

## 5 Steps to Get Results With the Power of Integrity

By Leslie Cunningham,  
Leadership & Teamwork Development Expert



Webster's dictionary defines integrity as the state of being complete or undivided. When we act out of integrity, we're acting from a deep and integrated place within ourselves, and from this place, we have enormous power to achieve our dreams and goals.

We're not thrown off course by some unacknowledged place within us that is in conflict with what we say we want. Our inner selves and outer selves are in concert with each other.

Consider the metaphor of an iceberg. We are able to see about 10 percent of the iceberg above the water. That 10 percent is the part of us that tells our friends and family things like, "I want to be a leader who makes a difference," "I want my team to be more accountable and personally responsible," or "I want to lead my team to increase revenue or sales."

And then there's the other 90 percent of the iceberg that is hidden beneath the surface.

This is the part of us that believes things like, "I'm not an effective leader," "I don't have a very good team," or "I don't have enough time to inspire or motivate my team." It's one thing to claim that we want our particular situation to be different, but what determines whether or not we achieve success or act out of integrity is who we're actually being in a particular situation - not what we are saying about it. And who we're being is often determined by that 90 percent of us that is just beneath the surface.

By tuning into the below-the-surface conversations that we're having with ourselves about a particular situation (which reflect our unconscious beliefs and can often appear as "reality," "truth," or "the way things are,"), we can determine whether or not we'll successfully achieve our goals. One way of accessing this stuff below the surface is to simply ask yourself, "What are my unconscious beliefs about this situation that I'm currently not aware of?"

Many events that occur in our lives unfold in a particular way because of our true intentions - or what we're really up to at the



fundamental level of who we're being (that portion of the iceberg concealed under the water).

This is incredibly hard for us to see in the moment because it often looks like everything is "out there happening to us." Remember in the movie *The Wizard of Oz*, when Dorothy, the Tin Man, the Scarecrow and the Lion arrived at the Wizard's house? They entered a palatial room that was filled with puffs of smoke and a loud, intimidating voice, only to discover later that the Wizard wasn't the big booming voice, but a timid, shell-of-a-man who was running the show behind some curtain.

Like the Wizard, we declare in a booming voice, "I want such and such!" And then we talk about it. We tell our friends about it, we dream about it. But the question remains, who's really running the show? It is our deep-seated beliefs and intentions that rest just below the surface that will determine whether or not we're able to achieve what we claim we want. Many of us instantly jump into action because we think that action is what's going to produce our desired results.

However, action without integrity is futile. We become the proverbial hamster in the cage, spinning our wheels, but not getting anywhere. We can talk the talk but if fear, doubt, and blame are operating just below the surface of our awareness we will continue to miss the mark.

When we're not achieving what it is we say we want, we're being given the opportunity to take a hard look at what's really motivating us. This isn't an easy task. Life presents us with countless smoke screens and distorted halls of mirrors that won't accurately reflect what's going on inside of us.



I've learned over time that my reactivity is often a sign that there's something going on for me below the surface that I'm not admitting to myself. A while back, I received an email from a friend who brought up an incident that had occurred over a year ago about a promise I had made to pay her back for ten dollars of gas money that I had borrowed from her.

Time passed and I forgot about my promise. When I first read her email, I instantly felt reactive and judgmental (she's still stuck on those 10 dollars - get over it!). My mind quickly raced to think of all the clever ways I could respond.

However, I had to take an honest look at what was fueling my reactivity, what did I have going on behind the curtain that I was not acknowledging to myself? And in an instant I got it. I realized that I was feeling reactive because of ME - not her. I was reacting to all the times I had loaned money to other friends who had promised to pay me back and never did. It didn't matter if it was a small sum of money.

I was reminded every time I saw them that they hadn't followed through on their promise. Within seconds, I understood that my reactivity was actually my internal resistance to acknowledging a disowned part of myself - it had nothing to do with her.

When I saw what was really operating for me, my resentment vanished in an instant. I was excited to email my friend to let her know that I would be happy to pay her back.

And of course in my reactive state it never occurred to me that my friend might just be joking and not mean anything by her comment at all!

By viewing our judgments, beliefs and reactivity as an opportunity to get clear about what is really running the show in our lives, we can begin to look deeper within and act out of a place of integrity and wholeness. Integrity is the golden ticket to personal transformation and achieving what it is that we truly want in our lives.

### **Your 5-Minute “Make An Impact Action Step”**

*Take 5 minutes to answer the questions below*

**1. Identify a situation** that you are currently struggling with.

**2. What are the results/outcomes** that you're telling yourself that you want to have happen in regards to that situation?

**3. What's the “below the surface” conversations** that your REALLY having in regards to that situation?

**4. Are you willing to focus on your part and to see how YOU ARE PERSONALLY contributing to this situation?** If so ask yourself, “If I were to focus on my side of the street, what is my part in this situation?”

**5. Identify one simple action step** you will take as a result of having an insight as to how you are personally contributing to this situation.

