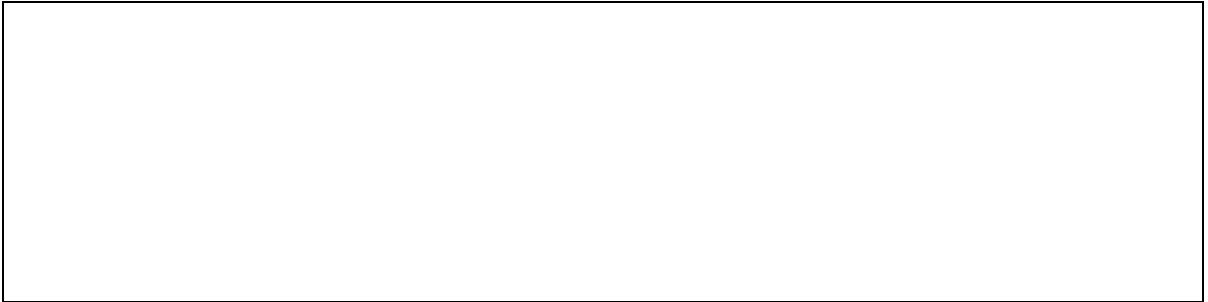
At the end of it all is behavior — are they taking the actions towards delivering what they promised?

### **What's ahead for Session 9**

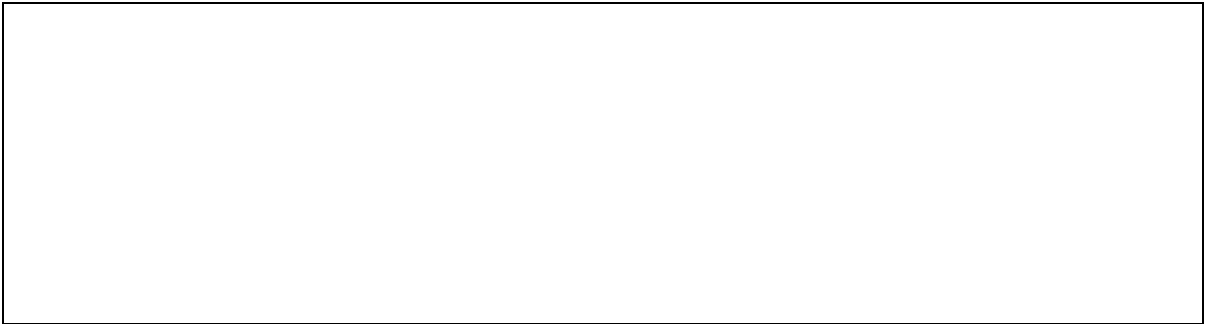
Get ready to find out if your team is **Ready, Willing, Able and Fit**. In the next session we are going to explore how to tell if your team is ready to achieve what you envision for them!

## Exercises

1. How do you know if your team is committed to achieving success vs. saying what they think you want to hear? What can you do to connect what really matters to each person on your team with the objectives you all need to achieve?



2. What do you need to do differently in order to evoke commitment from yourself and from your team?



3. Examine how committed you really are to achieving your personal best as a leader. There is a huge difference between 99% committed and 100% committed. Where are you? What would be different if you shifted to 100%?

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4. List your three Key Success Targets and why they matter:

	Target	Why it Matters
1.		
2.		
3.		

5. Identify your top two values. How will you link them to your plan? How will you identify them in your team?

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## Session 8: The Ins & Outs of Commitment - Notes

The three most important things I learned from Session 8 are:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

Here's how I plan to apply what I have learned:

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Terms** (See Glossary)

- **Commitment**
- **Values** (William Marston)
- **Key Success Targets**

**Extra Notes...**

