

Franklin, thank you so much for that warm and very welcoming introduction. Being introduced by you is very meaningful to me as I have such enormous respect for you as a leader and colleague but most importantly as a friend. I still remember your talk at this dinner a few years ago and your many important messages. I actually tried to give your speech again and hoped nobody would notice, but I would have a hard time convincing folks I am from Alabama

I began working on this presentation a couple of months ago and honestly have changed the content a few times. My wife finally got tired of me wondering what I should discuss and like all good partners told me to “be yourself and share your ideas and thoughts with everyone. She said talk about things you learned in your career” (To be honest, what she first said was why not talk about mistakes you have made in my career. When I told her I only had 15 minutes, she said, “even the abridged version of my mistakes could fit into 15 minutes.”

However, I thought about her suggestion, I came up with the idea of talking about leadership and perhaps some of the lessons I have learned. So you can see the title of my talk on this slide. (Title Slide) And don’t worry; this will not be one of those talks where we show baby pictures of ourselves.

Next Slide (hey I was kind of cute!)

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So friends and colleagues, tonight, I want to think about the topic of leadership with you and give some thought to how we learn to be leaders and how we can

improve our leadership skills. I would also like to highlight talk the value and importance of our leadership teams.

As I begin, I want to thank the APPD Board for the honor of allowing me to speak to you tonight. The APPD has been the most important organization of my career. I would not be where I am today without the many colleagues, mentors and friends who have provided guidance to me throughout my career and from whom I have learned so much about education, mentoring, and our topic for tonight...leadership.

Now I do have one complaint and want bring you back to 1992. I had been a Program Director for about 4 years and at that time was invited by Ken Roberts to give a speech to new Program Leaders at the Annual Spring Meeting. In those days, there was no fall meeting and new leaders were welcomed at a dinner the night before the spring meeting. My topic was "Life as a New Program Director". Anybody here tonight who remembers that talk? That's good, because you all missed a fantastic talk!!! Actually, It could not have been too fantastic since it took 24 years to invite me back. Anyway, that speech of 24 years ago will surface again a little later in this talk.

As you see, I have entitled my talk, Title Slide

Leadership: Going from Bad to Better. I think that title summarizes the story of my leadership career. Was I bad? Who really knows, but when I started I had much to learn about leadership. So with the memories of 12 years of a catholic education, I admit I was not a very good leader when I started my career.

Next Slide. St Josephs' school logo on my tie, which by the way was a clip on and wore short sleeve shirts as well. Maybe I was not the coolest kid in class.

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**Yes, I am admitting tonight, I was a not such a good leader when I first started by career. (Feel relief). I was good at the things that are most important in life and was a good father, husband and son, but leader.....NOT SO GOOD.**

**(whispering at table)**

**Who wants to admit to being lousy at anything? Certainly not me and certainly not in front of an audience of new program leaders. Actually, how many of you are accepting or have recently accepted a new leadership position at your institution? That is really outstanding. Congrats to each of you. Well let's talk about leaders, leadership and touch on some topics that all of us as leaders should spend time thinking about. .**

**My first message tonight is always be willing to admit your mistakes. It is the first step of improving as a leader. I still relive some of the decisions and moments from early in my career. Some are more humorous than others. Some are more serious. This was well before my medical career, but when I was about 11 years old I was caught shoplifting by my father. Who gets caught shoplifting a pack of gum by their father? Catholic School, stealing, religious family. That was a bad combination.**

**But as leaders we are going to make mistakes. I am sure, like me, you all want to continue to achieve success in your career. But the path is not so simple.**

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**We all wish it was a straight line, but it is not.**

**Next slide**

**Some of this deviation from this straight path to success is due to the mistakes we or members of our team may make. However, it is what we do with our mistakes that tells a great deal about our leadership abilities.**

**Any basketball fans out there? Dean Smith the legendary basketball coach of UNC Basketball said this about making errors.**

