Do As I Say, Not As I Do' Doesn't Cut It Any More
By Jim Clemmer

More and more, I hear managers express frustration over the behavior of the people they lead. They complain about their failure to take initiative and responsibility, grumble about lateness to meetings or lousy teamwork.

But it's so much easier to point fingers elsewhere. For when it comes to their own behavior, many of those same managers aren't acting any differently than the people they complain about.

Too few managers model what they demand from others. If you're a manager, ask yourself: How often do I seem to be saying one thing while doing another? How often am I practising what I preach?

Managers who want to stop giving out mixed signals need to hold up the leadership mirror and make sure they are satisfied with what they see being reflected back.

Here are some examples of common disconnects between what managers may say they want to see in others and how they actually behave themselves.

Teamwork

Most managers want individuals and departments to work together, yet many of those same managers will gossip about, put down, or fail to support peers or other departments. They protect turf and build walls around their division or department. They openly discuss disagreements with peers or senior management -- sometimes to foster a form of "us" against "them."

Continuous Improvement

Many managers who declare the virtues of continuous improvement slip behind in their own personal growth and development. They feel they are too busy or don't really need to upgrade themselves. Improvement is for everyone else.

Priority Setting

Harried managers are allowing today's electronic tools and 24/7 culture to drive and control them. Poorly disciplined and overly busy managers fail to harness these powerful tools. Instead, they often model micromanagement by responding to every little issue and expecting people on their team to do the same. Such behavior leads to short-term urgencies continually crowding out longer-term strategies and team or organization development.

Motivation

Workers are more disengaged and less committed to their organizations and the clients they serve. This morale problem is exacerbated by managers showing little visible passion or commitment to their own work. They fail to survey and diagnose what's turning people off and then engage them in solving those issues. When presented with morale surveys or other evidence of disengagement, these managers will often discount this input as "just their perception, not reality."

Taking Ownership

I often hear managers complain that people in their organization won't accept personal responsibility for fixing problems or dealing with issues. These same managers then point fingers upward at more-senior management or others for personal or organizational problems. "We tried that before," "no one will listen," "there's nothing I can do," "why bother" and other such expressions of learned helplessness easily roll off their lips.

You can't act one way and expect others to act another way. Here are ways to help set the right example:

Be a Team Player

Don't discuss any disagreements you may have with peers, senior managers or other departments. Be careful of making disparaging comments about their decisions or actions. Address any issues with those people or groups directly; don't use critical or negative e-mails or public meetings to "send them a message."

Engage Your Team

Brainstorm issues by asking staff for ideas on the "dumbest things we do around here," "biggest barriers to reaching our goals," "major implementation issues we need to address," "pet peeves," "dumb rules and forms," "things that drive you crazy," or the like. Identify those things you or your team directly control, can influence, or don't control at all. Discuss ways to fix the things you do control and get ideas and volunteers from the team to do the same for things you can influence. Discuss how you can all accept and let go of the things you can't do anything about.

Be Strategic with Your Time

Take a critical look at your calendar and in-box or keep a time log. What are you so busy doing? There's a likelihood that many of the activities you're involved in don't need you to dive into such a level of detail. Are you solving the same problems over and over? Watch for recurring patterns. What are the root or common causes of issues? You are likely perpetuating the dependence cycle by not delegating or developing others to handle many of your daily operational issues.

Practise What You Preach

Ensure you arrive for meetings or start them on time, give plenty of notice if you're cancelling or changing times, and show up prepared. Model the time management and respectful behavior that you expect from everyone else. Analyze your calendar and meeting agendas for the past few months. Do they clearly reflect your top goals and priorities?

Train and Be Trained

Ensure that you and others are well trained in the "soft" leadership skill areas of coaching, communications, leading teams, running meetings and the like. Use the skills in your own meetings, coaching activities, and team decision making and planning. Help deliver that skill development.

Bridge We/They Gaps

Search out and destroy the status symbols, perks or privileges that separate management from the workers. Find other ways to compensate managers or let those who need these symbols take their elitist insecurities to some other organization. Flatten corporate hierarchy and promote informality.

Step Back to Step Ahead

The busier life gets, the harder it is to keep our effectiveness in perspective. One of the first things to go when we're pressed for time, is personal development and renewal. But when we spend less time reflecting on what's working and what's not, we spend more time spinning our wheels. The faster and crazier our day gets, the less we stop and check to see that we're racing down the right road. That increases the chances that we need to spin our wheels even faster to keep up.

Break the cycle. Pause periodically on your own and with your team to check progress. Decide what you should keep, stop, and start doing, and refocus your efforts.

Check your own behavior

How to walk what you talk? Here are ways to check up on your own modelling behavior:

- When completing a direct report's performance appraisal, ask for input on your own behavior.
- Run focus groups using a cross-section of people in your organization. Include a neutral facilitator who prepares a report summarizing the feedback.
- Periodically do group assessments of your meeting effectiveness. Ask what you should keep, stop or start doing to make your work together more effective.
- Get an assessment from external consultants based on some combination of surveys, reviews, focus groups and customer feedback.
- Gather anonymous feedback on your behavior from direct reports, peers, bosses and people served by your organization.
- Network informally among peers in and out of your organization. Seek input on everything from personal observations to rumors they've heard about you.

Don't Wait to See Blood
By Jim Clemmer

At my youngest daughter's sixth birthday party, a five-year-old boy hit her on the head. Asked to apologize, he politely refused: "Mr. Clemmer, I don't apologize unless I see teeth marks or blood."

Many managers don't realize the problems they're creating unless they see the teeth marks or blood on those with whom they work. The most insensitive managers are those who lack good feedback systems and refuse to seek input on how to improve their own performance.

Feedback is as critical to learning and improvement as cake is to a six-year-old's birthday party. As painful as I find "corrective feedback" and "suggestions for improvement," they are sources of my best learning and most profound personal changes.

There are a multitude of ways to gain a true picture of how you and your management team's actions are viewed through your organization. Here are examples:

- Run extensive organizational climate surveys at least once a year. Review the results with the people who completed the survey to clarify their feedback. Get them involved in making the improvements they're suggesting.
- Spend a long time with people on the front serving lines, production lines or support offices. You know you're accessible enough when your presence isn't a royal visit or a special occasion — and when people are comfortable in challenging management actions and flagging potential problems.
- Hold regular breakfasts ("muffins with management"), lunches and celebration dinners with front-line teams. Take this time to ask for feedback, concerns and suggestions. A simple question — "What's the dumbest thing management asks you to do?" — can produce powerful insights.
- Invite front-line teams to management meetings to show off accomplishments, provide input to new plans, or assess the state of the organization.
- Use focus groups (a cross-section of front-line performers) to test new management directions before making grand announcements to everyone. Even if you press on against the advice of the focus groups, you'll have deeper insight on how to face the issues the new direction may raise.
- Develop systems, practices and skills to gain continuous feedback on your leadership effectiveness from the people you lead.
- Get your management team into the habit of committing themselves to personal plans. Report on leadership actions each of you has taken to signal the values or priorities the group is espousing. For example, if customer service improvement is a key goal, all managers should report on the amount of time they're spending with customers.

Improving personal and organizational performance without constant feedback is like trying to pin the tail on the donkey when we're blindfolded. Only through knowing where we are, can we change where we are going.

A Burning Commitment to Our Cause
By Jim Clemmer

"The longer I live, the more I am certain that the great difference between the feeble and the powerful, between the great and the insignificant is energy-invincible determination — a purpose once fixed, and then death or victory. This quality will do anything that can be done in this world." — Sir Thomas Buxton

During the 1980s, the Milliken textile company dramatically improved its customer service, product quality, and financial performance through an intense quality improvement effort. They eventually won a national quality award in recognition of their success. To promote the improvement process, office and factory walls were plastered with quality slogans and everyone wore gold lapel pins with the word "Quality." Very early one morning, at the height of their drive for higher quality, CEO Roger Milliken arrived ready to address a team meeting in one of the manufacturing plants coming off the night shift. The manager who met him asked, "Where's your quality pin?" Roger looked down at his lapel, smacked his forehead, and said, "Oh my God! I must have left it on my pajamas."

That's either very fast thinking, or a great example of commitment to the quality improvement cause! A burning commitment to the cause is a clear hallmark of passionate and highly effective leaders. There's no apathy. There's no doubt about where the leader stands and where he or she is going. As the growing research on Emotional Intelligence clearly shows, a strong point of view and a burning desire to see things through is worth dozens of IQ points.

