



The Top 100 Leadership Quotes Of 2023 Part 2

Aggregated by Brian Dodd of

Brian Dodd On Leadership

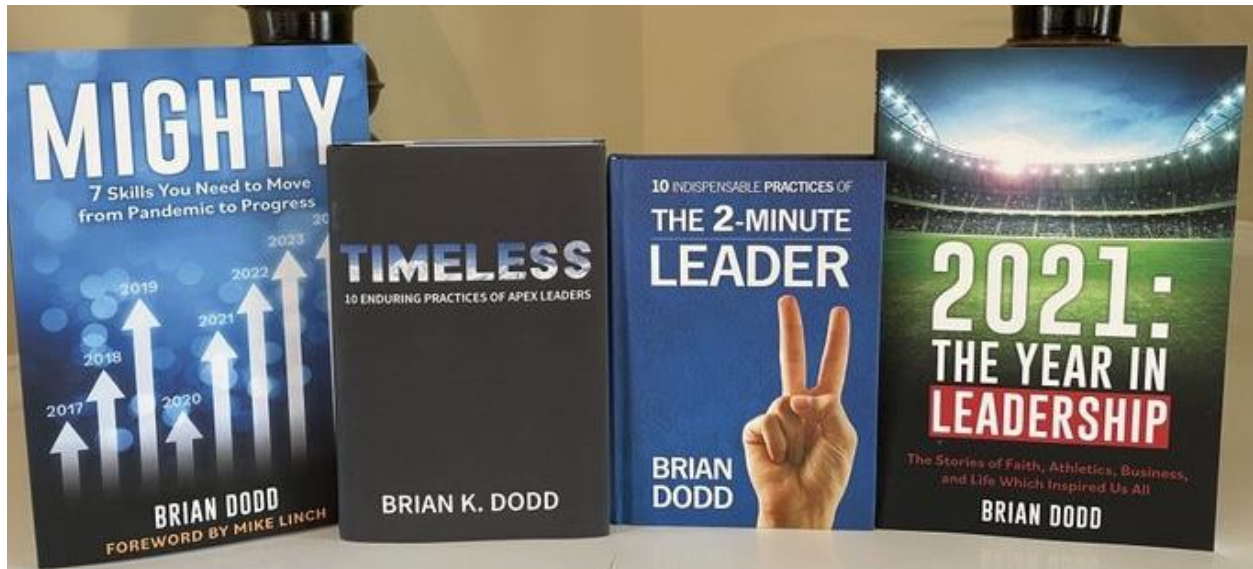
Introduction

Language is a BIG deal for leaders. Words matter. They can inspire enormous change and move people to life-changing action. Therefore, when a leader speaks, the quotes they give, have significant impact.

Quotes are powerful. A good quote synthesizes something with deep meaning into an easy-to-understand statement. Good quotes are pithy, repeatable, and memorable. When someone delivers a great quote, they capture in language what we all feel intuitively.

This is why I created this resource. The following are 100 quotes I captured during the second half of 2023. These will take 15 minutes to read and a lifetime to apply.

Let's get started. You're about to get smarter and better as a leader.



This resource has been created by Brian Dodd of [Brian Dodd On Leadership](#). Brian is the content coordinator of one of the most widely read leadership sites on the internet. He is also the author of the Amazon best-selling book *Mighty: 7 Skills You Need to move from Pandemic to Progress*. The following are additional resources from Brian. Click the hotlinks to order.

Coaching Courses

[The Timeless Leadership Masterclass](#)

[The 2-Minute Leader Coaching Course](#)

Books

[*Mighty: 7 Skills You Need to move from Pandemic to Progress*](#)

[*2021 The Year In Leadership: The Stories of Faith, Athletics, and Business Which Inspired Us All*](#)

[*Timeless: 10 Enduring Practices of Apex Leadership*](#)

Table of Contents	Page
Books and Writing	5
Hard Work	5
High Performance	6
Competition	7
Preparation	7
Relationships	8
Failure	8
Success	8
Money	10
Culture	11
Creativity	11
Leadership	12
Wisdom	13
Character	13
Luck	14
Coaches	14
Teamwork	14
Fear	15

Brian Dodd

"Giving your very best even when you're not feeling your best allows you to become your very best." - Brian Dodd

