

THE BIG IDEA

How you show up in the first few minutes isn't about you at all — **you're representing something bigger than yourself**. Whether you're in a mascot suit in front of 100,000 people or sitting across a desk from one client, the same truth holds: lead from the inside out, get genuinely curious about the human in front of you, and people feel seen.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Are things happening by you, or to you?

If you're constantly reacting — to emails, to to-dos, to whatever lands next — the outside is running your day. The moment you decide who you want to be and how you want to show up, you become the author. Everything else in this episode flows from that one shift.

THE FRAMEWORK

LEVEL 1 • SET YOURSELF UP	LEVEL 2 • GO DEEPER
Represent You're never just you in the room. Your actions carry the name on the front of the jersey — your company, your team, the people counting on you.	Authentic Curiosity Not the showroom act of sizing someone up. Genuinely wanting to know who this human is — what excites them, what they care about.
Inside Out Leading from your own values instead of being managed by everything around you. You write the script; you don't just react to it.	Full-Body Listening Listening with your ears, eyes, and gut — picking up the emotional and energetic cues most people miss while they wait to talk.
Pre-Read the Room The five minutes before the first five minutes. Find five connection points — not data points — so you can lead with the personal.	Ego Check The universal failure pattern. Ego keeps you from feedback, from blind spots, from the closeness that actually closes deals.

■ THE THREE MOVES THAT GO DEEPER

01 REPRESENT MORE THAN YOURSELF

It's not about being a goofy 19-year-old in a wildcat suit. It's about realizing your actions have implications because you stand for something bigger. The same is true on a sales call — you're not just repping you. You carry your whole organization into the room, and that raises the bar on how you show up.

ELITE MOVE:

Before you walk in, name out loud who you represent besides yourself — the company, the team, the client who referred you. It reframes the meeting from “prove me” to “serve them.”

“I'm not just here for me — I'm here on behalf of everyone who trusts us to get this right.”

02 LEAD BY YOU, NOT TO YOU

Outside-in is letting emails, junk mail, and other people's to-dos dictate your day. Inside-out is deciding how you'll use your time and energy. The tell is reactivity: if you're constantly reacting to what's happening to you, the outside is steering. The author writes the script.

ELITE MOVE:

When a client hands you action items mid-meeting, resist the urge to promise “within the hour.” Give yourself breathing room so you control the pivot to your next call.

“These are great — I'll have them to you tomorrow so I can give them the attention they deserve.”

03 LISTEN WITH YOUR WHOLE BODY

Level one listening is waiting for your turn to tell your own story. Level two is digging into theirs. Level three — the rare one — is listening with your ears, your eyes, and your gut: catching the moment someone tenses up, goes quiet, or lights up, and following it.

ELITE MOVE:

When you feel the energy shift, name it gently and ask permission. It breaks through the script of a normal conversation and tells the person they're being seen.

“I noticed you got a little tense there — is it okay if I ask what's behind that?”

3 ACTION ITEMS

1 Find Five Connection Points

Spend the five minutes before your meeting hunting for five human connection points — not data points. Lead with one to open the conversation.

2 Write One Guiding Principle

Take a core value like “relationships” and write a full sentence on what it actually means to you this season. Vague becomes a compass.

3 Recruit a Guide

Tell one trusted person what you're working on — interrupting, ego, whatever it is — and ask them to flag it. You can't see your own blind spots alone.



***Get your ego out of your way so
you can see the **truth** — at least
the truth as others experience
it.***

Keith Lewis



CARRY FORWARD QUESTIONS

1. Is this happening by me, or to me — am I the author or just reacting?
2. Am I authentically curious about this person, or just going through the motions?

■ BONUS DEEP DIVE • THE SCIENCE

What the research actually says about authentic curiosity?

Keith mentioned “authentic curiosity” almost in passing — but it's one of the most studied predictors of human connection in psychology. Researchers have run controlled experiments pairing strangers and measuring how close they feel afterward. The pattern is striking: the curious aren't just more pleasant to be around. They literally generate intimacy faster, even in conversations that should be boring.

1 Curiosity beats small talk. In a controlled study of strangers, highly curious people reported feeling genuinely close to their partners after both deep AND mundane small-talk conversations — while less curious people only bonded when the situation was engineered for intimacy. Curiosity does the work Keith's “pre-read the room” move is designed to do.

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2 It's visible — and it's attractive. When curiosity was measured in face-to-face interactions, trait curiosity predicted how attractive and close a stranger rated the curious person — even after controlling for general positivity and social anxiety. Authentic curiosity isn't just felt by you; the other person can tell, exactly as Keith said.

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3 Others can read it in minutes. Reviews of interpersonal-curiosity research show curious individuals are easier to identify in brief encounters and are better at reading social cues to understand who someone really is. That's the mechanism behind “people smell inauthenticity a mile away” — and why the real thing builds bonds so fast.

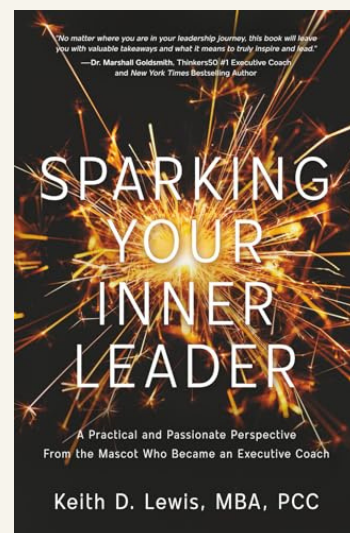
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FEATURED RESOURCE

Sparking Your Inner Leader: A Practical and Passionate Perspective from the Mascot Who Became an Executive Coach *by Keith Lewis*

What if the best leadership lessons came from an unlikely source? From Northwestern University's sidelines to executive boardrooms, Keith Lewis discovered that great mascots and great leaders share many of the same essential qualities. In this refreshingly unique take on leadership development, Lewis draws powerful parallels between the skills that make mascots unforgettable and the practices that make leaders truly effective.

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BY BRYAN BUCKLEY

THE 1ST 5 MINUTES

Keith showed how a mascot learns everything in the opening moments — when the suit goes on, the vision narrows, and how you carry yourself is the whole first impression. The 1st 5 Minutes is the playbook for those exact moments in business: how to lead from the inside out, get authentically curious, and turn the opening of any conversation into a genuine connection — long before you ever talk price.

[Get the Book → bryanbuckleyspeaks.com](https://bryanbuckleyspeaks.com)



TURN YOUR 1ST 5 MINUTES INTO YOUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE — LEVERAGE OR LOSE IT.

Bryan Buckley is the leading authority on the 1st 5 Minutes of a business conversation — 5X author, speaker, corporate trainer, and podcast host. He helps sales professionals and leaders develop, deepen, and master their business communication skills so every conversation counts.

✉ Bryan@BryanBuckleySpeaks.com / 630-689-7606

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