

The Power of Purpose



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**Based in part on the works of
L. Ron Hubbard**

THE POWER OF PURPOSE

“An individual, species, organism, organization, to succeed, survive and expand in influence must have a formulated BASIC PURPOSE.” -L. Ron Hubbard

AN INDIVIDUAL

When I was a child I observed the adults who existed in my life (parents, aunts and uncles, school teachers, the adult attendees of church services each Sunday, etc.) and I saw an emptiness in their eyes. I saw pain and suffering on their faces. It seemed as though their lives were filled with a monotonous repetition of arduous tasks



that had to be done each and every day. They did not look like very happy people. I came to the rather adolescent conclusion that adults were simply miserable people.

As I grew older I began to worry that this might be what I had to look forward to in my future adulthood. It bothered me. I saw it as some human glacier of people slowly moving through time, living and dying, living and dying. I wanted to avoid it somehow.

I did not want to become it. So I began to seek answers. I studied philosophies, religions, cultures.

Then one day at the ripe old age of 19 years, I found the above reference. I realized that what I had been observing in adults was LACK OF A BASIC PURPOSE.

BASIC PURPOSE

PURPOSE is defined as (1) what you intend to do; a plan or aim, (2) determination. It originates with you. It is something to do. *BASIC* is defined as forming an essential foundation or starting point; fundamental or essential part. A person or a business could have a number of purposes but a basic purpose would be the foundation.

For example, a musician may adopt a purpose to help children with cancer but the basic purpose would remain as music. A veterinarian may have a *basic purpose* to help, heal and protect animals. That same vet may also have a purpose related to outdoor sports like skiing or fishing but the *basic purpose* would remain with helping, healing and protecting animals.

A business that develops innovative solar technology has a *basic purpose* of making solar energy affordable and available to everyone on the planet. Yet the Finance area of the business would have a purpose of safeguarding the solvency and viability of the company. This would be a sub-purpose. The *basic purpose*





would remain about making solar energy affordable and available to everyone on the planet.

The “passion” is in the *purpose*. The apprehension I had about growing into adulthood had to do with being forced to get a job that I wasn’t passionate about. Having a job just to make enough money to pay the bills, to provide basic shelter, to put food on the table, etc., was my idea of hell. It was an unacceptable purpose. If I had

to have a job that had no purpose beyond these things, I would be operating at a level of bare, basic necessities in order to stay alive. It would be increasingly hard to get out of bed each morning just to earn money in order to exist. I would not be causing my life. I would be the effect of life. I could be on auto-pilot going through the motions of living. But I wouldn’t be living. Not really. I’d be dead to a greater or lesser degree.

When I was a child, I was observing spiritually dead people. These were people who were going through the motions of life without being spiritually engaged. They were on automatic. They weren’t *LIVING*.

To get some contrast, let’s look at an actual example of the opposite phenomena: having and following a *basic purpose*. Let’s look at the life of Joe Bonamassa, guitar virtuoso.

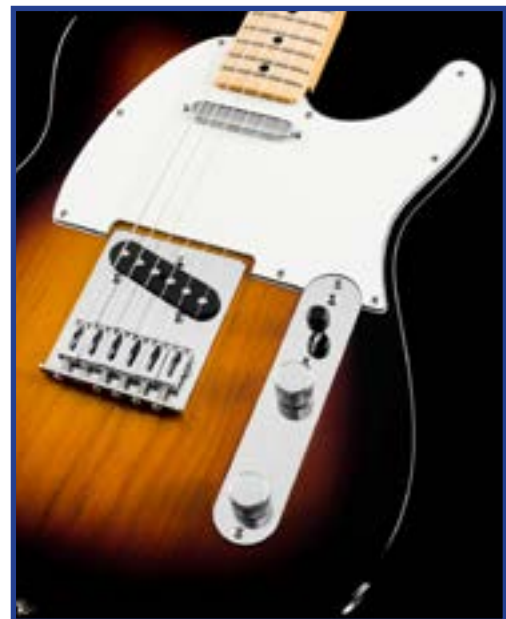
Joe was born in 1977. He started playing guitar at age four, encouraged by his father, who was an avid music fan and exposed



him to British blues rock records by Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck. Young Joe was greatly inspired by these artists. He was also inspired by American blues guitarist, Stevie Ray Vaughn. He knew then and there that his basic purpose was to master the guitar and entertain audiences throughout the world. His father bought him a guitar. While the rest of the kids his age played outside, Joe spent his early years in his bedroom training on the guitar. He set his own policy (a guiding rule or principle) that becoming proficient at the guitar was more important than play. Before he hit his teens, he was mentored by the revered Telecaster¹ electric guitar master, Danny Gatton. At age 12 he opened for B.B. King. That same year he was playing regularly around upstate New York. At age 23, he released his debut solo album.