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**Warren Bennis, who died recently, is thought to be a pioneer of what was then the emerging field of leadership. He was a business professor at USC and was known as the Dean of Leadership gurus. He said this about leaders.**

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**Leaders want to learn about everything, want to learn as much as they can.**

**Bennis also goes on to say, “They do not worry about failures, but embrace errors knowing they will learn from them.**

**Just like that road to success is erratic and will have its ups and downs, as you enter this career path take of the challenge of learning from our mistakes.**

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**My first leadership opportunity came in 1988, a few years after completing a chief resident year at the former Boston City Hospital. I accepted a position as a pediatric program director. Honestly I had no idea what I was doing. In fact, in the late 1980’s APPD barely existed and those were the days when few people recognized the importance of educational leaders. There was no preparation for this role at all. Chairs were PD’s**

**Where did I go wrong when I started down my leadership path? I did not ask enough questions. Growing up in the see one, do one, teach one era did not**

prep me for the importance of seeking guidance. Yes, I was a nice enough person, but I was not really self-aware. I knew I loved sports, hated eating breakfast, but in retrospect I did not really know myself and I certainly did not know about the processes behind making decisions. I was reminded of this a week ago, when I heard a very nice presentation by Mike Barone. He touched on Dan Kahneman's Book, entitled: Thinking, Fast and Slow.

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In his book Kahneman discusses the flaws in human reasoning contrasted with our sense of confidence when we are making decisions. Kahneman goes on to describe what he calls System 1 thinking. This is the type of thinking that is fast, automatic, emotional and subconscious. The best example of that is 36 years ago when my now-wife and I got engaged despite the fact that we only dated for six weeks. System 1 Thinking is less frequently based on sound deductive reasoning and fortunately for me my future wife Deb only used System 1 thinking when she agreed to become engaged to me. (Kneeling down and begging her may have helped my case, as well)

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Had she used System 2 thinking, which is slow, logical, and calculating who knows what she would have decided? There is a role for both System 1 and System 2 thinking. Busy clinicians love System 1 thinking. It is efficient, relies on pattern recognition and in many clinical situations there is a real value for using System 1 thinking. However, as educators our task is to understand what is different. One of the many lessons I have learned is how different each and every situation is that we face. Our job as educators is to dig deeply into these situations, dissect away background noise, avoid pattern recognition and work

hard to see not the similarities but the differences in each of our learners. As educational leaders we need to rely on System 2 thinking for many of the challenges we will face.

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The next message I have for you is that leaders should never exist in isolation. You want the best people at your side. Pick your team carefully to ensure that everyone is aligned with your goals. Speaking of teams, this is a special night for the APPD with this the 20<sup>th</sup> year of the fall meeting and 31 years since this organization was founded. There is no way better to highlight the value of teams than to look in this room. The backbone of this great organization has been Laura Degnon, the Executive Director, and her wonderful staff including Kathy Haynes Johnson, Rosemary Haynes, and Daglyn Carr. They are all here tonight and I would love to have them stand up and be recognized. Good leaders choose wisely when building their teams.

I also want to emphasize another theme.

SLIDE: If you have not read this book it is worth reading.

In his book, *Going from Good to Great*, Jim Collins describes the characteristics of great organizations. Collins talks about how great leaders get the right people on the bus and in doing so, everyone works toward the common goal of your organization. We don't often think of our educational programs organizations similar to the business world, but we should. Think about the structure within your institution. Your org charts include Program Leaders, Associates, colleagues, Coordinators, trainees. Similar to major companies like IBM or Google we are builders and developers. Now we may not building computers or

consumer goods, but we are building and developing the careers of those who share our most important mission as an organization and that is the mission to improve child health. That is why your team is so important.

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However, and this is really important. Don't just stop at getting the right person on the bus. In *Going from Good to Great*, Collins makes the point that you have to get them in the right seat. That is another mistake I have made and I have seen others do as well. Hiring a good person is a great way to start, but if you put them in a position where they do not have the skills to succeed it is going to fail. I felt that my first few years as an educational leader. But then I found others like Ken Roberts and this organization to rescue me.