"Change management" programs of various stripes and names are very fashionable. Research continuously shows over half of them fail. Like diets and New Year's resolutions, it's easy to excitedly declare a bold new world and launch into a major change effort. But the real test of leadership comes 12, 18, or 24 months later. Rare is the individual, team, or organization still as intensely committed to the cause at that point, as they were in the beginning. Where there's a successful, long-term change or improvement effort underway, you'll always find highly committed leaders. Many people pay lip service to change. Some can even get quite passionate about the need for improvement. But only a handful make the leap from lip service to lifestyle change. There are canyon-sized gaps from saying, to doing, to being. The depth of our passion and commitment determines the intensity of our involvement.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox's poem captures the spirit of passionate commitment found in highly effective leaders:

Will

There is no chance, no destiny, no fate,
Can circumvent or hinder or control
The firm resolve of a determined soul.
Gifts count for nothing; will alone is great;
All things give way before it, soon or late.
What obstacle can stay the mighty force
Of the sea-seeking river in its course,
Or cause the ascending orb of day to wait?

Each well-born must win what it deserves.
Let the fool prate of luck. The fortunate
Is he whose earnest purpose never swerves,
Whose slightest action or inaction serves
The one great aim. Why, even Death stands still,
And waits an hour sometimes for such a will.

A Coach's Playbook for Leaders
By Jim Clemmer

All organizations have access to more or less the same resources. They draw from the same pool of people in their markets or geographic areas. And they can all learn about the latest tools and techniques.

Yet not all organizations perform equally. There is a huge gap between high- and low-performing organizations. What accounts for this huge gap is leadership.

Leaders develop and bring out the best in people. This dramatically expands the performance capacity of an organization. With a strong leadership foundation, management systems and processes, as well as technology and technical expertise, expand to their full potential.

That's why coaching has become such a key management development topic in so many organizations. Too many managers are bosses, technicians or even bullies. They kill team spirit, arouse mediocrity and suck the energy out of the room. The results are poor morale, loss of talented people and low performance.

Effective leaders, by contrast, develop people. Rather than running around solving problems, while overflowing e-mail and voice mail boxes suck up huge amounts of their time and energy, strong leaders empower and enable others to solve daily operational problems.

Of course, successful leaders also direct and control when needed. But mostly they teach and engage people throughout their organization to reach ever-higher performance levels.

Strong leaders don't just see people as they are. They coach people into becoming what they can be.

Here are the best practices of leaders who provide the best coaching to the people in their organization:

Clarify roles and goals

There's an old saying that teaches, "The clearer the target, the surer the aim." It's common sense: We can't achieve top-level performance if we're not clear what it looks like.

However obvious this critical coaching strategy may seem, many managers fail to practise it. Unclear roles and goals is a primary cause of job dissatisfaction.

Effective coaches are masters at helping people set the performance bar very high by aligning organizational, customer and team needs with the individual's personal goals. While jobs may be shifting and roles evolving to meet changing conditions, a strong leader will get everyone involved in a continuing process of redefining and resetting roles and goals. Strong leaders build upon successes and string together small wins to boost confidence about what can be achieved.

Build on strengths

Abraham Lincoln once said, "It has been my experience that people who have no vices have very few virtues." Dwelling on our own or another's weaknesses rarely improves them. And it sure doesn't do much for self-confidence, passion or commitment. Like a good hockey coach who has specialty players or lines for specific situations — such as power plays or penalty killing — a strong leader finds people whose strengths most closely match the requirements of the role (and whose weaknesses are less important) in a given situation.

Rather than defining the ideal role and trying to find a perfect person to fit it, effective leaders find someone who meets most of the key criteria. He or she then tailors the responsibilities to align with the individual's strengths. Strong leaders give people a chance to do what they do best every day.

Confront poor performance

When performance problems arise, they need to be confronted. Like porcupines in love, such discussions can be painful for both parties. That's often why managers avoid them.

Leaders, however, know that poor performance is like a highly contagious disease. The longer it goes unchecked, the more everyone suffers.

Confronting performance problems is generally more humane than letting the individual and his or her co-workers suffer. An underperforming team member is often unhappy and likely mismatched to his or her job.

If training, developing or some of the other coaching approaches don't appreciably improve performance, helping the individual find new work inside or outside the organization will put everyone out of their misery.

Servant leadership

So much of what is done by a mediocre (or worse) manager makes it difficult for people to get their work done. "I am from head office and I am here to help you" sends the snicker meter over the red line in many organizations. Too often managers have made it harder for people on the front lines to get their job done.

Strong coaches start by building agreement or buy-in to roles and goals. Then they flip things around and serve their teams and organizations.

In his book, *The Contrarian's Guide to Leadership*, University of Southern California president Stephen Sample writes, "If a would-be leader wants glamor, he should try acting in the movies. However, if he in fact wants to make a consequential impact on a cause or an organization, he needs to roll up his sleeves and be prepared to perform a series of grungy chores which are putatively beneath him, and for which he'll never receive recognition or credit, but by virtue of which his lieutenants will be inspired and enabled to achieve great things."

Give good feedback

Effective leaders are effective communicators. And an essential part of this skill is the ability to deliver useful feedback.

Good feedback nourishes growth and development. Without it, the leader as coach is unable to clarify performance targets, develop skills and abilities, reinforce progress or build on strengths. Strong, relevant and useful feedback shows how much leaders care about the growth of people on their team.

A core element of corrective feedback is to objectively focus on the problem, issue or behavior and not the person. Through guiding self-reflection or giving behavioral observations, good coaches provide balanced feedback that helps people clearly see what they should keep doing, stop doing and start doing.

Ask and listen

Asking and listening are fundamental to strong leadership. They are learnable skills. Whether we choose to develop them or not depends upon our values.

Managers will claim they care about people in their organization. But their failure to seek out and really listen to other views or ideas tells the real tale. What comes across is, "If I want any of your bright ideas, I'll give them to you."

Many managers feel that the people in their team or organization have misguided views or petty issues. "That's just their perception," is a common response to input that they don't agree with. "We need to show them the reality of the situation," they'll often counter. Attitudes are something to be adjusted rather than probed for underlying improvement opportunities. Weak managers often believe that customers' perceptions are to be changed rather than better understood and learned from. Often, internal or external partners (such as distributors, other agencies or departments and suppliers) are classified as whiners who just don't get it.

Asking probing questions and listening attentively to the answers is a key sign of a strong leader. Mediocre managers do all the talking. They would rather be wrong than be quiet.

Leaders, on the other hand, listen. They know that coaching and developing people is impossible without paying attention to others.

The old bromide, "They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care," illuminates the base of mutual respect so fundamental to good coaching.

Cheerlead

It has been said that there are only two types of people who thrive on being recognized for their achievements: men and women. We have all experienced the incredible energy of getting recognition or appreciation from people whose opinions we respect. We cherish notes, cards, awards, trophies or the warm afterglow of a compliment.

A common complaint of people in low-performing organizations is that they don't get recognition and appreciation from their boss. They feel like a piece of furniture. It's a huge contributor to declining levels of morale and self-motivation. It's one of the reasons people leave an organization to work elsewhere.

Effective coaches understand the power of sincere recognition, genuine appreciation and celebration. These are what provide the atmosphere of encouragement that develops confidence and builds on strengths.

This encouragement needn't come from the leader. It can be just as meaningful coming from peers, customers, team members and other partners.

But it's the leader who sets the emotional tone and atmosphere for recognition, appreciation and celebration in his or her organization.

Sunrise Interrupted: Leadership & Choice-making

*By **julia fabris mcbride** on May 28, 2010*
I woke before sunrise to write about leadership.

Anticipating a good 90 minutes before boy, man and dog appeared at the kitchen table, I switched on the coffee maker, snapped a quick picture of the full moon setting in the west, and flipped open my MacBook.

In less than two minutes, a sleepy almost-three-year-old called from the hallway, "Mom? I'm awake."

Good morning, Life! How does anyone find time for Leadership?

I'm reminded of "The Carrot Story" told by **Ronnie Brooks** to an auditorium full of burned-out arts administrators. It was 2002 in Chicago. I was a crispy piece of nonprofit-manager-toast, ready for a change in the way I managed my life. Ronnie's story struck a chord with me.

