



**BLEEDERSHIP**  
*Biblical First-Aid for Leaders*

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## **Bleedership**

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## **Bleedership Life Planning**

Congratulations on your decision to take charge of your life!

This is an important first step toward living a more balanced, fulfilled life. Please take your time and follow the instructions. Do not try to rush through this or skip steps. It will be worth the time and effort you put forth.

I promise!

God bless you and may He give you patience and guidance as you go through this process.

Jim Lange

## ***Achieving the Mindset***

It is important in a ballgame (any ballgame) to consistently analyze the field of play and understand what it going on. A great basketball player understands what is happening on the court – IN TOTAL – all the time. Average or below average players only understand a small portion of what is going on – perhaps only concentrating on the next dribble, the next pass or the next shot.

What separates the men from the boys on the basketball court is that special understanding of most things that are going on and how those “things” interact and impact each other. Good players all have extraordinary physical skills. However, it is the understanding and the anticipation that makes the great ones great.

They have balance at all times. They understand how they fit into the whole, what the whole means and how they can most impact it in the coming seconds and minutes.

And so it is in life. It is important that we understand what is going on in our playing fields, how each of them interact, and how we can best impact each of our playing fields (and our teammates).

To help start that process and to put you in the proper frame of mind, I'd like to relay a story and the lyrics to a song.

I was once at a conference in Baltimore where the speaker was talking about the importance of parents spending time with their children. He was emphasizing the need for balance and understanding what is important, both from a short-term and long-term perspective.

Near the end of his talk he quoted the words to Harry Chapin's song *Cats in the Cradle*. It was hugely powerful. There was not a sound in the auditorium and I even saw some tears being shed.

Whether you have children or not, I thought a good way to remind you of the importance of life planning and perspective would be to give you the lyrics to this powerful song.

Please read through them carefully. Even if you are not a fan of poetry, music or hippies from the 70's, it will be a great way to set your mind on the task at hand – that of planning your life.



### **Cats in the Cradle by Harry Chapin**

My child arrived just the other day  
 He came to the world in the usual way  
 But there were planes to catch and bills to pay  
 He learned to walk while I was away  
 And he was talkin' 'fore I knew it, and as he grew  
 He'd say "I'm gonna be like you dad  
 You know I'm gonna be like you"

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon  
 Little boy blue and the man on the moon  
 When you comin' home dad?  
 I don't know when, but we'll get together then,  
 You know we'll have a good time then

My son turned ten just the other day  
 He said, "Thanks for the ball, Dad, come on let's  
 play  
 Can you teach me to throw", I said "Not today  
 I got a lot to do", he said, "That's ok"  
 And he walked away but his smile never dimmed  
 And said, "I'm gonna be like him, yeah  
 You know I'm gonna be like him"

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon  
 Little boy blue and the man on the moon  
 When you comin' home Dad?  
 I don't know when, but we'll get together then,  
 You know we'll have a good time then

Well, he came home from college just the other day  
 So much like a man I just had to say  
 "Son, I'm proud of you, can you sit for a while?"  
 He shook his head and said with a smile  
 "What I'd really like, Dad, is to borrow the car keys  
 See you later, can I have them please?"

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon  
 Little boy blue and the man on the moon  
 When you comin' home son?  
 I don't know when, but we'll get together then Dad,  
 You know we'll have a good time then

I've long since retired, my son's moved away  
 I called him up just the other day  
 I said, "I'd like to see you if you don't mind"  
 He said, "I'd love to, Dad, if I can find the time  
 You see my new job's a hassle and kids have the flu  
 But it's sure nice talking to you, Dad  
 It's been sure nice talking to you"

And as I hung up the phone it occurred to me  
 He'd grown up just like me  
 My boy was just like me

And the cat's in the cradle and the silver spoon,  
 Little boy blue and the man on the moon  
 When you comin' home son?  
 I don't know when, but we'll get together then Dad,  
 You know we'll have a good time then

Now that we are reminded of the importance of what we are about to do, let's begin.