"We all know nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care. But after we know how much you care, we definitely care about how much you know. Care alone can't overcome continual non-performance or neglect." - Brian Dodd

Books and Writing

- "The man who doesn't read good books has no advantage over the man who can't read them." - Mark Twain
- "Most people write to sound smart when they should write to be useful. Communicating to sound smart lowers your potential for impact. The harder people have to work to understand you, the less they want your input. Writing to be useful means writing what you would want to read. Simple, but not easy." - Farnam Street
- "Thousands of people don't like what I do. Fortunately, millions do." - James Patterson
- "I've seen a million writers with talent. It means nothing. You need guts, you need stick-to-it-iveness. It's work, you gotta work, do the freakin' work. That's why you're gonna make it, son. You work. No one can take that away from you." - Steven Pressfield
- "Oh it's very simple. My secret had been I know what to ignore." - Nobel Prize winner Francis Crick on the secret to winning

Hard Work

- "Everybody wants to save the earth; nobody wants to help Mom do the dishes." - P. J. O'Rourke
- "If you're going to lead people, the first hard thing you have to do is the hard work on yourself to figure out who you really are as a person so that I can lead authentically from my heart and who I am." - Andy McKay
- "His legacy will be that he had God-given talent and he worked hard at this talent. I'm really proud of that but I'm just so proud of him as a person. I guess I'm just his biggest fan." - Nolan Ryan's wife Ruth from the Netflix documentary Facing Nolan

- "Their *effort*, certainly. The effort has to be at the highest level possible for each individual player. Their *focus* has to be at the highest level. Their *discipline* has to be at the highest level. If they're falling below any of those things, that's a problem. The goal is to every day be able to come in and be at the highest levels of those things." - Duke head women's basketball coach Kara Lawson

For more wisdom from Coach Lawson, read [Duke coach Kara Lawson's Must-See Video Debunking the Myth of "Easy" Leadership](#).

High Performance

- "Hero ball didn't go away. It just went to M.I.T., got a degree in analytics, and rebranded as heliocentrism." - ESPN basketball analyst Kirk Goldsberry
- "Be a yardstick of quality. Some people aren't used to an environment where excellence is expected." - Steve Jobs
- "I divide my officers into four groups. There are clever, diligent, stupid, and lazy officers. Usually two characteristics are combined. Some are clever and diligent – their place is the General Staff. The next lot are stupid and lazy – they make up 90 percent of every army and are suited to routine duties. Anyone who is both clever and lazy is qualified for the highest leadership duties, because he possesses the intellectual clarity and the composure necessary for difficult decisions. One must beware of anyone who is stupid and diligent – he must not be entrusted with any responsibility because he will always cause only mischief." - General Kurt von Hammerstein-Equord, German general who opposed Hitler
- "People duck as a natural reflex when something is hurled at them. Similarly, the excellence reflex is a natural reaction to fix something that isn't right, or to improve something that could be better. The excellence reflex is rooted in instinct and upbringing, and then constantly honed through awareness, caring, and practice. The overarching concern to do the right thing well is something we can't train for. Either it's there or it isn't. So we need to train how to hire for it." - Shake Shack founder Danny Meyer
- "Only the mediocre are always at their best." - Jean Giraudoux
- "Performance is something that we will give more time; behavior we won't. And that's because behavior is a choice, not a skill set." - Frank Slootman
- "The mindset isn't about seeking a result—it's more about the process of getting to that result. It's about the journey and the approach. It's a way of

life. I do think that it's important, in all endeavors, to have that mentality." - Kobe Bryant

- "The secret to making progress is to get started." - Mark Twain
- "You cannot change your destination overnight, but you can change your direction overnight." - Jim Rohn

Competition

- "The surprise, and the irony, is that the more good (NBA) players there are, the more important the great ones have become. The proliferation of offensive threats has meant that defenses can't train their attention all on one person; that means that there are better shots for the best players to take, and the best players have become even better at making them." - Louisa Thomas from *The New Yorker*
- "We learn from history that complete victory has never been completed by the result that the victors always anticipate—a good and lasting peace. For victory has always sown the seeds of a fresh war, because victory breeds among the vanquished a desire for vindication and vengeance and because victory raises fresh rivals." - BH Liddell Hart from his 1944 book *Why Don't We Learn From History?*