"The Carrot Story" (A leadership parable)

One spring, a woman received a packet of carrot seeds from her neighbor. She planted the seeds in her back yard, studying the directions as she went.

A couple of weeks later, she tramped back out to the garden to thin her carrots as directed. She knelt to work, but looking closely at the little seedlings, *she just couldn't do it*.
The tiny carrots were too beautiful, too healthy-looking, too alive!

So, the woman let all the seedlings grow into fine, tall, luscious, dark green plants. She watered, and tilled, and waited with great anticipation to taste her first homegrown carrot. Then, on a hot summer day, she went out to the garden to harvest her crop.

She found only gnarled roots, tangled up in one another, thick, woody and inedible.

You need to choose, if you want to lead.

In 2002, I heard "The Carrot Story" as a wake-up call. I needed to weed the garden of my life, say "no" more often, change the way I spent my time, let go of the "shoulds," abandon some of what defined me in the first four decades of my life, so that I could walk fully and joyfully into middle-age, and on to elder-hood.

I had to stop trying to do everything, so that I could hope to accomplish *something*.

There will always be choices to make.

What I'm realizing today, as midnight nears and I'm finally getting around to posting this entry, is that you can't thin your metaphorical carrots once and expect that you're done.

Every day is a thousand choice-points: Purpose choices, priority choices, big choices, small choices, morning choices, evening choices, difficult choices, necessary choices.

As you make choices more consciously and intentionally, your leadership capacity grows.

Beyond Manipulating and Motivating to Leading and Inspiring
By Jim Clemmer

"People do work for money — but they work even more for meaning in their lives. In fact, they work to have fun. Companies that ignore this fact are essentially bribing their employees and will pay the price in a lack of loyalty and commitment."
— Jeffrey Pfeffer, "Six Dangerous Myths About Pay," *Harvard Business Review*

We've known for decades that money doesn't motivate most people to higher levels of performance. In his seminal 1959 book, *The Motivation to Work*, Frederick Herzberg identified money as a "hygiene factor." If we feel we're not fairly compensated, lack of money can de-motivate. But once we feel we're treated fairly, the promise of more money doesn't sustain higher energy and mobilize inspired performance.

Numerous studies over the last few decades have shown that when it comes to understanding what really energizes and mobilizes, there's a huge we/they gap between managers and frontline people. For example, in an article entitled "Mastering the ABCs of Organizations," John R. Throop cites a study of computer programmers who were asked to identify the top 10 factors that provided the highest degree of motivation in their jobs. The programmers' top three were: full appreciation for work done; feeling that they were in on things; and, sympathetic help with personnel problems. The programmers' managers, when asked what these factors would be, predicted rather different priorities: wages, working conditions, and fair discipline.

When confronting morale problems, managers will often succumb to the Victimitis Virus and blame the declining work ethic, attitudes of entitlement, softening values, the welfare state, or any number of societal factors. But these factors — which are mostly about doing the least work for the most money — are more imagined than real. Studies show that people's real needs are much less mercenary than most managers believe. People want to take pride in their work, belong to a winning team, and be part of an organization they can believe in.

In fact, the morale crisis so prevalent in organizations today is primarily the result of disappointment in these needs not being met. Ultimately, the problem is a leadership vacuum. The hand-wringing, teeth-gnashing managers, frustrated by their organizational energy crisis, often ask "Why don't people want to work any more?" But that's the wrong question, based on the wrong assumptions. The question to ask — with a long gaze in the leadership mirror — is, "Why don't people want to work here?"

Managers try to motivate. Leaders inspire. Managers try to understand how to motivate people. Leaders try to understand why people aren't feeling motivated. Managers try to add more drivers to increase mobilization and energy. Leaders try to identify, prioritize, and remove the biggest resistors.

Internal vs. External Motivators

Most managers recognize that one of their key roles is "motivating" others. They also recognize that a key to motivation is empowerment. But it's too often a lot of empty "leaderspeak." For all that the popular "E" word has been bandied about in the last few years, not much has changed in many organizations.

There are many reasons why empty empowerment rhetoric is so widespread today. One of the most common is confusion about (or misapplication of) intrinsic or internal motivation (leadership) versus extrinsic or external motivators (management). In his article "Empowerment: The Emperor's New Clothes," Harvard professor Chris Argyris outlines this difference: "If management wants employees to take more responsibility for their own destiny, it must encourage the development of internal commitment. As the name implies, internal commitment comes largely from within...by definition, internal commitment is participatory and very closely allied with empowerment. The more that management wants internal commitment from its employees, the more it must try to involve employees in defining work objectives, specifying how to achieve them, and setting stretch targets."

The power of using employee involvement to build internal commitment is both measurable and impressive. One organization made a massive effort to involve everyone in their planning process. (In our consulting work, there's an old adage that we frequently quote to clients: "If they help plan the battle, they won't battle the plan.") A year later, the company's absenteeism dropped by 300 percent — and saved millions of dollars!

Leaders Care for Organization Culture and Context
By Jim Clemmer

"When we are dealing with people, let us remember we are not dealing with creatures of logic. We are dealing with creatures of emotion, creatures bustling with prejudices and motivated by pride and vanity." — Dale Carnegie, personal effectiveness pioneer and author

In many organizations (especially those with morale or motivation problems), management has created a sterile and passionless culture. Their strategies, budgets, and business plans are cold and lifeless. So teams and frontline performers go through the motions, put in their time, and go home. Technomanagers try to energize their people by using "leader speak" and imitating some of the things leaders do and say. They develop statements of vision, mission, values, "strategic purpose," and the like. However, improvement programs such as reengineering, service/quality, empowerment, teams, or new technology have no spirit. These programs may build up some speed and even get off the ground. But they never soar.

Morale and satisfaction in those Technomanaged (focused on bureaucrat management and technology) organizations has been on a long slide. An increasing number of managers are expressing their frustration with this growing energy crisis. The problem stems from the expanding gulf between rising expectations and the reality of the organization's traditional culture. People want meaningful work in an organization with an exciting purpose. What they get is a job. People hear senior management talk about empowerment, teamwork, and service. What they get are paternalistic pats on the head, motivation programs, and blame for not using the systems, processes, and technology dropped on them and their customers.

Too many managers are dispassionately trying to "do leadership" as if it were just another set of tools to be deployed ("I've done my vision thing"). We need to shift from doing leadership to being a leader. A team or organization's Context and Focus (vision, values, and purpose) aren't just techniques, statements, or approaches. They're much deeper than that. Focus and Context is about feelings, causes, and convictions. They go to the very DNA of our being. You can't be dispassionate about passionate issues. Otherwise, while you do your "leadership thing," people on your team and in your organization will do their "commitment thing." So nothing is energized.

Caring For the Context

"Organizations exist to enable ordinary people to do extraordinary things." — Ted Levitt,Thinking About Management

During a strategy and culture development retreat to review progress and set new improvement plans, a CEO regretfully reflected on how he was asked by their chairman why he was always out of his office and no longer available to take calls. The CEO was feeling guilty about that. He was off giving another vision and values "stump speech" to a group going through a training program. He was getting increasingly frustrated that all those speeches and meetings with hospital staff weren't allowing him "to get his job done."

As we talked about culture change, people leadership, and vision and values, he had an "aha." He came to realize "caring for the context" was his job. Since then, the board has been educated on what the senior team is trying to do and he's talked to the chairman about how much more frequently he would now be out of his office. The CEO's redefinition of his role from operational manager to context leader, has been one of the key factors in the strong success of this organization in dealing with change.

Senior managers in medium to large size organizations need to spend a great deal of their time "managing the context" of their culture. One of the time consuming aspects of cultural leadership is developing a shared vision, values, and purpose. Senior management can (and often should) start the process by taking their rough cut at establishing these. Some decisions, like what business you're in, belong to senior management.

But if an organization's Focus and Context or culture is to be widely owned by everyone who will draw from and give it meaning, they need to be involved in its development. That takes a lot of time and effort. It also redefines senior management's role. They spend less time managing the day-to-day business (isn't that what all our "empowered" people should be doing?) and more time caring for the organization's culture.

Leaders Give People Space to Grow
By Jim Clemmer

"Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them become what they are capable of being." — Goethe

I enjoy perennial gardening in our yard. As I have tended our gardens over the years, I am continually struck by how some plants will do well in some locations and terribly elsewhere in the garden. Each spring and fall I move plants around to match their preferences for particular soil, wind, and sun conditions, as well as their proximity to other plants.