**I highly encourage you to set aside half a day to do this exercise (many of us spend more time than that planning for a vacation – this is our one and only life – a half day is not asking too much). I also encourage you to go to a remote place where you will not be interrupted, preferably a place where you feel very relaxed and at peace. Turn off your cell phone, your pager, your Blackberry. You will need some paper and a pen (or a laptop) along with your Bible. Once this is completed, the implementation process should take you no more than 15 minutes per week.**

This tool is broken out into 3 separate phases: Assessment, Planning and Implementation/Follow-through. Even though they are separate, each one is extremely important, so don't skip any phases.



## **Phase 1 - Assessment**

Everyone is familiar with bank accounts so we are going to use that terminology throughout this tool. Our first goal is to establish what our different “accounts” are. Accounts are the areas in our life or our roles that have value or importance to us.

To help you understand it even more, you might want to think about the various roles you have in life. What is your job, your marital status, your relation with others? What organizations are you involved with that rely on you for something? What roles would you like to have in the future?

These various roles will now be called “accounts” – just like we have at the bank. Only you are not going to have just one bank account, you are going to have several. Each of these accounts are the areas in our life or our roles that have value or importance to us.

Consider every area of your life. Think as though you are completing this short sentence, “I am a \_\_\_\_\_.”

As a starter, here are some accounts to consider. “I am a....

- ...Servant of God
- ...Husband/Wife
- ...Father/Mother (each child would have separate account)
- ...Manager, worker, business owner
- ...Church member, committee member
- ...Community servant, board member
- ...Keeper of my temple (body) – physical, emotional and spiritual

Take the next ten minutes and write on the next page all the accounts that you think you have, or would like to have. This is very important as this will become the basis for your life plan. You may have only 3-5 accounts, or you might have 20 or more to start.

Don't forget: take ten minutes (or more if you need it).



**Account (Role) Assessment Worksheet**

List individually all the accounts that you think you might like to create.

Want to be remembered?	Account

Now, look at the list you have created and ask yourself for every one “If I am successful at this, would I want to be remembered for it.” Put a checkmark beside every account that you can emphatically say “Yes! I hope I am remembered for that!”

Congratulations you have identified your accounts! They are the ones that you have checked on the Account Assessment Worksheet.

A precaution here: Make certain that you have not overlooked the obvious roles that many of us have, and take for granted.

- If you are married or in a relationship, make sure that you have listed that relationship as an account.
- If you have children under 21 (or still in your care) make sure you list each one of them as a separate account.
- If you have grown children, you'll probably want to list all of them in just one account (Example, I am the Father of 3 children.)
- Make sure you've made an account for yourself (for your emotional, physical and spiritual well being)

Review your list one more time, just to make sure you are comfortable with it. Some experts say that you shouldn't have more than about seven, But, we've expanded our account base to include one account for each child, potentially bringing your accounts to 10 -15.

I'd recommend that you try to keep your list to no more than seven accounts, plus however many underage children you have. ( I personally have 10 accounts, including my 3 kids.) Don't fret about it too much, as you'll be refining this list over time.

You're doing great! You have just completed the first step toward developing your life plan! Let's keep going.

Get out one sheet of paper for each account that you have checked. At the top of one sheet, write the name of one account (one account per page).

Now, spend some time in prayer asking our Heavenly Father for His guidance and direction.

Next, prayerfully pick out a Bible verse or two that depicts what you would like each account or role in your life to look like. There are a few ways to come up with your verses. First, you may just know an appropriate verse or two. That is terrific and the best way to do it.



However, if you are like me you'll need some help. Many Bibles come with concordances in the back that can help guide you to some appropriate verses. And, there are some very good web sites available to help you. I'll recommend one here that is robust and complete [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org). (You may even like this site so much that you'll use it for other research as well.)

Once you find one or two verses that you think are appropriate for the account, write the verse out at the top of the account's page. Here is an example of what is at the top of one of my pages:

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### **I am the husband of Connie**

*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.*

– Ephesians 5:25

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Take the time to do this for each of your accounts. Please do not continue until this step is completed. It is very important that you do find a verse or two for every account.

