News Release

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FGIA Annual Conference Keynote Speaker Ryan Hawk Shares Six Tips for Becoming a Learning Leader

SCHAUMBURG, IL – Participants at the Fenestration and Glazing Industry Alliance (FGIA) Annual Conference in Orlando, FL, heard from Ryan Hawk, host of [The Learning Leader Show](https://learningleader.com/podcast/), a popular business podcast in which Hawk interviews thought leaders and communicates their stories, insight and leadership wisdom. Hawk shared six tips for becoming a “learning leader,” or one who recognizes that their own ongoing education is a critical component of successful leadership.

**1: Be Accountable**

“The first thing I have learned about leadership is that the best leaders have 100%ownership,” said Hawk. “They are accountable of situations when times get tough.” He shared an example of his experience playing college football, and the pains of striving to be first string quarterback and not being chosen. “After having time to reflect, I learned that whatever I think I am entitled to or think I deserve, what matters most is the value I bring to other people,” Hawk said. “What an awesome thing to learn at 19.”

**2: Surround Oneself with Good People**

“Those who have sustained excellence are surrounded by others who have done the same,” he said. He encouraged participants to identify the people who are ahead of them in their careers, those who are their peers and those who are coming behind them. Each group serves a different purpose: those ahead serve as mentors if they are willing; peers offer support and encouragement when mistakes are made; and those behind offer teaching opportunities. “Sharing your knowledge is the right thing to do and a great way to live,” said Hawk. “Plus, teaching is where so much of your own learning happens.”

**3: Think About One’s Ethos**

“I think everybody, especially leaders, should have a code for how they operate and what they believe,” said Hawk. “’Leader’ is a choice, not a position.” Hawk shared that part of his ethos involves choosing to do the harder thing when presented with a choice. “We are wired for laziness,” Hawk said. “It takes a conscious effort to do the harder thing, like take the stairs over the escalator. But all the great moments in my life have been preceded by doing something hard. If I choose to do the thing that is a little bit harder, I will be better suited to handle adversity when it strikes.”

**4: Be on the Front Line**

Hawk asked participants to become obsessed with the front line of their organization, and to have a bias for action. “I want to be the kind of leader who does the thing,” he said. “Talking about doing the thing is not doing the thing.” He encouraged conference participants to know each role in their company and to humble themselves to learn how to do each one. “The highest-productivity people have a level of courage and confidence to stand up for what they believe in,” he said. “These qualities are equally balanced with curiosity and humility. They are always learning.”

**5: Reject Being Energy Neutral**

The energy one brings to a space is important, Hawk said, noting that a leader’s followers are watching them closely. “They notice how you respond to both good news and bad news,” Hawk said. “As a leader, you cannot be energy neutral. You can either make things better, or you can make them worse. You are the emotional thermostat for that team. Your words and behaviors matter.”

**6: Take the Path Less Traveled**

The last tip was related to Hawk’s personal ethos about choosing to do hard things when presented with the opportunity. “When we do hard things, we train ourselves to embrace friction and build resilience,” he said. “Hard things compound. The more you push yourself to do, the more competent you will be.”

For more coverage about the FGIA Annual Conference, visit [FGIAonline.org/news](https://fgiaonline.org/news).

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