At times I have been pleasantly surprised by how some lackluster plants have suddenly thrived in a new location better suited to their needs. Since each perennial has a different bloom time and length, one of the gardening challenges is to keep color spread throughout the garden from early spring to late fall. It's one reason I never "cheat" by using annuals that bloom all summer long. A constant chore is cutting off old blooms to encourage new ones and pruning plants that are becoming overgrown.

Although people also thrive on individual attention, managers often use a "one size fits all" approach and try to "mass grow" people. Leaders, however, work closely with their team members to customize their growth and development. Like a good gardener, leaders treat each person in their organization as an individual with his or her own unique aspirations, strengths, and characteristics. Leaders then work to put people in the best place for them to thrive and succeed. They mix and match team members to build a well-rounded team that can show its best colors according to the season – or is best suited to the current operating conditions of the organization or the team. Leaders tend to each person on their team and coach them to change habits or prune overgrown methods that may prevent further growth. They are consistently moving team members around to avoid overcrowding and to bring out the best in each person.

For the non-gardeners, perhaps a fish story might provide a more apt growing analogy. If you buy a little goldfish and keep it in a small bowl it will remain no bigger than a few inches long. Move that same fish to a large aquarium and it will double or triple in size. Put the goldfish in a large pond and it can grow up to a foot long! The biggest factor that determines the size of the fish is the size of its environment. And so it is with people.

Managers see people as they are and treat them according to what they see. A manager would take a small goldfish and keep it in the little bowl because it would be inefficient and wasteful to put it in a larger environment. Leaders, on the other hand, see people as they could be. A leader takes a small goldfish and puts it in a larger tank because it would be ineffective and wasteful of the fish's potential to keep it in a confined environment.

Leaders provide a bigger environment by delegating autonomy. Strong leaders are strong coaches. They clarify performance targets, develop skills and abilities, reinforce progress, and build on strengths. Leaders consult, facilitate, counsel, and guide. They also confront when they feel someone is not living up to his or her potential.

Management discourages independent decision making while leadership encourages independent growth and development.

MANAGEMENT (SMALL FISHBOWLS)	LEADERSHIP (LARGE FISH TANKS)
Commanding	Coaching
Solving problems	Enabling others to solve problems
Directing and controlling	Teaching and engaging
Seeing people as they are	Developing people into what they could be
Empowering	Partnering
Operating	Improving
Pushing	Pulling
Heroic manager	Facilitative leader
Quick fix to symptoms	Search for systemic root causes

Leaders Help People See Beyond What Is to What Could Be
By Jim Clemmer

"At first people refuse to believe that a strange new thing can be done, then they begin to hope it can be done, then they see it can be done – then it is done and all the world wonders why it was not done centuries before." — Frances Hodgson Burnett, 19th century American writer

Thomas Kuhn, the noted American professor of the philosophy and history of science, is best known for his work, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, which sold over 1 million copies in 16 languages. The book challenged conventional thinking that scientific change was strictly a rational process. It also popularized use of the term "paradigm," as the mental model or framework scientists use to explain laws of nature. Paradigms are essential for learning and continuously improving upon theories and their applications.

However, paradigms are also very limiting. According to Kuhn, "What a person sees depends upon what he looks at and what his previous experience has taught him." Many scientists – especially those with the most time and training invested in an established scientific discipline – resist new paradigms that challenge their established view of how the world works. They often ignore or just don't see new contradictory evidence that doesn't fit their paradigm.

Ironically, many organizations like to talk about "thinking outside the box." Yet the role of managers is typically to improve on the accepted paradigm, or what is "inside the box." They focus on what is, and work hard to enhance it. That's extremely important and vital to orderly processes and systems that consistently deliver high-quality products or services. Leaders, on the other hand, are more inclined to smash old boxes or paradigms and construct new ones. Kuhn found that scientific paradigms don't build on previous ones, they sweep them away. That's often the case with new organizational paradigms as well. Strong leaders focus less on improving what is (established products or services, for example) than on seeing what could be.

Just as the terms "management" and "leadership" are often used interchangeably, goals and visions are often perceived to be the same thing. They are not. While both are critical to success (and are therefore highly interconnected), the Goals/Vision chart shows that the management act of goal-setting is quite different from the leadership act of visioning.

Goals	Vision
Appeal to our intellect	Engages our emotions
Results and timeframes	A desired future state
Builds a business case	Kindles a cause
Rational	Intuitive
Pushes performance	Inspires and aligns
Targets and objectives	Images and feelings
Solves problems	Imagines possibilities
Logical progression	Irrational "skyhooks"
Written	Verbal

Although goals and vision are different but co-dependent, visioning without goal-setting and action is daydreaming. And goal-setting without the broader context of an exciting vision is drudgery.

O. A. Ohmann, an executive at Standard Oil, coined the term "skyhook" to describe the vision and courage required to develop a new paradigm. "It came in the heat of a discussion with a group of business executives attending the Institute of Humanistic Studies at Aspen, Colorado. As we debated the limits of the rational and scientific approach to life, it occurred to me that science appears rational on the surface, but at its very foundation typically lies a purely intuitive, nonrational assumption made by some scientist. He just hooked himself on a piece of the sky out there and hung on. It was a complete leap of faith that led him."

Successful entrepreneurs are good examples of strong leaders who use vision to build new paradigms. Entrepreneurs know that there can only be experts on what was or is. There are no experts on what will be. One highly successful entrepreneur declared, "I am not a disciple of research – unless, of course, it agrees with me. Otherwise, it's useless." Successful entrepreneurs are leaders with vision who predict the future by inventing it.

Leadership Development Failure: New Managers Often Left to Sink or Swim, Study Shows

According to a recent leadership development study from Development (DDI), many new managers don't know what it takes to succeed and weren't ready for the challenges and obstacles that they faced as leaders.

Finding the First Rung as New Managers

A study on the challenges facing today's frontline leader surveyed 1,130 supervisors and first-level managers to understand how they are overcoming the challenges of their jobs and what is holding them back from being successful.

The major findings of the study include:

- 42% of new managers don't understand what it takes to succeed
- 89% have at least one "blind spot"
- Only 1 in 10 leaders were actually groomed for the job
- Half took the role for the increase in compensation — only 23% because they actually wanted to lead others
- More than half of leaders learned through trial and error

Caught by Surprise, Without Adequate Leadership Development

So why were new managers so surprised by the job? Since trial and error on the job (57%) was the number one means of achieving their leadership skills, it's not surprising these managers were shocked once they were formally in the role.

And even if they've been in the role for a year or two, 30% of managers still don't understand what it takes to be successful. After six years, that number is only 10% lower, with 1 in 5 still not really understanding what it takes.

The result of this management development gap is leadership regret — 1 out of 3 leaders surveyed regretted being promoted due to lack of preparation and/or not knowing how to succeed.

Some of that distress can be attributed to how people got the job — 11% of respondents said they became a manager because there was no one else for the job. These "accidental leaders" regretted the promotion the most, were less likely to have wanted the promotion to begin with, and were more likely to question their ability to lead others.

"Management by default isn't an effective promotion strategy," said DDI's Senior Vice President of Selection Solutions, Scott Erker. "Companies need to do due diligence to select leaders who have the desire, motivation — and skills — to be a leader or you've failed the individual and the organization."

New Managers Thrown into the Deep End — and Not Liking It

The half of new managers who found themselves learning from trial and error felt they were less supported and getting fewer good learning experiences, and they were overall less satisfied with their professional development, than those who learned through active management development

New managers learning through trial and error were 52% more likely to describe their first year on the job as stressful and twice as likely to describe it as overwhelming.

"While learning tension is good, the stress from having to navigate a complex role with little support takes a toll on morale and creates negative feeling from leaders," Erker said.

In fact, when you compare managers who learned through active management development and support to those who learned from trial and error, the number who said they were less interested in being a leader more than doubled (9% with manager support to 20% with trial and error).

Lack of management development and support when transitioning to the role also took a toll on self-esteem, as those learning from trial and error were a great deal more likely to rate themselves as poor or fair (18% compared to 7% with management development and support) and were twice as likely to say they were unprepared to take on the job (20% compared to 9% of those with management development and support).

"What can we learn from this? The manager's role — and ultimately the company's responsibility — in helping a new manager impacts everything from their perception of leadership to their perception of themselves," Erker said.