Preparation

- "To each there comes in their lifetime a special moment when they are figuratively tapped on the shoulder and offered the chance to do a very special thing, unique to them and fitted to their talents. What a tragedy if that moment finds them unprepare or unqualified for that which could have been their finest hour." - Winston Churchill
- "It takes a boldness of execution and an ability to overcome fear. Fear is just a symptom of lack of preparation. The best antidote for fear is competence." - Chris Hadfield
- "I trained four years to run nine-seconds, and people give up when they don't see results in two months." - Usain Bolt

For more leadership lessons on the subject of preparation read the following:

[The 2 Greatest Indicators of Future Performance](#)

[12 Lessons on High Performance from the Best Locker Room Speech I've Heard](#)

Relationships

- "There's not a player alive that's gonna let you coach *until he trusts you.*" - Clint Hurdle
- "People like you more when you are working towards something, not when you have it." – Drake
- "The most accurate metric for your love of someone is how you feel about their flaws." – Mark Manson
- "I'm at the stage in life where I stay out of arguments. Even if you say $1+1=5$, you're right. Have fun." – Keanu Reeves

Failure

- "It's not a failure; it's steps to success. There's no failure in sports. There's good days, bad days. Some days you're able to be successful. Some days you're not. Some days it's your turn. Some days it's not your turn." - Giannis Antetokounmpo channeled his inner Ted Lasso after his team's shocking exit from the NBA playoffs
- "Never ascribe to malice that which is adequately explained by incompetence." - Napoleon Bonaparte
- "Plausible deniability is the currency of most State leaders when calamity strikes." - George Manners
- "What are you shaking your head for? It's part of it. Greatness don't shake his head. You feel me?" - Phoenix Suns Monty Williams to Kevin Durant who was shaking his head after a missed shot
- "Constant effort and frequent mistakes are the stepping stones to genius." - Elbert Hubbard

For more leadership lessons from Giannis Antetokounmpo, read [5 Lessons From Giannis Antetokounmpo's Comments On Failure vs. Steps To Success.](#)

Success

- "The ultimate goal of every smart hitter in baseball is not only to get on base, but to make it home." - Keith Madison
- "In war, the victorious strategist only seeks battle after the victory has been won." — Sun Tzu
- "You are not going to find true happiness on the hedonic treadmill of your professional life. You'll find it in things that are deeply ordinary: enjoying a

walk or a conversation with a loved one, instead of working that extra hour, for example.” - Arthur Blank

- "When you're good at something, you'll tell everyone. When you're great at something, they'll tell you." - Walter Payton
- "Ultimately in life you can have success on the field but really what matters in the long term is a good set of values and that's what Nolan Ryan exemplifies." - President George H.W. Bush from the Netflix documentary Facing Nolan
- “The most dangerous story that’s ever been told is happiness lies just beyond achievement. And you can spend your whole life following that story just to find that there really wasn’t a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.” - Jack Raines
- "Success, to me, is more about impact than anything. I think that you can make as much money as you want, but when you leave this world you can’t take it with you. When you leave a lasting impact on people — whether it be in your community, your team, your family, or your inner circle — you will be remembered forever. That’s the biggest thing for me that I want to do in this world, and I won’t feel successful until I’ve created the most impact I possibly can." - Savannah Jordan
- "When you've tasted significance, success will never satisfy again." - Jason Stoughton quoting John Maxwell
- “The greatest achievement is to outperform yourself.” - author Denis Waitley
- "Guarding the victory." - Michigan Wolverines head coach Jim Harbaugh on the duty of a head coach. He also added, "There's no offense. There's no defense. It's a we-fense."
- "Execution is the chariot of genius." - William Blake
- "The difference between successful people and very successful people is that very successful people say ‘no’ to almost everything." - Warren Buffett
- “And in my observation of competitors in any discipline, this a really fundamental idea. Those who succeed at the highest level, I think, basically manifest their unique character through their discipline.” - Chess International Master and martial arts champion Josh Waitzkin
- "I just focus on the growth, and amazing things happen when you focus on that. You end up having more success — and you end up having things go your way." - Kara Lawson