Once you have a verse below each of your accounts, think and pray about what you would like to be said of you in this area. An interesting way to do this is outlined below:

(I am guessing that you might have heard this before, but it is worth repeating.)

Picture yourself sitting in the back of a church 20 years from today. (Note, you may want to use 10 years, 5 years, or even 2 years – you need to decide what works best for you). You see people coming in and you know all of them. Some you haven't seen in years. As the sanctuary fills up it dawns on you that you are at a funeral.

The pastor begins by saying a few opening remarks and then he asks everyone to file by the casket to pay their respects. After this, the service will begin. As you go by the casket you look down and you see that it is you! This is your funeral!



You take your seat in the rear of the church with a very strange feeling inside of you. The pastor then states that he is going to have a person from each of your accounts/roles come up and share about your impact on their life.

You begin to squirm in your seat as you wonder what they will say about you. Have you been your best in each of these areas of your life? Have you left a legacy that is worth sharing?

Even if the answers to those questions are not easy for you to hear, fear not. There is still hope! At this point, you are like Ebenezer Scrooge and you get a second chance to shape your future.

Right now, take a few moments and write down what you would like those people to say about you at your funeral in each of your accounts if it were to be held in 20 years. Only consider what people will say who truly know you in the account you are considering. For example, I would care more about what my wife thinks about my role as husband than what my boss thinks about it. So, for my father role, I'd consider only what I'd like to hear my children and my wife say.

Anyhow, write what you'd like to hear for each account below each verse on each of your account pages.

Next, write down what your purpose in each account is. Complete this sentence for each: "I believe God has called me to be, or to do \_\_\_\_\_ in this account?" Try to keep this to one sentence.

This is an example of what each of your sheets might look like (this is mine for my oldest daughter):

### **I am the father of Kristin**

*I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.  
– 3 John 4*

*The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed are his children after him.  
– Proverbs 20:7*

In 20 years Kristin will be 38 and I want her to feel that she can share anything with me. I want her to not fear my judgment. I want there to be a mutual respect between us and I want her to like being with me.

My purpose is to lead Kristin by example and to give firm boundaries.





OK, you are almost there!

Next, take a look at each of your accounts. Where are you today versus what you desire to be said about you at your funeral? I ask this not to beat you up, but rather to assess where you are today.

More than likely you will have a ways to go in each of your accounts (if you have been honest). Take heart, you are not alone! View this as a gift. It truly is valuable to know where you are today.

Let me show you what I mean. If you are going to travel across the United States to a certain destination, it is important to have a map. It is equally important to know where you are starting from – if you don't know that, the map isn't going to do much good! The same is true of our lives!

You have just completed what many consider to be the most difficult part of this process. What you have done to this point is what we call the "Assessment Phase." I recommend that you redo this phase every 6-8 months so as to take into account any changes in your roles, or accounts.



## **Phase 2 - Planning**

We are now ready to begin with the “Planning Phase.” This is where the rubber meets the road – where you begin to see real results in your life.

In this phase, you need to ask yourself the following questions for each of your accounts:

1. What things can I do in the next 6 months to increase the value in this account (or the net worth in that account)? (As many as you can think of)
2. What things can I do in the next month to increase the value (or net worth) in this account? (No more than 6)
3. What things can I do this week to increase the value (or net worth) in this account?  
(No more than 3)

On each account page, under your goal, write each of these questions along with your answers below each question.

This Planning Phase should be done at the same time each week. For example, this might work well for some on Sunday evenings at 7:00. Others might prefer Saturday mornings or Monday afternoon. Whatever works for you is good – as long as it is consistent – every week! This should not take you more than 15 minutes per week.

Each week, you can review your long term (next 6 month) list and see what can move into the “next month” list. You can also see what you can move from the “next month” list to the “this week” list.

Each week, look at the 1-3 things that you can do this week to improve the value in each of your accounts. One by one, take each one and schedule it in your calendar. That’s right, on the same calendar you have your “really important” business appointments.

