

LEADERSHIP x DESIGN - SPRING 2019

# PERSONAL LEADERSHIP BRAND

Liberty Kikerpill

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## Personal Background

I was born as the child of Carl Kikerpill and Shari Stevens. Carl is a first generation Long-Islander and graduate of West Point Military Academy. He believes strongly in traditions, he values the importance of practicality, education and hard work, and is a natural developer and connector of anyone he encounters. Shari is a California born hippie, ethereal nurturer and master health guru. She always encourages us to adventure, build (as she is a builder herself), and to chase our dreams. Both of my parents come from a Christian background. My dad discovered Christianity in his 30's and my mother grew up with church-building parents. Their personal histories and their desire to raise us in the Church played a significant role in who I am today. They both taught me to never make decisions based out of fear, and develop what is uniquely me. It also gave me a framework and lens for which to process. Growing up in the church, I understood the importance of community, the importance of integrity and that the story of the universe is so much bigger than myself.

Being one of 9 children (not all from the same parents) also had a significant role in my development. As child number five, I watched the leadership styles of my older siblings. I aspired to take what I wanted from each of them and make my own a la carte style. My eldest brother Jacob is the **nurturer**. The second eldest Benjamin always **takes risks** and gave me a **safe environment to try daring things** as a kid. My third oldest brother Gabriel is the **strong but silent** type, like my grandfather was. He is a **behind the scenes no glory needed leader**. My sister is wise and **searches for the deeper meaning and connections** in everyone and every situation.

My household was chaotic in my childhood at times. I learned to be calm in the storm, and to realize and expect a greater meaning and purpose in everything. It causes me to aim to refocus deeply on what matters, and to free my mind from letting the the trivial take up space. This is something that I have carried proudly through my life and was a consistent theme in my RBSE.

In my professional life, I have been deeply influenced by my managers and colleagues. My first manager was an amazing women who taught me the business by giving me smaller deals to work on. She would coach me when needed but she trusted me to find



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my own way. My current manager calls upon when she needs something done specific or quickly and the rest of the time she trusts me to manage and find my own work. On the flip side, I have also worked for more challenging managers. The most prevalent characteristics of challenging managers have been micro-managing, gaslighting, lack of anger management, emotional manipulation and lack of clear direction.

The most influential leader was a colleague of mine. She manages with grace, empathy, clarity and she is always advocating for her team, even at the expense of her own success. She never does it for her own glory, always for the betterment and growth of the team. She sees herself as an advocate and protector of her team.

## **Strengths + Insights**

Through the program thus far as well as with the help of tools like Strengthsfinder, SCARF and Reflected Best Self, I more deeply understand and have developed a context and framework from which to understand and verbalize myself as a leader.

### **Achiever**

My dad always told me I have a high capacity. I have a great deal of stamina, enjoy hard work, and I take great satisfaction from being busy and productive. This is directly tied to my overall drive. In order to feel a sense of accomplishment, I must achieve something every day, even on vacation. This also shows itself through my attention to detail.

As a leader, this shows itself as me being someone people can always count on to get the work done. I also can be counted on to work as long as needed without tiring. This allowed me to do insanely challenging jobs as a chief of staff where I worked 15+ hours a day, every day of the year.

As part of my personal leadership development plan, I need to seek out roles that support my desire to work as hard as I want, where I measure my productivity. I am most satisfied when I am building and the project has a set deadline. I also need to give myself limits as to not burn out in the long run. In my current role, I shy away from this due to the commitments of school, but I look forward to resharpening this strength in my role following graduation.



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## Developer

I constantly seek out the positive and potential in others. I have a keen eye for catching and calling to light small improvements in others, and love to celebrate them. I always approach each person as a work in progress, always with room to blossom. I constantly encourage ways to help stretch others while offering encouragement and support along the way. It brings me a lot of joy to see others succeed.

I use this every day at work when I produce. I constantly have to seek out the uniqueness in others, working to help others develop in order to get the work done. My tender and open approach, allows me to reach the deeper motivators and meanings of others.

As part of my personal leadership development plan, is to seek a leadership position that requires me to facilitate growth in others and our team. I commit to developing myself as well. This will allow me to develop and grow others more deeply. In my current role, I intend to ask for a managerial role where I can advocate for and helps other grow.

## Futuristic

I constantly think about the future and am a devout flexible planner. I dream about what can be, and I work towards those futures. I constantly drum up new ideas, and get energy from imagining the possibilities of those ideas.

This strength is used most when strategizing and planning for the future in my work. I enjoy getting involved in conversations about product roadmap strategy and the future of experiences. I love dreaming about what can be, and I have an uncanny ability to always believe it's possible to achieve that.