- "Winning didn't make me enough, or make me beloved in some permanent way. That's what I wanted. I wanted assurance I would be loved. But it was temporary. The love from success is always temporary. You have to find satisfaction with yourself on your average day." — Lauren Fleshman
- "The most dangerous story that's ever been told is happiness lies just beyond achievement. And you can spend your whole life following that story just to find that there really wasn't a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow." — Jack Raines
- "The process of winning is fun. Trying to create fun for everyone else outside of that isn't your responsibility. You're not a camp counselor for everyone's fun activities. You're out there trying to perform, trying to dig deep for your teammates. That requires intense focus for a long period of time." - Tom Brady on being a NFL quarterback

Money

- "The best measure of wealth is what you have minus what you want. (By this measure, some billionaires are broke." - Morgan Housel
- "Sometimes it seems that it might be better to go back to those simpler days, that one might get more out of a less complex life. But it cannot be done. One changes with prosperity. We all think we should like to lead the simple life, and then we find that we have picked up a thousand little habits which we are quite unconscious of because they are a part of our very being-and these habits are not in the simple life. There is no going back-except as a broken man." - Harvey Firestone
- "Inherited wealth is as certain a death to ambition as cocaine is to morality." - William Vanderbilt
- "It's so simple: you spend less than you earn. Invest shrewdly. Avoid toxic people and toxic activities. Try to keep learning all your life. And do a lot of deferred gratification. If you do all those things, you are almost certain to succeed. And if you don't, you'll need a lot of luck. And you don't want to need a lot of luck. You want to go into a game where you're very likely to win without having any unusual luck." - Charlie Munger
- "I am 100% happy to watch you get really rich doing something that I have no interest in doing." - Brent Beshore
- "I see rise in life who are not the smartest, sometimes not even the most diligent, but they are learning machines. They go to be every night a little

wiser than they were when they got up and boy does that help." - Charlie Munger

- "It is remarkable how much long-term advantage people like us have gotten by trying to be consistently not stupid, instead of trying to be very intelligent." - Charlie Munger

For more leadership lessons from Morgan Housel, read [Morgan Housel's 5 Ways Organizations Lose Their Competitive Advantage](#).

Culture

- "The culture you have in your organization is the sum of all the wanted behaviors that you celebrate minus all the unwanted behaviors that you tolerate." - Danny Meyer
- "Larger companies ... tend to become their own worst enemies. It's not what the world does to them; it's what they do to themselves." - Frank Sloatman
- "All success organizations and companies have a system — a system that they flow — throughout the organization... When everyone follows their process, it's much easier for managers to manage, to troubleshoot, identify and solve issues and therefore grow the business. The clear lines enable you to let go and gain more control." - Gino Wickman, *Traction: Get a Grip on Your Business*
- "What doesn't get measured has a good chance of being ignored. Executives are busy people and as long as their compensation remains only marginally tied to nonfinancial metrics, we shouldn't expect them to pay much attention to these metrics. And as long as executives don't pay attention, their corporate purpose statements remain largely hot air." - Joachim Klement

Creativity

- "It's one thing to create. The other is you have to choose. 'What are we going to do, and what are we not going to do?' This is a gigantic aspect of show-business survival. It's kind of unseen, what's picked and what is discarded, but mastering that is how you stay alive." - Jerry Seinfeld
- "I am completely obsessed. And the audience wants that; they pay for that. I don't want to see someone who's kind of into it. ... That's what I care

about. That's all I care about. I don't care what you do—I just want to see people and talk to people and be around people who are into it." - Jerry Seinfeld

- "The best new ideas always have unanticipated benefits. So it's stupid to require people who want to do new things to enumerate the benefits beforehand. The best you can do is choose smart people and then trust their intuitions about what's worth exploring." - Paul Graham
- "The highest form of creativity is found by improvising within a set of restrictions." - Christopher Nolan
- "You don't merely want to be considered just the best of the best. You want to be considered the only ones who do what you do." - Jerry Garcia, lead singer of The Grateful Dead
- "We're going to do the opposite of what everyone else is doing. That's the only way to be innovative. When designing an offense you should break the rules of what previous coaches have taught. If you're following the rules the defense has an advantage." - Miami Dolphins head coach Mike McDaniel
- "Things always happened when I completely gave up the concept of being discovered... Don't wait to be discovered. Discover yourself. Don't wait to be hired. Hire yourself." - Mike Myers
- "New ways of looking at things create much greater innovation than new ways of doing them." - Visa founder Dee Hock