This is a critical step. This is where your seriousness about this “life balance” thing will really be tested. Please see my December, 2006 newsletter (“Pie Charts, Egos and Dead Men Walking”) if you would like to read about why this is important.. I have also included an excerpt from one of my newsletters at the end of this tool, “Put the Big Rocks in First” that I think will really help you.



### **Phase 3 – Implementation/Follow-through**

Just by the simple fact that you got this far, you are doing great. Now all that is left is the “Implementation/Follow-through Phase.”

This can be very difficult for some. If you thought putting some of those “not so important” things on your calendar was tough, wait until you have an important business appointment come up which will cause you to have to choose between that and an “appointment” with your son or daughter. **That can be very tough!**

Now, I am not saying that your new appointment book can never be changed – sometimes actual emergencies come up requiring us to shift some things around. However, if you truly want to make a difference in your life and the life of others, it is very important that you be of strong integrity with the appointments on your schedule (both business and personal).

While this might be very difficult at first, it does get easier each week that you stick with it. **I can promise you, if you make this a habit in your life, your life and the lives of those around you will be richer.**

If you would like some assistance in implementing this in your life, I can help. There are several options of assistance you can choose from and they are as follows:

1. Email accountability\* – weekly emails sent to check on your progress (annual package rate)
2. One on one implementation assistance\* – 3 twenty minute phone conversations to assist you in implementing your life plan (package rate)
3. One on one coaching and accountability\* – ongoing one on one phone assistance – scheduled weekly, bi-weekly or monthly (hourly rate)

If you choose not to take advantage of these services, that is OK. However, I would encourage you to please find someone to hold you accountable to working your life plan. I would recommend meeting with someone or talking with them on the phone about this at least once per month.

\*If you are interested in assistance, please email me at [jim@bleedership.com](mailto:jim@bleedership.com) and I will send you some information on these services. Please include the words, “Life Planning Assistance” in the subject line.



## Appendix A

# Condensed Steps in Life Planning

### Assessment Phase

1. Write down each of your accounts (who do you want to be remembered by?)
2. Write each account at the top of a blank sheet of paper
3. Ask God for His guidance and direction
4. On each sheet write a Biblical verse or two that depicts what you would like each role to look like
5. Picture what you would like said about you at your funeral in each account/role and write this on each account's page
6. Write down your purpose for each account – Why do you believe God has called you into this role?

### Planning Phase

1. Write down the things you can do in the next 6 months to increase the value in each account (write as many as you can think of)
2. Write down what you can do in the next month to increase the value in each account (no more than 6)
3. Once per week (preferably at same time each week), review the list you created in steps 2 above for each account
  - a. Write down what you can do this week to increase the value in each account (no more than 3)
  - b. Schedule each item in your calendar for the upcoming week
  - c. Treat just like an important business appointment
4. Once per month (preferably at the same time as your weekly planning), review the lists you created in steps 1 and 2 above
  - a. Write down what you can do in the next month to increase the value in each account (no more than 6)
  - b. Write down anything else you can do in the next 6 months to increase the value in each account (as many as you can think of)

### Implementation/Follow-through Phase

1. Stay the course – treat all appointments as important, both business and personal
  - a. Maintain integrity with those appointments on your calendar
  - b. Don't beat yourself up if you aren't 100% successful – Fail Forward!
2. Find someone to hold you accountable\*
  - a. A trusted friend who won't be afraid to "speak the truth in love" to you
  - b. Bleedership emails, one on one assistance, coaching

If you are interested in living a life worth living and/or living your Christian faith 24/7, I have developed some tools I believe can help you. Go to [www.free.bleedership.com](http://www.free.bleedership.com).



## Appendix B

### Put the Big Rocks in First

It is not exactly a new principle anymore, but it does bear repeating. Steven Covey was speaking at a seminar that I attended about a chapter in his book, *7 Habits of Highly Effective People* called “Putting First Things First.”

