

THE MENTOR EXPERIENCE



SPIRITED
LEADERS

CECIL HAYES,

PRESIDENT & CEO

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Spirited Leaders—"Being Consciously Competent"

Cecil Hayes, President and CEO of Spirited Leaders, took time to talk about what aspiring leaders need to think about as they move toward higher levels of leadership. Cecil talked about his background, growing up in a family business on a farm and the need to be consciously competent. He said, "I learned early on to work hard and to be responsible for my own actions." He said, "it was important to recognize my responsibilities with family, the family business and in the community."

Cecil said that, "leaders must create value. There is such a focus on wealth creation that leaders can lose sight of being consciously competent. If, on the other hand, they focus on creating value that is worthy, compensation will follow." He added that, "I have always been a strong observer in what other people do. Within our company, we do a lot of prep work to make sure we

understand people before meeting with them. When we give a presentation we will ask people around the room what they hope to get out of the presentation. Then we can respond based on what they need."

By listening to potential clients it is easier to understand their needs. As Stephen Covey wrote in his book, *Seven Habits Of Highly Successful People*, "first seek to understand before attempting to be understood."

Cecil stated that, "we spend a fair bit of time talking about philosophy; we balance our leadership styles, and we try to push the envelope with each other. Together we work on the big picture with organizations and leaders." Cecil commented that, "the leader's job is to see the big picture, come up with strategic planning, identify key battles, and measure regularly."

Cecil then cautioned aspiring leaders that, "there is a tendency then to examine things too closely and become too focussed on little things and lose sight of the overall plan. Being 'consciously competent' implies that you know what you are doing and act on it with deliberation."

Spirited leaders plan to succeed, set monthly goals, measure key activities and daily activities, and adjust their tactics to ensure they achieve their goals. Cecil added that, "as part of our core values, we strategically support community projects." Overall, Cecil recommended a broader perspective on leadership: the importance of leadership in the community, the need to protect time with family, and being consciously competent with business partnerships and connectivity.