Leadership

- "Leadership is an elusive concept, hard to describe and impossible to prescribe. It is more evident in its absence so that when leadership is needed, its lack is sorely felt." - Patrick Dodson
- "The best leaders believe it is more important for the leader to admire the team than it is for the team to admire the leader." - Admired Leaders
- "People don't believe what you tell them. They rarely believe what you show them. They often believe what their friends tell them. They always believe what they tell themselves." - Seth Godin
- "You can be invaluable without ever being most valuable." - Don Yeager

For a plethora of additional leadership content, get [The Ultimate Nick Saban Leadership Resource Library](#)

Wisdom

- "Beware of the difference between prediction and prophecy. Prophecy purports to know things which cannot be known." - David Deutsch
- "It doesn't take much to convince us that we are smart and healthy, but it takes a lot of facts to convince us of the opposite." – Dan Gilbert
- "Belief in yourself is overrated. Generate evidence." - Ryan Holiday
- "The future is much like the present, only longer." - Dan Quisenberry
- "Thunder is good, thunder is impressive; but it is lightning that does the work." - Mark Twain
- "Trees don't try to produce fruit year-round in an absurd attempt to be more productive. They embrace dormancy, shed their leaves, and wait. No amount of tugging or overwatering will force a tree to grow faster." - Ozan Varol
- "You do not have to sit outside in the dark. If, however, you want to look at the stars, you will find that darkness is necessary. But the stars neither require nor demand it." — Annie Dillard, *Teaching a Stone to Talk*
- "Don't be afraid your life will end; be afraid that it will never begin." - Grace Hansen
- "Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least." — Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Character

- "I re-invented electric cars and am sending people to mars...did you think I was also going to be a chill, normal dude?" - Elon Musk
- "You earn trust in drops – but you lose trust in bucket fulls." - Kevin Burrell
- "It's hard to get really depressed until your dreams come true. Once your dreams come true and you realize you feel the same way you did before then you get a feeling of hopelessness." — Rick Rubin
- "When I got everything that I wanted, I think I was the most empty that I've ever felt inside." — Johnny Manziel
- "Competence is how good you are when there is something to gain. Character is how good you are when there is nothing to gain. People reward you for competence. But people only love you for your character." - Mark Manson

Luck

- "Give yourself a lot of shots to get lucky' is even better advice than it appears on the surface. Luck isn't an independent variable but increases super-linearly with more surface area—you meet more people, make more connections between new ideas, learn patterns, etc." - Sam Altman
- "Lucky people are more relaxed and open, and therefore see what is there rather than just what they are looking for." - Richard Wiseman
- "It's important to remember that big data all comes from the same place – the past. A new campaigning style, a single rogue variable, or a 'black swan event' can throw the most perfectly calibrated model into chaos." - Ogilvy U.K. Vice Chairman Rory Sutherland

Coaches

- "More grounded, more humble, more selfless makes us more opportunistic." - Coach Mike Tomlin
- "Life is not just about peaks and valleys, about wins and losses. Life is about the journey. You hear that all the time. You've got to absorb that. You've got to know that. The journey has to become the destination because there is no true destination. There is no endpoint. There is no goal. All rivers run to the sea and yet the sea is not full. Life goes on; accept what life gives you. The sun rises the morning after you win the championship or lose in the first round."— Paul Assaiante, *Run to the Roar*
- "Don't mistake energy for execution." - Oregon head coach Dan Lanning
- "I'm the iron wall that viruses bash against and shatter. ... Something's going on there, but I'll get it worked out, work it out of my system. Do some more pushups, eat an apple." - Jim Harbaugh
- "These chickens are low maintenance and high production. They lay an egg every 26, 27 hours. They need water, they need food. I play with them, too. I let them out in the yard to run around. They're happy to see me." - Jim Harbaugh

Teamwork

- "I'm not a system player. I am a system." - James Harden

Fear

- "At a time when digital techniques can show us almost anything, *The Blair Witch Project* is a reminder that what really scares us is the stuff we can't see. The noise in the dark is almost always scarier than what makes the noise in the dark." - Roger Ebert
- "Fear distorts our ability to see opportunities as they are." — Gio Valiante

