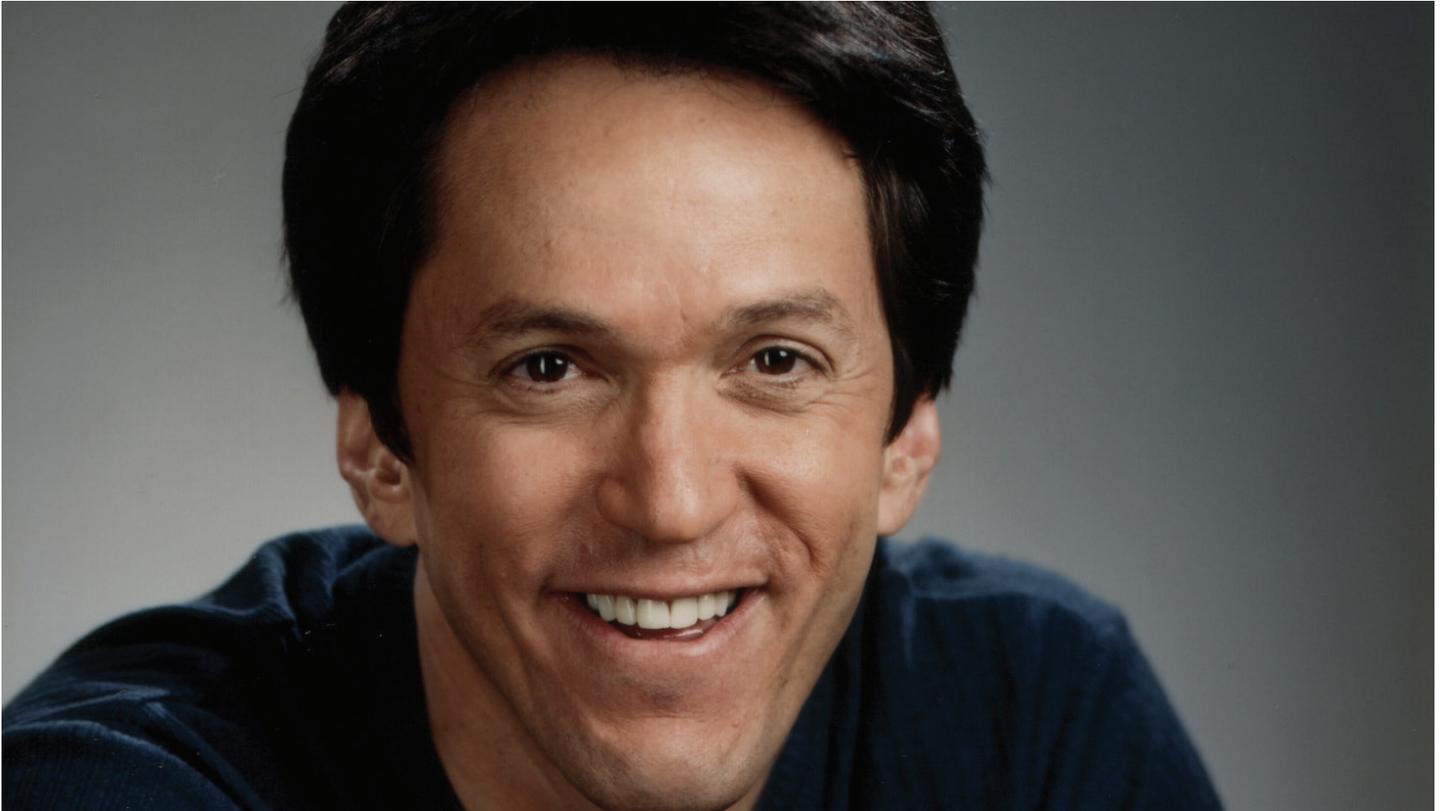


Gagen
MacDonald
Presents

LET GO & LEAD

LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION GUIDE



STORYTELLING



Perspectives from Best-Selling Author
MITCH ALBOM

Ideas for Application

In conjunction with the video clips from the conversation with Mitch at letgoandlead.com, you can use this guide to spark thinking on leaders' role in:

- Vision articulation
- Strategy articulation and execution
- Effective communications
- Organizational learning and development
- Employee engagement

Instructions

This guide was developed to complement the Let Go & Lead™ interview with Mitch Albom and encourage learning on the individual, team, and organizational level.