New Managers Accepting Promotions for the Wrong Reasons

When asked about their top two reasons for taking the promotion, half of frontline leaders surveyed took the role because it would lead to greater compensation — this was the number one reason for becoming a leader. What lagged behind?

- o Broadening skills (39%)
- o To advance their career (33%)
- o Making a greater contribution to the company (33%)
- o Power and influence (21%)

Surprisingly, wanting to lead others was almost at the bottom of the list, with only 23%.

"Leading others is one of the biggest changes for those transitioning from an individual contributor to manager," Erker said. "But it's a central part of the job, so the low motivation to lead should be concerning to organizations."

What's the downside to the financial motivation? The managers driven mainly by money were more likely to become disillusioned by the job — they were 57% more likely to regret the promotion than those who took the promotion because they wanted to make a greater contribution.

Common Problems for New Managers

Can managers see themselves clearly and identify their skill gaps? Even with the low confidence and high regret reported, 87% of managers rated themselves as good or excellent.

In separate data from 200 managers going through a frontline leader assessment, their self-ratings of their leadership skills were compared to their actual performance during the assessment. Nearly all of the managers (89%) rated themselves above their actual skill level on at least one leadership skill — and half rated themselves higher on at least three.

"These leaders clearly have blind spots about their own leadership skills-this is dangerous because they won't seek development in these areas. Without insight into their development gaps, they'll create problems for themselves and their teams throughout their leadership careers," Erker said.

Leaders Invest in Growing and Developing People
By Jim Clemmer

"A true Master is not the one with the most students, but one who creates the most Masters. A true leader is not the one with the most followers, but one who creates the most leaders." — Neale Donald Walsch

Successful leaders understand the difference between things and people in an organization. They know that it's important to manage things, but that it's even more important to lead people. Leaders don't just mouth empty phrases like "people are our greatest resource;" they demonstrate by their actions that people – not strategy, products, plans, processes, or systems – are the most critical factor in an organization's performance. That's why leaders invest heavily in growing and developing people, while managers see people as objects to be commanded and controlled.

In his *Fortune* article "A New Way to Think about Employees," Thomas Stewart writes, "We should not confuse human beings with human capital at all. Surely people are not assets in the same way that their desks and chairs are assets, or that factories or bank balances are." Phrases like "head count" dehumanize and objectify people. We could really push this further and make the same argument for "human resources." Most of us want to be treated as a person, not a resource. Indeed, some companies now refer to this department in their organizations as People rather than Human Resources. Most of us want to be treated as a person, not a resource.

Managers who view "their people" as property, are cold and dispassionate. In fact, they would make perfect donors for heart transplants – their hearts have had such little use!

It's heartless to view people as less than human. Maybe it's just because I was raised on a farm, but whenever I hear managers use the term "head count" (and I hear it a lot), it grates on me like fingernails scratching a blackboard. When managers say things like "We've got to reduce our head count," or "What's the head count in your division?" I immediately think of cattle. In the community where I grew up, farmers would ask each other questions like "how many head are you milking?" when talking about cows in a dairy herd. People were never referred to this way.

Of course, some managers will argue that "head count" is just an expression – "mere words," they'll say. Sometimes that's true. But in my experience, these "mere words" often convey a deeper set of values about how people are viewed and treated in an organization. Despite all their pious declarations about the importance of people, leadership, and values, far too many managers treat people in their organizations with about as much care as they would attach to an inventory of office equipment. They are just one more set of assets to be managed. These just happen to be breathing and have skin wrapped around them.

Leadership: Nature versus Nurture

Scott M. Reithel, Ph.D., and David M. Finch, Ph.D

Whence leadership? The question surely predated enterprise education, but it's taken on new importance as organizations look for ways to develop this crucial competency. Explore how

� and whether � leadership can be cultivated through learning.

Leadership: Is it born or is it bred? It�s more of a philosophical question than it is a point of debate. For business leaders, though, it�s an important question worthy of exploration. Asking whether someone can be nurtured, or �brought up,� as a leader is fundamentally questioning whether we can train people to be leaders, regardless of their personal attributes. The very idea of

�developing� leaders suggests there are existing skills and abilities to be developed. More likely, it is the right mix of traits, skills, experience and the organizational environment that makes great leaders. Identifying those characteristics that can and cannot be developed is clearly important as organizations strive to populate their talent pools for critical leadership positions.

Leadership Traits and Competencies
Consider the CLO. To effectively drive their initiatives and meaningfully contribute to the

organization�s bottom line, CLOs must possess a certain body of knowledge specific to their area. One of their key roles is to develop learning architectures and link learning objectives to business needs. Effective CLOs will possess the technical knowledge (e.g. learning technologies, theories of adult development, training metrics and organizational theory) necessary to create a learning architecture that delivers results and builds corporate capabilities (e.g. a stronger

leadership pipeline). Although more than just technical knowledge is needed to create and implement learning and development solutions, is it a defining element of a successful CLO?

Inherent in developing learning programs is the role of the CLO as an agent of change. Developing a learning architecture usually means redesigning or replacing an old one. Therefore, CLOs must be proficient at leading change and addressing the resistance that is a part of any change initiative. This requires knowledge of organizational design and development.

As an agent of change, the CLO also must possess excellent interpersonal and communication skills. A CLO must be able to gain the respect, confidence, partnership and participation of senior management. With a lead role in driving new learning initiatives, the CLO must be able to engage and influence individuals throughout all levels of the organization, including the highest-ranking executives.

Coaching Tips for Leadership Impact – Influence Others
By **Pam Solberg-Tapper**

In a recent coaching conversation, my client wanted to work on "how to have more influence in his organization." He felt that he was being overlooked for opportunities. He wanted to influence others more effectively in order to advance in his leadership role.Here are some ways to influence others in the workplace to enhance your leadership impact:

- When new in a group or with individuals, introduce yourself right away.
- Expand your sphere of influence by cultivating strategic relationships.
- Know your audience, what is important to them and how will you provide value and benefit?
- Increase your level of contribution by making suggestions and sharing your ideas more often.
- Be well prepared with facts and data so you are more forceful in stating your opinions. Be sure to also give your perspective on why you believe the facts are valid.
- Develop conviction when stating your opinions and ideas – don't hesitate. Pay attention to your vocal quality so you come across confidently.
- Summarize your opinions frequently to build understanding.
- Ask others for feedback on how they perceive you and what you could do differently to have a more positive impact.
- Show enthusiasm – the more committed you are, the more others will be willing to support you.
- Observe leaders in your organization or community who are highly influential. What are they doing that is effective?

Influencing others is a critical skill in today's work environment. In what ways do you influence others to enhance your leadership impact?

A Tale of Two Managers: Command versus Commitment (By Jim Clemmer)

Organizations should be built and managers should be functioning so people can be naturally empowered. If someone's doing their job...they should know their job better than anybody. They don't need to be 'empowered,' but encouraged and left

alone to be able to do what they know best." — Henry Mintzberg, management researcher and author

Joel views himself as a "realist." As a manager, he has little time or patience for, as he puts it, "making nicey-nicey." Coming from a deep technical background, he hates meetings ("they get in the way of real work") and resents having to sell changes or get people on board. "I don't care if they like me," he's fond of saying, "I only want their respect and compliance." He likes nothing better than solving tough technical problems with practical, well-designed solutions. He runs his organization "by the numbers." He focuses on continuously improving existing processes and technologies. He sets high targets and relentlessly drives everyone to meet them.

The part of the job Joel likes least is dealing with people. Their irrational, emotional behavior drives him nuts. He often dismisses contrary points of view with comments like, "That's only their perception, that's not reality." He then proceeds to prove his point with facts, rational arguments, and analysis.

Joel believes that most people see their work as a four-letter word and must therefore be tightly controlled, threatened, or bribed with incentives before they will work hard enough. He prides himself on being a tough manager who rolls up his sleeves and digs deep into operational details. He exercises tight control with policies, directives, and rules. His mood swings cause the team's emotional tone to wildly gyrate from high to low with much time being spent figuring out how to read him and avoid his wrath. Joel's main tool for influencing behavior on his team is through punishment and "shooting down people who haven't done their homework."

