



*Improving life and leadership of assistant principals*

## Five for Friday Show Notes

### Teaser:

If I can't do everything, doesn't that mean that I choose what does get done – and what doesn't? And if I'm choosing, do my choices reflect my values? These three ideas make up my three epiphanies:

- I can't do everything
- Therefore, I choose what gets done
- And my choices do – or should – reflect my values

The three epiphanies are foundational to making the leap from urgent to strategic leadership, because they empower us to manage our priorities instead of managing our time.

That said, just because I understand the three epiphanies doesn't mean that I can always execute.

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Insert intro

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Today's episode of Five for Friday recaps the strategic leadership emails for the week of April 3-7, 2023.

First off, celebrations! I have two today. I'm recording this on April 1<sup>st</sup>, and the end of March brings with it the second straight month that we have exceeded 3500 download in one month. My second celebration is for the APs who inspired this week's emails. I'll say more in a few seconds, but Gina, Shekeila, Emily, Sheri, Brenda, and Joi – you are all awesome. Thank you for embracing the journey and allowing me to be your guide.

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When I talk about The Journey, I'm talking about the journey from urgent to strategic leadership. This five-stage journey is the topic of my upcoming book and several weeks ago I launched an adventure through those five stages with a cohort of six assistant principals.

Last week we wrapped up stage 2 of the journey, a stage I call the U-turn. The U-turn refers to making the pivot from managing time to managing priorities, and central to that pivot are the three epiphanies.



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The week's emails consisted mainly of the story of my recent failure in following that which I am teaching.

Overwhelming amount of spring yard work...

Chose the fence ahead of planting seeds – a bad decision on multiple levels.

One of the difficult parts of the three epiphanies is trying to understand your bad choices, for which there are two primary reasons:

1. We are in the urgent zone, reacting instead of deciding.
2. Our values aren't what we say they are.

Checking my values... high for greens

But overwhelmed by urgency, I didn't think things through.

Even when we are operating with the three epiphanies, we still may make bad choices. I may choose to watch the latest episode of Ted Lasso instead of doing my taxes, which is what I will be doing this weekend while it rains and I can't finish my fence.

The important thing is to make our decisions intentionally. When we bring awareness to our decision making, we are taking a bog step towards not reacting, towards not being controlled by what is urgent.

I closed the week with a positive example - One of the APs discussed making an intentional choice to invest in checking in on teachers and students instead of closeting herself away to take care of email.

This is the opposite of what I did last week when I chose fence building over planting seeds.

She checked her values, aligned her priorities, and chose to invest in people instead of spending on email.

One of the interesting discussions in our cohort revolved around an example I give in the book, about choosing to invest extra time polishing a presentation to the school board instead of working with some beginning teachers. One AP pushed back on my assertion that investing in a presentation instead of developing teachers reflected valuing the appearance of competence (to the board) over developing teachers. I celebrated this pushback, because the choice itself is less important than what goes into the choice, and what my AP colleague was doing was being intentional about examining the context in which she would make one choice over another, and that is the point!

Takeaway: Embrace your power to choose! In many cases you cannot do everything, so recognize that you have the power to choose, and make your choices based on your values.

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That is this week's Five for Friday rendition of The Assistant Principal Podcast.

Thank you for including me on your leadership journey.

I look forward to seeing you again next Tuesday when we feature my interview with one of the most well-known and prolific authors of school leadership books – the amazing Todd Whitaker! Todd offers so many nuggets of wisdom in our conversation that you won't want to miss it. The one I have been thinking a lot about is this piece of advice: make your decisions based on your best teachers, not the ones who are struggling! I hadn't though about it until now, but hasn't that been the underlying message of today's show? Anyway, tune in on Tuesday for a great episode.

I'm Frederick Buskey and thank you again for joining me on this episode of the Assistant Principal Podcast. Remember to subscribe so you don't miss a single episode. Cheers!

**Frederick's Links:**

Email: [frederick@frederickbuskey.com](mailto:frederick@frederickbuskey.com)

Website: <https://www.frederickbuskey.com/>

LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/in/strategicleadershipconsulting>

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