

NINE ELEMENTS

EPIC MOVEMENT'S COMMITMENT IN LEADERSHIP AND REPRODUCING LEADERS



Do you have a clear philosophy of leadership?

When we consider that the heart of ministry is not just accomplishing tasks, but reproducing leaders who live out integrity, love, and fruitfulness in mission...it calls for a value-driven, Kingdom driven way of envisioning and modeling leadership. We must answer key questions such as: "What are we committed to? What are we longing to see in the next generation?"

After wrestling with some of these questions in collaboration as a ministry, we've been led to nine elements of Kingdom servant leadership that are essential to who we need to be, as leaders and as followers of Christ on mission. These are not abstract ideas, but foundational pieces for developing leaders and cultivating communities that are spiritual, ethical, loving, and ultimately fruitful.

Epic's Commitments in Leadership

What makes life meaningful?

What makes life worth living?

These questions can only be answered in the context of a **story**. Every person and community has a backstory, a **story** with origins and heritage and identity-shaping influences. It is very much a part of who we are today, because it forms everything we find meaningful - whether in our work or relationships. It is from and within these stories that our unique **identities** are birthed and formed. It is within our **stories** that we learn to ask the questions, "Who am I?" and begin to live out the answers.

Who we are is a wonderful combination of who God has made each of us, as well as how we have been shaped by our cultures, families, and experiences -- even by our pain. We all are on the journey of discovering our unique **identity**, and God in his infinite wisdom continues to use diverse people and contexts to shape us. Epic is committed to empowering each person to ask the question, "Who Am I?", in a community that will help them learn how to live out of their **identity** in worship to God, and in service to others.

But we're not just shaped by our backstory! Our actions and **identity** are also shaped by what we believe the future holds for us; what we believe about God's ultimate **STORY**. This **STORY** anchors each of our unique **stories**, as we see how we are a vital part of God's design and purpose -- and as we understand that we can all bring glory to the Creator and Author of those **stories**.

As leaders in a pragmatic culture, we can often choose strategy over story - we can elevate tasks and goals over the welfare and dignity of others, forgetting about the way we are shaping other people's **stories** in ways inconsistent with **God's STORY**. We are committed to not overlooking or minimizing our stories while we still maintain a commitment to our mission. That is why Epic is about **servant leadership**, or stewarding one's power for the sake of **empowering** others. **Servant leadership** is the commitment to bring our gifts, strengths, titles, position, and influence to help others succeed, and become more of who God made them to be -- in the fullness

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of their **identities**, and in the context of their **stories**. **Empowering** others in this way produces a new generation of leaders that can bring their own passions and uniqueness to God's mission and to their communities.

As we grow and seek to live these things out, we will inevitably see that we're all broken and wounded people, and this is also part of our stories, as individuals and as entire cultures and communities. Epic is committed to our ongoing growth and **transformation** in Christ - both individually and corporately -- as we move towards **healing and wholeness**. This transformation is about more than just head knowledge, but must touch every area of our lives, including our **emotional maturity**.

Wholeness as a person goes hand-in-hand with integrity and trustworthiness. As we seek to live out our identity in this world, we are constantly influenced by various pressures -- whether to conform to the status quo, or compromise to please others. These pressures are inevitable, but those who have **integrity and nerve** can lead out of their core identity even in the midst of challenge and resistance. **Integrity and nerve** are about having the capacity to lead consistently and courageously in a variety of contexts; they are about serving and loving without losing ourselves or our values.

So why such a commitment to things like **servanthood, holistic transformation, emotional maturity, identity, empowerment, integrity, and nerve**? Well it comes back to **God's STORY**. That story is about the Kingdom built upon and through Jesus Christ. To be a part of that **STORY** is to be called to live out an alternative reality to the broken and fragmented solutions of the world. Our leadership, our community, and our witness all must embody Christ Himself and His heart for each of us and the world.

As people part of God's story, we're committed to being people and leaders of **faith, hope, and love**. In **faith** we live courageously according to the truths God has given us, and the work and presence of Christ in our lives. In **faith** we move towards the world in **love, courage, and integrity**, seeking to bring the life of Christ to anyone and any situation that needs Him.

Loving others with the same kind of unconditional **love** which God has first **loved** us brings hope to a broken world and provides more than a glimmer that there is a better **story** to be lived - God's **Story**. We are agents of **hope** in a lost world, as we live by **faith** and in the **love** that only God can produce in our hearts. God's Kingdom must be evident in the way we do our business; in the way we relate to one another in personal or professional situations. We're committed to staying anchored first and foremost in God's Kingdom. Our leadership culture and convictions about how to develop as leaders -- they all flow from that hopeful truth and reality.

THE NINE ELEMENTS

- Story
- Identity
- Servant Leadership
- Empowerment
- Emotional Maturity & Holistic Transformation
- Integrity and Nerve
- Faith
- Love
- Hope

The Nine Elements and You

The nine elements interwoven above capture a vision of leadership, anchored in the Kingdom of God. They should serve as a mirror to us, as we reflect upon our own character and actions, whether individually or as a community. What are these nine elements reflecting back to you about your own leadership, and the culture in which you are living and serving? What resonates with you? What excites you and motivates you to relate to others in transformational ways?

Leadership is about relationships, and the growth of our ministry is dependent upon the quality and nature of our relationships with God, and with one another. We are excited for a day when these nine elements are so much a part of our ministry culture, that we can't imagine leading, relating, or even thinking in ways that aren't loving or serving to others. And we pray that this kind of culture and community will be a light to a broken world, filled with people longing to know that their story has a place in God's Kingdom.



This article was written in collaboration between the National Leadership of Epic Movement. You can read more on each element at our resource site <http://resources.epicmovement.com>