On the other hand, Denise is an "idealist" with a strong technical background. She realized some time ago that her real leadership work increasingly gets done in meetings. So she has trained and worked hard at developing her facilitation and team leadership skills. She also knows that just wishing or "positive thinking" problems away usually makes them worse. She is also determined not to be so focused on the problem that she and her team can't see the possibilities. To avoid getting stuck in "reality ruts," Denise keeps everyone focused on what could be.

Denise sees possibilities in people. She believes that people want to take pride in their work and be part of a winning team. She has learned that motivation or morale problems are usually rooted in leaders failing to engage people in the broader aims and ideals of the organization. As more people search for meaning in their lives and in their work, this disconnect creates much of the frustration and lack of purpose found in so many workplaces today. Denise works hard at connecting people to her organization's vision, values, and purpose. Denise's high energy and optimistic attitude sets a strong and positive emotional tone throughout her organization. People are inspired to face tough problems with confidence and teamwork.

Out in the real world, we see plenty of Joels — and not nearly enough Denises. Their differences are obvious enough, but ask yourself the following questions:

- o Whom would you rather work for?

- o Who is the stronger leader?

- o Who is likely to get the best results?

- o Would your team consider you to be most like Joel or Denise? How do you know?

Denise uses a collaborative approach to partner with people. She sees people as adults who are generally self-managing (with some exceptions). Joel treats them like kids who need to be managed "with a firm hand" (with some exceptions). Denise cares about people. Joel dehumanizes and objectifies them. Denise uses the power of persuasion (leadership) to get things done. Joel uses position power (management). Denise builds a cause and case for change, appealing to the head and heart to get buy-in. Joel tries to overcome resistance to change with facts and force; like someone traveling in a foreign country who can't speak the local language, he'll just talk louder to be understood. Denise shares as much information as she can and builds strong multi-channel and multi-directional communication loops. Joel gives people information on a need-to-know basis; he only "empowers" people as a motivational technique to get people to do what he wants. Denise partners with people so they feel naturally empowered to reach their mutual goals.

Building Passion and Commitment the Wal-Mart Way (By Jim Clemmer)

In response to the much-asked question "What is Wal-Mart's secret to success?" founder Sam Walton compiled a list of his business principles. Here are some of those which pertain especially to providing the leadership that creates passion and commitment:

Commit to your business. Believe in it more than anybody else. I think I overcame every single one of my personal shortcomings by the sheer passion I brought to my work. If you love your work, you'll be out there every day trying to do it the best you possibly can, and pretty soon everybody around will catch the passion from you — like a fever.

Share your profits with all your Associates, and treat them as partners. In turn, they will treat you as a partner, and together you will all perform beyond your wildest expectations...behave as a servant leader in a partnership.

Communicate everything you possibly can to your partners. The more they know, the more they'll understand. The more they understand, the more they'll care. Once they care, there's no stopping them. If you don't trust your Associates to know what's going on, they'll know you don't really consider them partners. Information is power, and the gain you get from empowering your Associates more than offsets the risk of informing your competitors.

Appreciate everything your Associates do for the business. A paycheck and a stock option will buy one kind of loyalty. But all of us like to be told how much somebody appreciates what we do for them. We like to hear it often, and especially when we have done something we're really proud of. Nothing else can quite substitute for a few well-chosen, well-timed, sincere words of praise. They're absolutely free — and worth a fortune.

Celebrate your successes. Find some humor in your failures. Don't take yourself so seriously. Loosen up, and everybody around you will loosen up. Have fun. Show enthusiasm — always. When all else fails, put on a costume and sing a silly song. Then make everybody else sing with you. Don't do a hula on Wall Street. It's been done. Think up your own stunt. All of

this is more important, and more fun, than you think, and it really fools the competition. "Why should we take those cornballs at Wal-Mart seriously?"

Listen to everyone in your company. And figure out ways to get them talking. The folks on the front lines — the ones who actually talk to the customer — are the only ones who really know what's going on out there. You'd better find out what they know. This really is what total quality is all about. To push responsibility down in your organization, and to force good ideas to bubble up within it, you must listen to what your Associates are trying to tell you.

Growing the Leader in Us (By Jim Clemmer)

"For what we've discovered, and rediscovered, is that leadership isn't the private reserve of a few charismatic men and women. It's a process ordinary people use when they're bringing forth the best from themselves and others. Liberate the leader in everyone, and extraordinary things happen."
— James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, *The Leadership Challenge: How to Keep Getting Extraordinary Things Done in Organizations*

Leadership is a verb, not a noun. Leadership is action, not a position. Leadership is defined by what we do, not the role we are in. Some people in "leadership roles" are excellent leaders. But too many are bosses, "snoopervisors," technocrats, bureaucrats, managers, commanders, chiefs, and the like. Conversely, many people who have no formal leadership role are excellent leaders. In today's fast changing world, we all need to be leaders.

To lead is to show the way by going in advance. To lead is to guide or direct a course of action. To lead is to influence the behavior or opinion of others. We all need to be leaders, regardless of our formal title or role. This starts with inner self-leadership and moves outward to influence, guide, support, and lead others. The process of becoming a leader is the same as the process of becoming a highly effective human being. Leadership development is personal development. Leadership ultimately shows itself in what we do "out there." But it starts "in here."

It would be easy if we could all become leaders by following a simple set of steps. But the journey of personal growth means finding our own way. There are, however, critical areas of personal development based on timeless principles. The distance we need to grow along each leadership dimension will differ for each of us, but defining and continually growing along each of these paths is the way of the leader.

Strong leaders are well-rounded and constantly expanding their personal leadership across these key areas:

- **Choose Not to Lose.** Whether we choose to focus on our problems or our possibilities is a key leadership issue. When we are faced with obstacles and failure, those who can overcome adversity and learn from their experiences, turning them into opportunities, are the ones who will be truly successful.
- **Focus and Context.** THE CORE OF MY BEING: This is central to our growth along all the other dimensions. Our Focus and Context is shaped by three vital questions: Where am I going? (my vision); What do I believe in? (my principles and values) and; Why do I exist? (my purpose or mission).

- **Responsibility For Choices.** IF IT'S TO BE, IT'S UP TO ME: Leadership means accepting responsibility for our choices in life. Leaders realize that life accumulates,

that choice more than chance determines their circumstances. They refuse to succumb to the "Victimitus Virus" ("it's all their fault" and "there's nothing I can do").

- **Authenticity.** GETTING REAL: Leadership isn't just what we do, it's something that we are, which then drives what we do. Genuine leadership comes from within. It's authentic, and based on honesty, integrity, and trust. We must ring true to ourselves by exploring our inner space, gathering feedback on our personal behavior, and ensuring consistency with our stated values and principles.
- **Passion and Commitment.** BEYOND NEAR-LIFE EXPERIENCES: Successful people are energized by a love for what they do because it brings them ever closer to who they are. They overcome apathy and cynicism, develop a burning commitment to their cause, and with discipline achieve their dreams and desires.
- **Spirit and Meaning.** WITH ALL MY HEART AND SOUL: What is the purpose of our work? Of our lives? Material success alone is not enough. Leaders seek within — and find something more. In what is too often a mad dash from cradle to grave, we need to take time — in work and life — to nourish our inner selves.
- **Growing and Developing.** FROM PHASE OF LIFE TO WAY OF LIFE: The popular goals of security, stability, and predictability are deadly. The closer we get to these dangerous goals, the more our growth is stunted. True and lasting security comes from constant growth and development, based on regular R&R (reflection and renewal).
- **Mobilizing and Energizing.** PUTTING EMOTIONS IN MOTION: Leaders don't motivate with rewards and punishments. Whether at home or in the workplace, they energize people to motivate themselves. Highly effective leaders boost the energy of others with their passion and appreciation. They engage people's hearts as well as their minds. They get them involved and participating. They actively nurture the "being" or culture of the group, not just the "doing."

The more the world changes, the more leadership principles stay the same. Leadership principles are timeless. And they apply to all of us, no matter what role we play in society or organizations.

Tough Times Call for Strong Leaders

When working with business owners and leaders, I am constantly reminded of the stress they currently endure in this difficult economy. Most have had to make tough decisions for the long term health of their company and more importantly, about their employees.

More often than not these complex decisions include the release of good employees as well as cutbacks in salaries, wages and benefits for those people who remain. These employees are faced with even more work and often less compensation for their increased efforts.

Leaders are well aware of the impact this has on everyone's morale and productivity. As a business owner their own personal finances may also be severely impacted by the financial health of their business. Most feel personally responsible for the employees who they have had to let go as well as those who remain.