As part of my personal leadership development plan, I want to seek out a role where I can impact the conversation about the future. I believe I would be strongest in entrepreneurial settings or the development of new teams. It is critical for me to be in a place where my visions are appreciated and free to be voiced. In my current role, I intend to speak up more and not be afraid to ask for a seat at the table. In my current role, I fight imposter syndrome and the feeling like I don't have enough experience to participate.





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## **Adaptability**

I cherish the importance of planning, but always find myself flexible to change and excited for the challenge of having to strategize and adapt. I love the challenge of a detour. I love encouraging my teams to find the opportunities and the satisfaction in the accomplishment of these detours. There is always something to learn and be gained. This is part of growing up and learning to be calm under pressure. I thrive in chaos and seek to bring safe haven and clarity to others when given the opportunity. As a leader, I exude productive flexibility. On a more emotional level, my adaptability has proven to make me very attuned to the stressors of others. I am able to read the tension in the room, and find discreet ways to relieve it.

In my last few roles, I have worked mostly in ambiguity and uncharted territory. My ability to be adaptable has allowed me to find success in roles where others have struggled and needed more clarity and set direction.

As part of my personal leadership development plan, I plan to practice the power of a positive no more often. This will ensure that I value my own interests while maintaining flexibility. In my current role, I intend to verbalize my desire for less structure as well as continue to seek out projects where my job description calls for me to thrive in ambiguous situations.

## **Individualization**

I grew up surrounded by many people. I appreciate the uniqueness in everyone. I love learning what makes people tick, and how to help them succeed. Given my exposure in my personal and professional life, I learned never to stereotype as people can always surprise you. I learn about others through stories of their life, and seek out opportunities to hear things from different perspectives. I am excellent at gift giving and experience design as I learn about people deeply and get joy from creating something uniquely for them.

As part of my personal leadership development plan, I desire to seek out opportunities to build teams. I love looking for the x-factor that people often overlook in interviews. I enjoy thinking about how people fit and work together through the subtleties. In my



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current role, I intend to use the tools I have learned to deepen this skill. Teaching and highlighting for others about their own strengths, will give my team a better framework to grow.

## **Status**

I have a strong desire for personal excellence. I seek out “mic drop” moments when people tell me something at hand can’t be done. It fuels me deeply to always find a way to solve the problem. I thrive in situations where I have autonomy and am trusted to use my best judgement to get the job done. I strive for respect due to what I know well.

As part of my personal leadership development plan and in my current role, I plan to give my manager the feedback of how important appreciation is for me. Having a clear understanding and path to advancing as well as ask for support on and investment in my personal growth.

## **Long-term Leadership Goals**

In my occupation, being a leader means working cross-functionally. I often the saviour no one asks for, but desperately needs. I am at my best when I am building. I enjoy thinking through and developing processes. I am at my best when I am able to find hidden ways to add value to the team. I like to problem solve and find creative solutions. I am at my best when I am given the freedom to develop my own path to a solution. I handle myself incredibly well in ambiguous situations.

I aspire to be the kind of leader who understands your past, believes in your future and accepts you just the way you are. On my mother’s side, my family is Native American Osage Tribe. My name in our language means “the one who cares for the maiden.” I have spent most of my life in the shadows, not being heard or seen. I know that in order for my future career to change, that needs to adapt and change. I need to be ok in the light.

Long-term, I’d like to own my own company or to work as a consultant. I want to find ways to keep things dynamic and changing, always being faced with new challenges and opportunities to overcome. I want to always be searching for the next mic drop and creating the opportunity to create something meaningful for people.



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## Leadership Development Plan

### What do you consider to be your primary 1-2 strengths as a leader?

Adaptability & Individualization

*Validated through: RBSE, Strengthsfinder as well as in person peer and manager feedback.*

### What do you consider to be your primary 1-2 areas for development as a leader?

The Art of the Pause & Fighting off the Imposter

*Validated through: in person peer feedback and mentor coaching*

### Priority Areas

#### 1. Be a decider and in a position to manage down

- a. Most of my career has been focused on managing up and around and guiding others who are making the decisions.
- b. Coming to grad school was the first step to do that
- c. In order to do this, I must learn to fight off the imposter syndrome

#### 2. Practice the Art of the Pause

- a. Learn to relish in the process instead of always pushing to execution
- b. As someone who is good at guiding a reading a room, further utilize this in team settings and as a manager
- c. My team called this out and said if I could harness this with my execution abilities, I would be unstoppable

#### 3. Embrace and accept myself as a creative and a designer

- a. I struggle with acknowledging my own creative power
- b. My feedback clearly highlighted and called that out
- c. I have worked with incredible musicians, designers, etc (the best in the world) and have therefore downplayed my own abilities

















