

Emergenetics Profiles: Kelvin Redd

Director of the Center for Servant Leadership

Leadership is not an easily defined idea—it encompasses myriad qualities and skills and truly means different things to different people. One word that may not immediately spring to mind in the leadership discussion is *servant*. But as the Director of The Center for Servant Leadership, in Columbus, GA, Kelvin Redd sees leadership in a different light, one that is focused on a commitment to lead by understanding and respecting others.

According to Kelvin, *Servant Leadership* is defined as “a lifelong journey that includes the discovery of one’s own self, a desire to serve others and a commitment to lead.” It is a novel concept, but one gaining ground as more and more organizations and individuals are looking for new ideas on leadership. And that works for Kelvin, as last year alone he gave 88 workshops, seminars and speeches around the country.



“I love being in front of people, so to be able to talk about Servant Leadership, especially through the lens of Emergenetics, has been a very fulfilling and meaningful thing for me. We approach leadership by breaking it down to those core components—self discovery, desire to serve, and commitment to leadership—and facilitating a way for people to continually reinforce them.”

As self-awareness is a vital element of servant leadership, Redd underscores the importance of Emergenetics in his work. “Understanding oneself is the key in becoming a leader and Emergenetics is the foundation of that discovery process. With Emergenetics, you gain the knowledge of how you think and behave and how you approach work, and that becomes a bridge to understanding others and ultimately to becoming a stronger leader.”

In all cases though, Kelvin stresses that leadership and success is a reachable goal and one to strive for. “I always look to John Wooden (legendary UCLA basketball coach), who believes that the true measure of success comes when we simply do the best that we can do. This is a simple statement but a profound reflection on self-awareness—only when we truly understand ourselves can we know how to be the best we can be.” According to Redd, Emergenetics brings the ability to look inside ourselves and find those talents that we may or may not be using.

“I am driven by one statistic—that 87% of Americans have jobs that they don’t like. My goal is to overturn the apple cart and diminish that number. Our approach is to help people find their talents and preferences and use them to better communicate and work with others,” said Kelvin.

In using Emergenetics, Kelvin facilitates a discovery process centered on ensuring that people can see the differences in how people approach work and life, and it is one that has garnered excellent evaluations from his participants. “I separate Blue/Yellow and Green/Red thinkers and ask each group how they communicate. Of course the abstracts speak in broad concepts while the concrete thinkers need the details. This simple juxtaposition is a powerful learning tool—especially for those already in leadership positions who have always approached things in one way.”

Although grouping people by preference is a common theme in Emergenetics, Kelvin bolsters these exercises with personal stories and examples. “With Emergenetics the stories are all mine. I use my daughters and their interactions...the oldest is a Blue/Green and the youngest is a Red/Yellow...or I talk about my own preferences and how I work. When I went through Certification, I spent a lot of time on definitions, but I also looked for Geil’s personal insights. Those kind of insights are where the ‘Aha’ moments come, and this is what I try to replicate as I use personal examples on thinking and behavior.”

Kelvin uses Emergenetics in widely varied settings including executive and management coaching, traditional workshops, teambuilding sessions, and through another arm of The Center for Servant Leadership, even in marriage and family counseling and couples seminars.

And in keeping with his breakneck scheduling, he has authored a book, which is coming soon. *Stand Tall – Essays on Life and Servant Leadership* is a compilation of several years of work and presenting on leadership. To learn more email Kelvin at kredd@pilink.org.