For more 2023 leadership lessons from Brian Dodd On Leadership read the following:

[25 Leadership Axioms To Live Your Life By](#)

[7 Deadly Leadership Sins](#)

[5 Keys To Performing Under Intense Pressure](#)

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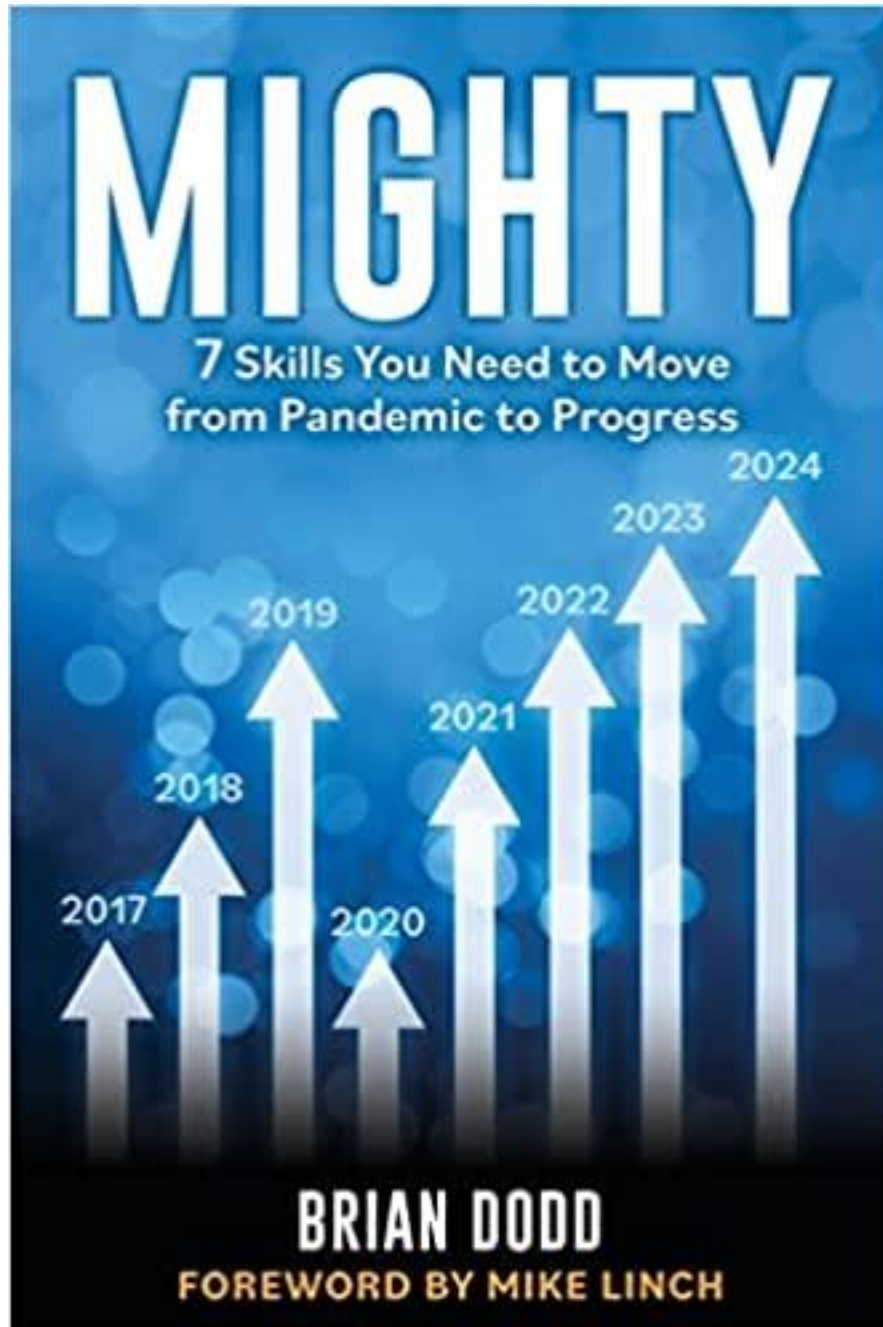
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