Recently, I met with a business owner who shared with me a recent conversation he had with some of his employees. Although he had not had to release any employees, business had started to slow and he had made some cutbacks in overhead expenses. As a way of expressing his gratitude for his employees' contributions, he decided to take some key employees out to lunch. During lunch the employees shared their observations of him over the last several months. He

was shocked to hear that he had been demonstrating a number of behaviors that lead the employees to believe that he was stressed out.

The positive outcome was that the employees felt comfortable enough to share their concerns with him. He had obviously created a safe communications environment for his employees. I then asked him "what message did he get from this conversation?" His immediate response, "I need to be a better leader!"

We then explored what being a better leader would look like and how he could start to move towards this goal. He identified the options and resources available to him and committed to some next steps with a specific time line.

This story is just one of many about leaders who are having difficulty handling the stress created by today's economy. Many leaders don't realize how they present themselves to their employees and the impact that their transparent emotions and negative behaviors have on their employees.

The following are some suggestions to maintain a persona of strength with your employees and team members during these extremely challenging times:

1. Take care of yourself. Exercise, eat well, get 7-8 hours of sleep, and take time for yourself. These behaviors are important to keep your energy up and your emotions in check.
2. Focus on your business recovery plan and communicate the details of the plan in a positive and encouraging tone.
3. When communicating bad news, again focus on your plan to turn the situation around.
4. Practice important communications with a trusted advisor before communicating the information.
5. Encourage others around you to be part of your plan and their success. Don't take it all on yourself!
6. Celebrate your company's successes! This doesn't have to cost money. Visibly recognize employees who contributed to the company's success.

Remember your employees and team members take their cues from you. The behavior you model will be picked up and replicated by the people around you. Positive cues and behaviors can be contagious and are important to navigate your company through these challenging times.

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Leadership: How Important Is 'Integrity'? In Today's Business World Is Integrity an Afterthought?

I don't know about you, but reading and hearing about leaders who have either lost, or never had integrity, has become all too common these days. It makes us believe that perhaps there are no leaders with integrity.

As someone who tries to view the glass as half-full, I think it is the media who has created this misperception that today's business leaders are void of integrity, morals, and ethics, because every day I work with executives and business owners who have very strong values and integrity. Yet, the stories that our media chooses to disseminate never seem to promote the leaders who live and breathe integrity. Integrity, as defined in the Merriam-Webster dictionary, is a "firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values (incorruptibility,) an unimpaired condition (soundness,) and the quality or state of being complete or undivided (completeness)." Types of integrity include: integrity of character and professional integrity. Synonyms for integrity are: honesty & unity. Or as Aristotle said: "Men acquire a particular quality by constantly acting in a particular way."

It is the word "constantly" in the Aristotelian quote above and the phrase "an unimpaired condition" from the Merriam-Webster definition that makes the concept of integrity challenging for many people. While we all have values that we believe are important in our life, outside pressures and circumstances may lead us to stray from these values because of our own self-interest. It is so much easier during difficult times to think of a decision in the terms of "what's in it for me?" versus "what's best for the team or the company?"

One of the keys to maintaining integrity is the ability to act not in one's own interest but in the interest of others. A great example during these difficult times are the many leaders I work with who have taken significant pay cuts over and above the cuts made to their employees. They continue to follow their values in spite of the negative impact it has on them financially. There are other executives who have deliberately not poached their competitors' star performers, but instead have decided to wait for those performers to reach out to them, if and when the time is right for them.

There are countless examples of leadership integrity that I could share with you and very few instances of leaders who either never had integrity or chose not to develop integrity. Integrity is not something you are born with. It is something you learn and strengthen over time. It is a conscious choice you make and you have total control over. No one can make you have or not have integrity.

Leaders without strong values and constant adherence to these values fail to recognize the message they are sending to their employees: "when things get tough, our values are up for sale." Those leaders who have the ability to stay the "values" course will reap the benefits of having employees who are motivated and loyal to their company. These employees will mimic the behaviors of integrity that they see modeled by their leader. They will clearly understand what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behavior within their team and their company. Integrity, like the Internet, can have a viral positive effect, and the lack of integrity can quickly create negative behavior in an organization, leading to decreased performance and ultimately decreased profits.

The following are some questions you may want to ponder to determine both your level of integrity and your commitment to integrity:

• On scale of 1-10, how would your employees rate your level of integrity?

• How do you react to lapses in integrity by another person?

• What positive behavior did you model recently that was later mimicked by an employee?

• What one behavior do you display on a consistent basis that is aligned with your company values?

• What key behaviors, other than your answer to the previous question, are necessary for you to be aligned with your company values?

• Describe a recent behavior you displayed that was not aligned with your company's values.

• What words or actions from your employees will let you know that your employees trust you and your leadership?

• How are you practicing the behaviors you want your employees to mimic?

• On scale of 1-10, how would your employees rate their trust in you? How confident are you in this rating?
• On scale of 1-10, what one behavior can you display more of to increase your employees trust in you by 1 point on this scale?

In summary: a leader who values and successfully models integrity benefits by having motivated and loyal employees, resulting in increased performance, especially during difficult times.

Five Benefits Of Leadership Development Coaching

1. LESS EXPENSIVE
Developing, coaching and promoting internal people to a leadership position is significantly less expensive than:
Advertising, recruitment fees, time wading through resumes, relocation and interviews with unknowns, signing bonus and the training/break-in costs typically required bringing in someone new from the outside. Some studies indicate that 50% of the new hires at the executive level only last between 6 to 9 months. Just like good new customers are often expensive and hard to find, so too is good new leadership.

2. MORE COST EFFECTIVE
Studies show that replacing a management level employee by hiring from the outside can cost between two and four times the annual salary of the position being filled. According to some firms, this is a conservative estimation as they have seen the cost go to as high as six times the annual salary.

3. LESS FRUSTRATING
Most managers find the process of recruiting; time consuming and frustrating because:
Managers do not hire on a day to day basis and normally are not well prepared or trained in effective interview/hiring techniques. As the economy grows, hiring will become more of a problem. If you have kept the very best through the down times - and I would suspect you did - why would you not want to develop and use this ready talent for your key positions as you begin to grow?

4. A WIN-WIN
By developing and coaching in-house high potentials and key management individuals... the organization wins because:
A succession planning process is embedded in the organization, it helps to preserves acquired skills, maintains both product and organizational knowledge gained by your top people, promotes longevity and dedication from the best people in your workforce, provides growth and educational opportunities for key individuals, lets them know they are valued, helpsreduce turnover of your best people and... provides evidence and a comfort level to your board of directors that future organization leadership is in place.

5. A GREAT RETURN ON INVESTMENT
Investing in the development of your best... to make them even better... is a very bottom-line savvy tactic, as well as an ethically sound philosophy.
Take care of your very best people and they will return the favor!!!

Simma's Seven Step Solution for Successful Inclusive Leadership (Do Your Employees Know Your Name?)

Do your employees know your name? Do they even know why your organization exists? If the answer to one or both of these questions is "no," you cannot possibly have an inclusive culture in your organization. And if that's the case, you are not optimizing your business results.
Two revealing interactions with employees in the last month caused me to ask these questions.

1- I call a large hotel asking for the general manager by name. The person answering the phone responds, "I don't show any guests registered by that name." When I tell him that the woman I'm asking for is the general manager of the hotel, he says, "Oh, I'll look in the directory."

2- I try to reach a client who is the CEO of a Fortune 500 corporation. Since I didn't have his direct number with me, I get the operator. I ask for the CEO by name and the operator asks me what department he works in. I tell her he is the CEO. She says he's not at that location, and gives me a number at another location. The operator at the other location connects me to his assistant, who puts me right through. When I tell the CEO that the operator didn't even know who he was, he's surprised and says he had just assumed everyone in his company of 75,000 employees knows his name.

I ask him, "Why don't they?"

Do your employees know your name? Do they know why your organization exists, and it's values, or do they just know how to do "their jobs?" What else do they not know about where they work?

I tell my clients how important it is during this stressful economic period to be seen by their employees and to provide information and answer questions about the current state of their organizations. It's not enough to simply come out of your silo and speak to senior level managers. You need to make sure that they are educating their directors and managers and that those directors and managers are educating their employees. Finally, you need a process that ensures everyone is passing on information that is accurate, complete, timely, and usable. That includes knowing the names of top leadership, and understanding the organization's mission, vision and values.

