



## The Steadfast 25 Years of Dr. Irwin Becker

By Richard A. Green, DDS, MBA,  
Director Emeritus of Business Systems  
Development

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Today's thoughts for your crucible are: (1) There is a difference between wanting to be a leader and being willing to do "leader work." (2) We do not determine our Legacy; others do that after we are gone. (3) Leaders do not know the impact they have had on your life unless you share it with them.

What is leader work? Simply said, it's influencing yourself and others towards a preferred future by "being" and "doing." Our unique expressions of leadership need to come from deeply held values – from the inside out. One of the building blocks of leadership is to ask how we want to be known through our actions. A legacy comes from others remembering those moments with you when you touched them where they live in a very significant way. You become a leader, when you are clear and congruent in thought, word, and deed – and have an opportunity to be significant in and eyes and lives of others.

Reflect on the steadfast work of Dr. Irwin Becker and the seeds he has sown over the past 25 years and will continue to sow as he redefines the next chapter in his life and career. He has been "doing" leadership work with participants around the philosophical constructs that comprised Dr. Pankey's message for nearly 25 years. In each of those years he has spoken to 10-12 C1 classes with

20-24 participants in each class. Do the math. That is 5,000 to 7,200 dentists. And that is only in C1!

Reflect, if you will, back to your C1 experience – the philosophical message, the connecting points for you, and the questions that moved you, shook your soul, and began to shape your vision, sometimes unaware. It is only in reflection from a more distant view that Irwin's Legacy appears. It appears when you think of him at significant times in your life. He will not know about his legacy for you unless you tell him about those significant moments.

On the first floor of The Pankey Institute, in the "break room" on the wall appears a framed letter entitled "Remember" from Dr. Gary DeWood, written in 1991. This poem speaks to this issue. Read it the next time you are at the Institute, and speak about your remembrance to Irwin. It is important for him to hear from you at this "transition time" in his life to get a clearer sense of the potential impact of his "doing" and the steadfastness of his intentions through all these years.

Irwin will tell you he is not retiring but rather "reengaging in life." This is a time to take a new look at the things that matter most to him, to reengage from the inside out! This is in and of itself a developmental process. Behaviorally, it is not unlike developing a practice, a team, a patient (at their own speed), or even yourself. When you get a glimpse of the similarities, it's huge!

Irwin, thank you for your expressions of leadership over the past 25 years; they are the foundation forming your legacy. The legacy of your "doing" has been planted and dutifully tended by you through the years. It is and will continue to bear fruit! ■

[rich@evergreenconsultinggroup.com](mailto:rich@evergreenconsultinggroup.com)

2633 Wulfert Road, #4 Sanibel, Florida 33957  
239.579.0135