

The Five Wells

"Men must be so sensitive to the presence of disorder, mediocrity and injustice that they cannot sleep well at night until they tip the scale toward justice. Unto whom much is given, much is required."

- **Dr. Robert M. Franklin**

1. Well-read: Leaders must be well-read. Being well read means reading a variety of materials that will enhance your leadership skills and promote personal, academic, and professional growth. When reading it is important to open one's self up to more than urban novels, sports magazines, or class cliff notes that will allow us to short change our selves. As UMI men, we must work to eliminate shortcuts in our lives, and open ourselves up to learning and growing into a well-rounded man. Reading is a gateway to knowledge, exploring the world around you and breaking through barriers that stand in ones way of success. It is important to understand that the more one reads, the more nourishment is provided to one's mind. Reading is not only imperative to learning and growth, but also being able to change ones perception of life and the world around them. Reading also allows UMI men to grasp the powerful dynamic or lack thereof language and literature plays in all facets of their lives (social interactions, familial interactions, academic interactions, professional). Being well read means UMI men realize that an intellectually informed and astute man is the true definition of "hard" or "real"

Questions to Consider:

- What is your definition of being Well Read?
- What role does reading currently play in your life? What role would you like reading to play in your life?
- What barriers can reading eliminate in your life? (Personal, academic, professional)
- Are you open to using literature as an avenue to promote growth and development?
- How can reading help you change perceptions you hold about the world around you? How can reading help change the worlds perception of you?

2. Well-spoken: Leaders mean what they say and they say what they mean. It is important to understand that as a well-spoken UMI man, you always have something of relevance to say. People look forward to your dialogue, point of view and the stylish manner of your delivery. To be well spoken is as Dr. Franklin explains, "Just as important as reading is the study of grammar and syntax: "This reduces the necessity of relying on profanity or empty verbal placeholders like, 'um, uh, ahh . . . ' or nonsense like 'you know what I'm saying?'" Being a well-spoken man indicates you possess the ability to verbally communicate within an environment transcending stereotypes, and bias. Expansion of one's vocabulary is a key component of becoming well spoken. Possessing the ability to express ideas, thoughts, and beliefs confidently so that the listener clearly receives your message is another characteristic of a well-spoken individual. As UMI men, the bar is raised for us to be men of distinction and resolve in our community (school, local and national). One of the ways we will achieve this goal is by sustaining a presence simply through the eloquence, power, and authority of our words. To be well-spoken means one also possess the skills set to be a great listener. Communication is a two way street. Being able to participate in dual direction dialogue is a key characteristic of a well-spoken man.

Questions to Consider

- What is your definition of a Well Spoken UMI Man?
- Do you possess the skills to hold a conversation within any environment?
- Do you depend on empty verbal placeholders when you talk to others?
- Can you conduct a conversation without the use of profanity or the use of disparaging vocabulary?
- When you speak, do you possess a level of confidence that shows through your dialogue?
- What steps do you take to increase your vocabulary? Be specific.
- What further action steps can you take to become a well-spoken UMI Man?

3. Well-traveled: Leaders go. To be well traveled means that you are open to seeing the world outside of your own community through opportunities that present themselves. Becoming a well traveled man does not mean that you embark on a trek around the world physically, being a well traveled man means that you are willing to embark on a journey around the world, through visual imagery and through your openness to embrace diversity. To be a well-traveled man means that you are open to engaging in conversations with individuals from different regions of the world, cultures, and ethnicities to learn about them and the world as they see it. To be a well-traveled man means you possess the ability to step outside of your comfort zone, assess, and understand your origin. Well-traveled men do take advantage of opportunities to travel to new places, North America and beyond to physically experience new cultures, understand the significance of world events and history, and undergo an essential “decentralization” that will allow the well traveled man to become a global community member. As Dr. Franklin states, “Get out there, break new ground, and take others with you.”

Questions to Consider

- What is your definition of a Well Traveled man?
- How can travel help you change your perception of the world around you?
- How can travel enhance your knowledge and acceptance of different cultures?
- Can you identify 2-3 places within the United States you would like to visit? Why?
- Can you identify 2-3 international destinations you would like to visit? Why?

4. Well-dressed: Leaders present themselves in a respectful manner. Making the right impression is very important to a man that is well dressed because they understand a person’s impression is often formed before a formal interaction takes place. A well-dressed man is able to distinguish himself simply through the clothes that he wears. A man that is well dressed takes great pride in his appearance, hygiene, and demeanor. Well dressed does not mean having an extensive collection of expensive clothes. Being a well-dressed man signifies your understanding of what it means to be in control of your personal brand. A well-dressed man understands there is a time and a place for everything, meaning a time and a place for business professional attire, a time and a place for business casual attire, and a time and a place for jeans and a t-shirt. A well-dressed man takes great pride in his appearance because he knows that his appearance can open the door to new opportunities in all facets of his life. The way you dress does not only reflect the way you feel about yourself, it also sends signals to the people around you.

Questions to Consider

- How can the way you dress change the types of interactions you have with people?
- What does my wardrobe say about me?
- How can your attire help you distinguish yourself?
- What is your personal brand?
- Can you adapt your wardrobe based on the occasion/situation?

5. Well-balanced: Leaders are well balanced and well rounded. Well balanced means you are a self-disciplined man capable of balancing his time and efforts in a way that allows him to exercise the proper amount of energy to any task and or situation. A well-balanced man understands there is a time and a place for everything and one’s life should reflect this understanding. A well-balanced man possesses strong morals and a positive work ethic along with an ability to remain humble and open to lifting others to realize their potential. A well-balanced man is a person that adds to people’s lives and their development. A well-balanced man is always prepared for what the world presents them and life’s roadblocks do not easily frustrate him. Instead of wasting good energy, the well-balanced man is capable of letting go of unnecessary stress and maintaining a determination to succeed. A well-balanced man possesses a level of spirituality no matter their religious or spiritual beliefs. A well-balanced man understands the importance of a healthy lifestyle physical and mentally. They understand that, “A healthy body is a healthy mind, and by taking better care of ourselves we will feel more confident, more motivated, and more controlling of our life situation”. A well-balanced man approaches life in a positive manner, and refuses to take on the label of “victim”. A well-balanced man seeks opportunities to be a leader, he

understands the big picture, and he is well versed in implementing a plan of action that will help him achieve his goals within the bigger picture of life.

Questions to Consider

- Do you have balance within your life?
- Do you live a healthy lifestyle?
- Do you possess self-discipline?
- Do you struggle to follow through on commitments?
- Are there areas where you can improve your leadership skills?