

My wife, friends and former business partner will tell you I have a tendency to say the same things over and over and over again. They will tell you I have quite a few cliché sayings that I have said so much they can finish the sentence as a start speaking it. I have said them so many times when things happen that would cause me to use a particular saying they use my words to avoid hearing me say that phrase one more time. This brings a smile to my face because I know they have committed that phrase to their memory. My repetitious job is complete as the saying is now more than simply words shared, its learned knowledge.

Fittingly, one of these sayings I use is repetition leads to retention. Repetition leads to retention! I think that too often as leaders we falsely believe that our messages need to be refreshed, that the troops have grown weary of hearing our repeatedly uttered phrases or messages. This false belief causes us to shift away from our focus and stray from our path. Think about it this way; imagine you are in front of a client 4 times a year. If you say something different all 4 times, how much do you think the client will retain? They have more important things they are focused on throughout the year than your message. However, if you say the same thing all 4 times they may remember what you tell them. By repeating the same consistent message each time you meet with a client, they are more likely remember the message you communicated. By saying the same things so many times it will be transferred to the learned knowledge of the client. Repetition leads to retention.

In today's 144 character Twitter world, people's attention spans are shorter than ever. Even before Twitter the old adage, known as the rule of 7, states someone needs to hear something 7 times before they remember it. My message today is that you need to be consistent in your message to break through the noise surrounding people's daily lives. It might seem like overkill to say the same thing over and over again and you might feel people are sick of hearing the same thing but consider your own life. Can you remember what people told you last Wednesday?

I have been studying and reading the Bible and going to church my whole life and I still hear new things from the Bible all the time. The more you read the Bible the more you remember, because once again repetition leads to retention. Learning the Bible is

something I am actively engaged in, yet even then it's hard to remember it all. Think about something you are actively engaged in learning in your life and how much can you retain? How much can you remember of things you experienced and paid attention to? For example, can you remember who won the Super bowl last year? How about the year before? Think about the last book you read, can you give me a cliff notes report on it? If you are like most people you are probably starting to question your memory. However, I bet you can remember McDonalds slogan, "I'm Loving It," or Nike "Just do It." Why can you remember these slogans and other things you do not care about? Because repetition leads to retention!

So how can we as leaders benefit from this strategy? My suggestion is to do things more than once. If you read a great book, read it again and again. If you hear a great podcast listen to it again. If you are teaching somebody something, teach it to them multiple times. Find your message, stick to it and say it over and over and over again, because REPETITION LEADS TO RETENTION!