He invited a lady up on stage and placed a clear bucket on the table in front of her. In another bucket were tiny green pebbles. He said these pebbles represented all the things this lady needed to get done every day – the phone calls, the emails, the reports, the laundry... He asked her to put those in her bucket which represented the time she had in one day. **She poured them in and had about 4 inches to go in her “day.”**

Steven then pulled out another container with bigger rocks in it. Each rock was labeled with things such as “vacation,” “play with kids,” “talk with your spouse,” “help a friend.” There were about 15 big rocks. He asked her to pick out the big rocks that were important to her and to place them in her bucket. She selected about 7 rocks and started piling them in. **After 2 rocks, she started to go over the top of the bucket.**

**Steven stopped her and said that she has run out of time that day. She can’t put anymore in.**

He then asked her how she felt and she said she was very disappointed that she could not do some things that she considered to be very important.

He then countered and asked what would happen if she changed her way of thinking. **What might her life look like if she put the big rocks in first?**

He emptied her bucket and asked her to put her big important rocks in first. Once that was done, she was asked to pour in the urgent stuff (the green pebbles). **Guess what? They all fit in the bucket!**

He then asked her if anything else would fit and she said “Absolutely not.” He pulled out a bucket of sand and poured that in and it also fit. He asked her again if anything else would fit. “Surely not,” she said.

He then pulled out a container of water which he proceeded to pour into the bucket as well.

His point is an excellent one. **If we schedule the stuff that is truly important, we will be able to fit all the other stuff in.** That was such a good statement, I need to repeat that:

***If we schedule the stuff that is truly important, we will be able to fit all the other stuff in.***



**I don't know about you but this is sometimes a struggle for me. I am so task oriented that I oftentimes find myself doing things just so that I can get them off my "to-do" list, even if they don't mean much in the greater scheme of things.**

Crossing something off my list is a way for me to "keep score." In the past, I have even found myself adding something to my list (that wasn't on the list to begin with) after I completed it simply for the satisfaction of crossing it off. **I know, I know, this is not healthy. I need some serious therapy!**

Over the years, I have found it very helpful to put my "big rocks" in first – that is, to schedule the truly important stuff in my planner. I need to treat everything I want to do just like a business appointment. Am I able to always keep my appointments with those that are near and dear to me? No, not always. But most of the time I do. I think my family would agree that since I have begun to do that, I am a much better husband and father (They will also say I'm kinda strange and I need a lot of work, but I am hopefully getting better each day).

I am looking through my appointment book right now and I will tell you a few of these "big rock" appointments I have on my upcoming agenda. Play with Robbie (my 10 year old son), Camp in back yard with my kids, go in the hot tub with Connie (my wife), write a love letter to my oldest daughter (who leaves for her first year of college in 3 days – very sad, yet exciting) and go to one of our local metro-parks with our family. This may seem very strange that I need to do this, but I will tell you that it helps me tremendously. I know that if I didn't do this, much of this stuff wouldn't happen. I encourage you to try it this week.

**Here's what you do.** On a sheet of paper, write out all of the roles you play. For example, you might be a father/mother, husband/wife, child of God, brother/sister, sales person/business owner/your occupation here, friend, community servant (eg. On board of YMCA), church volunteer...

**One day each week (Sunday works great),** write each of these roles down with 3 blanks below each one. Pray for God to guide you and then write down 1-3 things you can do in each role to make a significant positive impact that week. For example, under your parenting role, a couple of things might be to "help Billy to understand his math homework" and to "go on a date with Sally." You can then, mark each of these "big rock" things in your calendar and make that an appointment that is just as important as a business appointment.

Try this – this week! I promise you that if you can follow through on this, your life will be much richer!

You will be healthier and your organization will be better for it (even though you will probably spend less time there). Remember to **PUT THE BIG ROCKS IN FIRST.**

If you are interested in living a life worth living and/or living your Christian faith 24/7, I have developed some tools I believe can help you. Go to [www.free.bleedership.com](http://www.free.bleedership.com).