- Use the Questions for Individual Reflection for yourself or as pre-work before your team comes together for the Group Exercise.
- The Group Exercise can be tailored to the needs of your organization and team, but is meant to encourage deep conversation around new ways of thinking about and acting on leadership.

Questions for Individual Reflection

On Relevance

To move people, you must find a way to present a story so they can place themselves in it. Why is there power in this? Why aren't facts and figures alone enough when you are telling stories about your business?

On Simplicity

Think about the stories that have been really memorable to you. What were the essential elements of these stories? Why were they compelling?

On Keeping Your Soul Intact

Does a business have a soul? Do you believe it can be lost? Why? How can a business recapture its soul? Think of some examples of companies with a soul – what do you admire about them? What traits are applicable to your business?

On Love

How do you define love from a business perspective? What role do you think love plays in your business?

On the Power of Not Knowing

What happens in relationships when you open yourself up to learning from others? What must you do to open up? How can you open up more?

On Experience

What role does life experience play in business? How does it help you as a leader? How does it impact your ability to relate to others and share stories that have appeal and relevance?

Group Exercise

1. In advance of this group exercise, ask your team to watch the Mitch Albom videos on letgoandlead.com and answer the Questions for Reflection.
2. Open the discussion by asking, *After watching the videos, what resonated most with you?* (5-10 minutes)
3. Now, think of a time when you were younger and you learned a lesson from someone. (2-3 minutes)
4. Turn to the person next to you, tell your story and discuss the following questions (10 minutes):
 - What is the universal lesson in each person's story?
 - What effect did the story have (a) as it was told, and (b) as it was heard?
5. Come back to the larger group, and discuss (15 minutes):
 - What components inspired you most about the stories you heard?
 - How could we apply knowing what inspires us about these stories in our personal life to our work life?
 - What benefit would it have on our organization and the community in which we live and work, if we were all better storytellers?

Track the conversation on a white board or flip chart paper.

6. Now that we've discussed benefits, ask each member of your team to take a few moments to think about what actions they will take to commit to using stories to engage their teams.
7. Ask for volunteers to share their commitment.
8. Summarize the discussion and share next steps.

How to Take This Further

Now that you've explored the lessons from Mitch's interview from the perspectives of your own personal leadership and your team, take some time to consider the implications for your business...

- What is the story your organization is currently telling? What story do you want your organization to tell about its history, strategy, purpose and contribution to the world?
- How can leaders and the communication function at your organization tap into both the hearts and minds of employees and external stakeholders through storytelling?
- How is leadership currently defined for your organization? How does that definition need to change in order for your company to thrive in today's dynamic environment?

LET GO & LEAD

LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION GUIDE

About Let Go & Lead

letgoandlead.com

Let Go & Lead is an online project to explore leadership in the 21st Century. Maril MacDonald, CEO of Gagen MacDonald, has engaged thought leaders from different walks of life for conversations on what it means to “let go” and lead people to create meaningful, sustainable change. Video highlights from each conversation are posted for you to view and share your comments and perspective.

Most of all, Let Go & Lead is a community. It is a celebration of diversity and a genuine embrace of different points of view in an attempt to come to an unprecedented understanding of how the most powerful ideas come to life within the most complex environments and systems.

About Gagen MacDonald

gagenmacdonald.com

Gagen MacDonald is a firm founded on a big idea: We want to make the world a better place, transforming one company at a time.

Since 51 of the world’s 100 largest economies are corporations (not countries, as one might expect), it’s a worthy pursuit. We help clients find ways to bring their employees’ passions, talents and sense of purpose to bear on the business strategy. Working collaboratively from the corporate office to the front line, we use an organization’s brand, culture, vision and history to motivate and align employees behind accomplishing meaningful and sustainable results.

Want to learn more about how Gagen MacDonald can help develop and align your leadership team to inspire exceptional performance?



Our team has extensive and proven experience helping companies develop leaders, engage employees and build high-performance cultures that support the business strategy. Contact Meg Wheaton for more information on how Gagen MacDonald can help you.

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