



Jim's Profit Accelerator 133: Precision Leadership

Pine City High School, in Minnesota, has taken precision in basketball to a new place. Ninety-six percent of their shots are either layups or three-pointers—and that's by design.

Coach Kyle Allen was influenced by *Moneyball* to use statistics to guide his team. He found that these two shots are far more likely to deliver a score compared to the common jump shots taken from the space between these two. They took their 12-4 record to the state championship game. The double bonus is that they're short: their tallest player is 6'2". And these two shots are the ones that high school players like to practice the most!*

SPEED BUMP: The clearer your path, the more likely your success.

Where can precision be applied in leadership?

Daily Metric

Instead of a forest of KPIs that only a math jock can love, start with the single best measure of daily performance. It usually is at the place where you connect with the customer. Examples include percent of shipments on time, number of unanswered customer calls, and number of transactions. Track without fail, share with all employees, and teach them what the number means (and doesn't mean).

CEO Mark Donegan of \$9 billion Precision Castparts regularly walks the floor to learn how things are going. He unfailingly asks folks at the lowest levels in the company, "What were our numbers yesterday?" He expects them to know, and he counsels supervisors whose people don't have a ready answer. (My source is a client who had Precision CP for a customer.) His approach must be working: Warren Buffet's Berkshire Hathaway paid \$37 billion to buy the company, anticipating significant future profit growth.

Communication

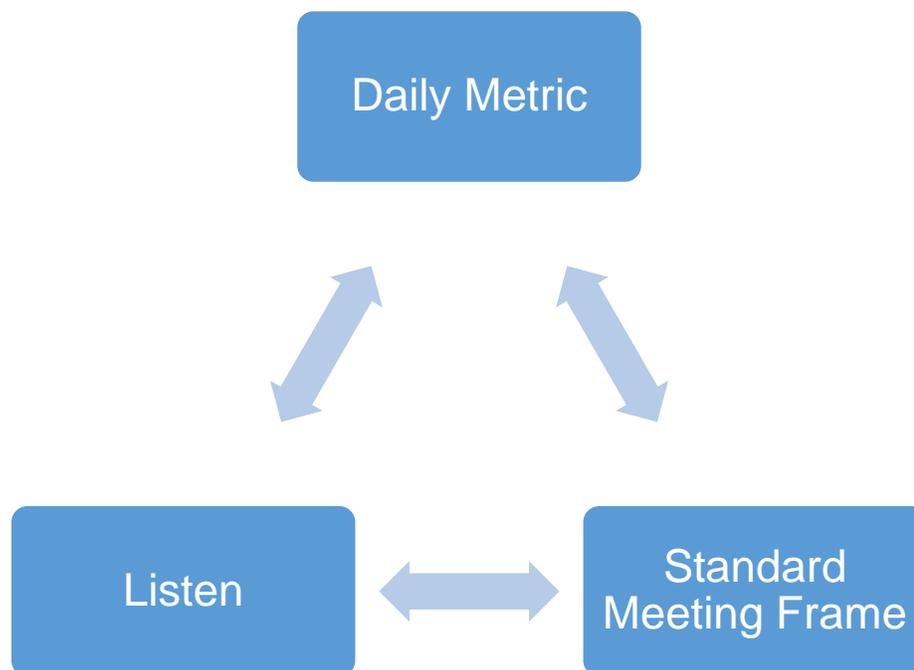
The simplest communication is listening. The task is to pause for more, letting empty time draw out the critical nuggets. Reward by acknowledging. Often nothing else is needed. Most folks want to know "how we're doing"—if the answer is simple and quick. They want simple and quick because they've got work to do. Their key numbers: daily backlog and weekly sales.

Standard Meeting Frame

Daily or weekly meetings are essential for folks at most levels of your business. Make them useful by adopting a standard agenda:

- How'd we do (yesterday, last week)?
- What problems are in front of us?
- Where will we focus this week?

This powerful framework boosts the performance of folks at every level in your business—if you keep it simple and relentless.



SPEED BUMP: Softening the truth cripples its usefulness.

Every leader knows some form of the above, yet I see repeated failures in establishing these. My theory is that it's more fun to create new stuff (new data, new meeting structure, new directions) than it is to refine and maintain the data that works.

Descriptions of the intensity of the Battle of Gettysburg describe trees and shrubs stripped of leaves and branches from about five feet above the ground—victims of desperate rifle and artillery shots that delivered over 40,000 casualties to North and South combined. And all that sloppy firepower didn't end the war. (It went on for nearly two more years.)

ACCELERANT: Which shots should you stop? You'll likely get better results.

For more information on how you can accelerate revenues and profits in your business, please call or email me.

**Wall Street Journal*, 1/31/17, p. A 12

For more information, visit www.grewco.com.

Jim Grew, the Business Defogger and Accelerator, helps leaders discover hidden opportunities within their businesses and exploit them for dramatic results. Jim has led 9 businesses, worked in 31 companies at C-level, and is an expert in strategy and executive leadership. He presents regularly to industry groups, mentors business leaders, and shares insights in his Executive Letter (above). Jim holds BA and MBA degrees from Stanford University. In his new book, *The Other Side of Succession*, he shares how to plan for the future by growing your business now.

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