

IGNITING CHANGE AT YOUR GMAU ACADEMY

At last year's national conference, I encouraged black belt instructors in attendance to begin praying about creating a strategic plan for each of their academy locations. As we launch our new website and format, I would like to put this same challenge out to all of you who lead a martial arts school, schools, or association/organization. I would like to encourage you to prayerfully develop a strategic plan that focuses on evangelism and discipleship. A plan that focuses on reaching students. A plan that fosters student recruitment, retention, and resiliency through evangelistic and discipleship initiatives.

As God solidifies the strategic plan in your heart and mind; I encourage you advance this plan into the implantation phase. The implementation of your strategic plan begins by effectively communicating the VISION the Lord laid upon your heart. This can be incorporated as a theme within martial arts school (and in particular your devotional time as well as discussed at monthly Parents Meetings at your school).

Once the vision has been effectively communicated, the journey continues by adopting growth mindset infrastructures within your martial arts academy(ies) that nurture the desired culture necessary for implementing God's strategic plan.

As we now advance into the 2020 academic year, let us now consider **OUR COMMITMENT**. Understand that the strategic plan for each of our schools is going nowhere without commitment of a critical mass of your students and parents. The unavoidable truth is that necessary but disruptive changes for strategic planning will not happen unless there is a **real commitment** to making them happen.

- **DUTY:** it is our responsibility to get our students and parents fired up and ready to embrace and, in some ways, take the lead in growing the strategic growth culture.
- **EARNED:** it is important for us to remember that commitment cannot be commanded or demanded; it has to be given... it has to be earned; by YOU.

Please note that there is a big difference between COMPLIANCE and COMMITMENT

Compliance is, *"Tell me what to do and I will do it (whether I like it or not... and even if I don't agree with it)."* You certainly can command compliance with your strategic plan. Your martial arts students want to advance... they want to be a "good martial artist" and they will most likely comply. However, if your students are simply told what to do, but lack a deep understanding of why it is important, the outcome, and in particular student learning outcomes/growth/dedication will not be what you set out to achieve.

Commitment, on the other hand, means, *"Tell me what results are needed and I will make sure they happen."* It is only in the second case that your academy students and your parents begin to take responsibility for the strategic outcome. When your people know the "why" and believe in the value of the outcome, they will take responsibility for outcomes. They will use their initiative and do things no one asked them to do because they believe the results are worth it.

COMMITMENT COMES FROM HAVING A SHARED VISION:

Creating an inspiring vision and strategic plan for your martial arts school's future is an essential requirement for you as the ministry's servant-leader. The vision and plan must be a compelling statement that motivates and energizes students, parents, and even the hosting church to become actively engaged in creating the transformational initiatives that will establish a solid foundation for your academy structure and foundation.

It is important to note that a compelling vision is a vivid picture of a possible future that students and others find inspiring. It lets them imagine in detail what will be different from today that will make them excited to be in that future. Each of your students and stakeholders within your martial arts school must be able to see themselves (and others) "*doing something great*". For the plan to be embraced, people need to visualize what it would look like if each strategic goal were being realized **magnificently**. In this future picture, students, junior leaders, and even parents can see how far they have come in just a few years. Each will see the positive impact GMAU involvement is having on the success of students. It is a picture of an academy that is not just surviving but actually thriving.

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