In 2009, Bonamassa played in London at Royal Albert Hall with Eric Clapton in a duet. He fulfilled one of his childhood dreams playing in the Hall. He's worth millions. And his productivity hasn't slowed a bit. He drives himself forward, impelled by a basic purpose.

Anyone who pursues a worthwhile basic purpose and who sets up and follows policy that permits success will grow and be strong. "He has no ambition" has often been used to describe an individual who lacks a basic purpose.



¹ TELECASTER: The Fender Telecaster was introduced in 1951. It was the first commercially successful solid-body electric guitar whose design and revolutionary sound greatly influenced popular music trends.

One could have a worthwhile basic purpose and adopt or formulate bad policy that does not forward it, such as staying up half the night every night playing video games or boozing it up with his buddies, etc., and cause the basic purpose to fail. An artist who gets himself addicted to drugs and who goes in and out of rehab clinics has not set policies for himself that would prevent the things that are distracting him from his basic purpose.

AN ORGANIZATION

This equally applies to an organization. Strong organizations will have a formulated and expressed basic purpose that acts as a catalyst for the group.

A fellow named Joel Kurtzman wrote a book called *“COMMON PURPOSE: HOW GREAT LEADERS GET ORGANIZATIONS TO ACHIEVE THE EXTRAORDINARY.”*

Here’s an excerpt from that book:

“What inspired you to write this book?”

“Years ago, I went to Apple’s Cupertino headquarters to have a discussion with its senior leadership. Not only were people everywhere in the company upbeat and happy, but you could feel the energy snapping through the air. It was very informal — there were even bicycles in some individuals’ offices — and people worked day and night. One woman told me she felt she was part of something great and thought of herself as a revolutionary. The next day, I flew to Detroit for meetings and walked into a parts manufacturing company much larger than Apple. As soon as you walked through the doors, you could



see, feel, and sense the difference. The receptionist did not look up from her newspaper when I walked up to her, people's faces were downcast, the atmosphere felt lackluster, the CEO was embattled. I began wondering what was responsible for the differences between these two companies. Why was one company so depressing and another so exciting? This led me to the realization that common purpose was present at Apple and lacking at the automobile parts company. I spent years testing this hypothesis before writing the book.”

The problem with many small businesses is that the owner has made the company an extension of himself. It is sometimes difficult to see where the owner's personal life ends and the business' life begins. The business is there to make him rich or to facilitate a desire to own fancy cars or other lavish things, etc. The business is his sandbox. The employees are allowed to play in his sandbox. One can predict heartbreak and failure for this enterprise. If the accounting of the business allows business money be used for the owner's groceries and swimming pool, there could be trouble from tax agencies. The IRS requires a separation of an owner's money from the money of the business.

Until a worthwhile purpose is formulated, the workforce (referred to as “the group”) will not be brought together or coordinated and may fight with management and each other on a continual basis.



Mr. Hubbard states it concisely in this excerpt:

“The enturbulence (commotion and upset) in an organization is directly proportional to the ignorance or absence of policy and purpose.” -L. Ron Hubbard

A group will not catalyze on a purpose that is good for one person only. What idiot will jump out of bed each morning at the thought of making an owner a rich person? To catalyze a group, a purpose must be worthwhile. It must benefit a much broader range of people and things. The more benefit or solution it brings to the problems of life, the more it will catalyze a group.

The clarification of the basic purpose of a business is a very important thing to get done should any sign of contraction be at hand. It is a senior item related to the subject of organization. Its importance should never be discounted.

By doing so one may be heralding a new age of success and prosperity for one's enterprise and group.



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