Leaders also need to be selfless. Harriet S. Truman captured this when he said, Next slide, read....It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit. Great leaders know this and share the recognition.

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A few years ago I read this quote and now it is my new personal goal. A business leader was asked how will you know you have achieved success? He/She answered it as follows: "When I leave nobody will know when I am gone." Think about that for a moment. Great leaders achieve success by setting up future leaders to be successful. Similarly we need to think about how we provide our trainees with the mentorship that allows them to be successful. This may be your most important role as a leader. How do you do that? Two words are helpful here. Servant leadership.

A few years ago when I was on the APPD Board, Laura Degnon bought this book for our Board Members.

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Mark Miller the author of this book discusses the concept of servant leadership, and becoming the leader that others want to follow.

How many times have you been asked by others “What can they do for you?” I love that question. I have thousands of things I need help with, but sometimes I lose track of my role as a servant leader. In fact, a true servant leader doesn’t answer that question, but rather replaces it by asking back, “What can I as a leader do for you?” or “What do you need from me today?”

Miller goes on to talk about the HEART of LEADERSHIP?

H - Hunger for wisdom – Always improve

E - Expect the Best – from your team and from you

A - Accept responsibility – the buck stops with us.

R - Respond with Courage – don’t hesitate to tank on the touch challenges.

Meet those challenges....

T - Think others first

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As we develop these core skills how do we continue to develop as leaders? We have to embrace feedback. As you know I have been married for 36 years and that has allowed me the recipient of an enormous amount of feedback. It usually starts with five simple words, “Honey, we have to talk”,



**This is the last book that has helped me on my leadership journey. It is by Keith Ferrazzi**

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**“Who’s Got Your Back”. One of the concepts Ferrazzi discusses is the value of having somebody on your team who has the courage to tell you what you don’t want to hear. Become the leader who is comfortable with being critiqued. Learn from it, refine your leadership style, rebuild and move on. Remember it is a critique not a criticism.**

**I have talked a lot about leadership qualities but there is another component of leadership that is worth emphasizing and that is the principle of extraction. I made this up myself. I urge you to take advantage and extract what you can from this wonderful organization. The spirit and camaraderie of the APPD is tremendous and every door is open to you. Earlier today you heard about the opportunities this organization provides. Take advantage of the amazing depth, diversity and educational excellence of the wonderful members of the organization.**

**Finally, one if the many things you will appreciate is the enormous trust that your colleagues and trainees will place in you. Their deepest fears, their personal struggles, the skeletons in their closets, may all be discussed in the privacy of your office. Use some of the leadership skills we have discussed tonight to ensure that your door is always open to them. How you deal with trainees in crisis will be one of your defining moments as a leader. Their personal life will become part of your life. Empathy will be the cornerstone of**

**your interactions with your trainees, who need and will come to value your compassion. Strive to be in the moment as your presence will have a profound impact on your colleagues.**

**Lastly as many before me have pointed out in order to be in the moment we have to care for ourselves. Dena covered this topic so wonderfully when she gave her presidential address but the importance of personal wellness for leaders cannot be understated. In fact, here is my new hobby.**

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**Sadly, I am getting to the end of my presentation. Sad because I am confident I have only scratched the surface on this critically important topic. There is so much more to learn. That is why I am going back to that talk I gave at that APPD meeting 24 years ago. There is one piece of advice from that talk that still rings true to me. What I told them then and what I will still state with great confidence tonight is if you want to maximize your chance for success there is only one really important message. Here it is. Never miss an APPD meeting! It is the secret to success and will be the framework upon which you will build your career. Who knows, 24 years from now they might invite me back again.**

**So, from the entire Vinci Family (next slide, next slide,) to our new leaders, welcome and best of luck. To our seasoned leaders, continued success.**

**Thank you so much for the time and opportunity to be with you tonight.**

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