



# Never Again

Thoughts on leadership  
by Karl Pister



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"Never Again!"

Words such as these are usually uttered after having experienced something extremely humiliating, embarrassing, or difficult.

I heard a very moving story told by a person, who in his early 20s, received the news that his grandmother, with whom he was extremely close, was at the point of death and that he should come rapidly.

How he wanted to do that! Yet a minimum wage job, poor family support, and other challenges resulted in him arriving after her death. He missed saying goodbye...something that for him, as it would be for many of us, was profoundly sad and troubling.



He related that, as he traveled back home, he uttered words **"Never again"**! In a 'raise yourself up by your bootstraps' type of story, this person has spent ensuing decades making good on his vow. He has made himself quite wealthy, and as part of his legacy, has made sure that many others have taken this journey with him. Any way you look at it, he has stayed true to his determination.

I love stories like this that illustrate what determination, added to strong values, can accomplish. As you consider what you have done over the past few months in leading through a truly historical event, what are your "never again" moments? Or maybe yours predates Covid 19?

Whatever your situation, what will history say about your reaction to your 'never again' moment? Will it note resolve, fortitude, conviction, and dedication?



Or will it note passivity, apathy, fear, or weakness? The latter are strong words, but history is a ruthless judge, especially when it is our own regret generating the thoughts. As the poet John Greenleaf Whittier stated "For all sad words of tongue and pen, The saddest are these, 'It might have been'."

Regret is too heavy a burden to take on willingly. It will drain your leadership bandwidth with frightening speed.

So the questions:

1. What is your 'never again' moment?
2. What was your promise to yourself at that moment?
3. How have you stayed true to that?
4. And if you have not, what will you do to reverse course?

As always, great to work with you!





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**Karl Pister, PCC**

Leadership Coach

[karl@coachinggroupinc.com](mailto:karl@coachinggroupinc.com)

(503) 381-8705