Employees are more empowered and more productive when they feel included. People feel more included when they have information that helps them do their job. They are able to serve the needs of customers when someone asks to speak to the CEO, or General Manager.

People can't follow your lead and you can't influence them to excel if they don't know who you are. If employees don't know something as simple as the name of the CEO, there is probably a lot more they don't know about the organization. Without basic knowledge they won't be able to answer questions from customers or who to ask for the right information. They can only do their jobs and exist in their own silos.

As the leader you are responsible for providing information and tools to help employees do their jobs and make the organization a success. A good leader knows how to create environments where people are inspired to do their best work. They feel a connection with the mission of the organization and understand how their job contributes to that mission.

Here are seven steps to ensure that your employees have the information that they need to feel included and help you achieve success.

Simma's Seven Step Success Solution for Inclusive Leadership

1. Identify key information you want your employees to know.
2. Review communication processes in your organization: how information is provided and how it is received.
3. Assess the effectiveness of current communication processes in reaching all employee levels.
4. If the assessment shows that information is getting stuck and not reaching the rest of the organization, identify the problem areas and fix them.
5. Develop and implement a strategy for organizational communication that includes:
* New hires
* Current employees
* Employees who work remotely or at less populated sites
6. Create a matrix of information accountability at each management level
7. Review matrix to ensure information is reaching all employees

If you follow these steps, you can create a more inclusive culture where everyone

can do their best work, and enjoy what they do. You'll ensure that your employees know your name and the whole organization will benefit from your leadership.

Five key points to Strong Leadership (thus a Great Manager)

Being known as a strong leader is easy to obtain when you know in your heart you are doing the right thing for the "good of all."

Here are five key points, which are the pillars to being a successful leader, that you should absorb into your psyche:

1. **Develop trust and credibility.** When people trust you, they will be more inclined to follow you. If they follow you, and you have all the pieces of the puzzle in place as described throughout this course, you will succeed. A leader builds trust by considering the "good of all" when making decisions. Leaders do not abuse their power, but build trust by using it properly. Trust fosters collaboration, which contributes to openly sharing information, which then creates a solid team who supports each other. Trust is based on the respect and expectations of a leader who cares and acts with compassion in a most positive way. With trust there is:

*   Honesty

*   Integrity

*   Compassion

*   Fairness

*   Good relationships

Incorporating these five traits will help guide you on the right path to strong leadership.

2. **Share the vision with absolute clarity.** Leaders need to share the vision of what they want their department to achieve. For example, a leader might share a vision like, "We will be a world class customer service organization that provides the benchmark for customer satisfaction." To get others to see and understand your vision, you need to motivate and inspire with the same enthusiasm and positivity you have inside you.

It is vital, however, that your team understands the vision, and is 100% clear on the objectives. You are striving for a better and secure future, while eliminating the common work related fears. People with a shared vision are more productive and have a greater sense of achievement. Inspire them to follow the processes and procedures you will put in place to achieve the vision.

You also need to listen to what they are saying. Doing all the talking does not let them participate in the vision quest with their ideas.

A way to see the dream come true is by charting successes, as well as failures. If the employees always know where they stand, they will know what part they played in achieving the vision.

3. **Be there to help them succeed - Coaching, mentoring, communicating, and listening.** Great interpersonal skills are vital for a successful leader. You don't lead by hiding behind your desk. Be out there and find the strengths and talents of your employees, and place them where they can shine. They need to know how their strengths serve the objectives. Show them the respect they deserve, and you have their interests at heart.
The bottom line is that they need to know that you will be there to help them succeed. You can do this by:

- *Coaching.* Try and help them improve their skills to do their job better. Give them feedback on their performance with observations and give good advice. Use specific statements rather than general comments, whether good or bad.

- *Mentoring.* Help them understand what you are all about, guide them for a better chance of promotion, and have them learn about other aspects and functions of the business.

- *Communicating.* Clearly share your visions and goals, encourage individuals and groups, praise when praise is due, and take the time for one-on-one meetings.

- *Listening*. Let them share ideas, concerns, and know you are approachable and caring.

 The most important aspect here is that you are always looking at ways to help develop your employees' unique skills, both individually and as a group, for a better future including possible growth in the company. This is a win for the company as well. The company will gain more productive employees, not to mention you will look good in upper managements eyes.

4. **Make the decisions and be held accountable.** With the skills developed throughout this course, you will mostly make the right decisions and guide your department into the right direction. You need to:

- Sift the data for facts and relevance.

- Look closely at the issue at hand while never losing sight of the big picture.

- Talk to subject experts if needed.

- Don't make a decision too quickly unless necessary.

- Think about the cost-benefit for both short-term and long-term.

- Once a decision is made, do not be wishy-washy or unsure about yourself. You will be seen as a person who can be easily persuaded with little confidence.

You as a leader are expected to take some chances and you might make some risky decisions. In saying that, as people expect to be held accountable in their job performance, they also expect you to be held accountable as their leader. If you fail or deny any wrong doing on your part, or place blame on someone else, you will lose credibility and not be seen as an effective leader.

You also need to know when it is better to follow, rather than lead, by trusting your employees' suggestions. Leaders realize they can't know all the answers, and earn respect when they seek advice of others when needed.
If you make a decision that is obviously seen as showing favoritism, or just a lack of judgment, by promoting someone who has bad work ethics, no respect, or below average performance, you will not only lose respect, but also hurt team morale.

Being held accountable is also a positive thing, as you want to be known for the good things that you do. The same goes for your employees as it makes them feel important and appreciated. You do, however, need to allow people to sometimes fail or make mistakes during the process of achieving difficult goals. You do, however, also need to confront them. By using your management and leadership skills, people will admit their mistakes and accept accountability. Your skills as leader will also help and coach them to improve. If you do not already have the nerve and confidence to confront people, you will eventually, as the contents of this course should lift your confidence and ego immensely.

Make sure your decisions are always ethically sound. Do not ask or expect your team to get the results unethically or use a "no matter what it takes" approach.

5. **Keep it all under control and headed in the right direction.** The objective of every leader should come with the mindset of striving for "mission accomplished." You, as leader and manager, need to focus on what's most important related to the vision and goals of the organization. You need to eliminate chaos and be known as a person with authority who can make the right decisions. You might have 5 projects going on at once, but focusing more on the least important when the most important is in need of help will destroy your vision and miss your goals. Make sure you get your team to focus on the most important and critical tasks to achieve the goals related to your vision. By delegating tasks to the right people, fulfillment of the vision will become more likely.

Everyone needs to have the same focus and direction you have. A sense of community within the team, with a common goal, is key. If you waver and change your mind and direction continually, you will lose trust. Consistency is key to maintaining control and keep things going in the right direction.

These "five key points" are the core competencies to strong leadership. We will continue on this path later in this lesson with 101 tips, tricks and secrets to success in Leadership and Management.

14 Things a Leader Must Do (By <u>Gina Abudi</u>)

Below are 14 things that some of the most effective leaders in organizations do today to help their organization be successful. These are not focused on managing the company's finances, preparing for Board meetings, or planning strategy; but rather, in addition to those certainly important items (along with many others), these 14 key items help leaders to get in touch with their employees as well as their clients to help the company succeed.

1. **Communicate effectively**: Leaders must know how to effectively communicate through all levels of the organization – the right communication, with the right amount of information, at the right time. Be honest when things aren't going well in the company – don't scare the employees – but let them know what's happening and what the plans are to get back on track. Keeping things behind closed doors only worries employees and increases anxiety and de-motivates them. Some communications may be written memos sent via email, in other cases face-to-face conversations work best, and for others, small group or one-on-one meetings might be most effective.

2. **Get out of the corner office**: Leaders need to walk around among employees; not just sit in their office waiting for employees to come to them. Take a walk about the office – see how employees are doing. Get to know them. Ask about their family, an upcoming event, or what they did over the weekend. Attend department meetings – learn what's going on within each department and what challenges they face.

3. **Be out there representing the company**: Speak at conferences, blog, Tweet, participate on LinkedIn groups, contribute to the company FaceBook page, etc – do the "social media thing." Represent the company and its employees. You are the face of the company!

4. **Praise employees**: Know what projects employees are working on and what their accomplishments are – praise them for work well done! Make it personal (one-on-one) and public (on the company intranet site, via a newsletter, in a staff meeting, etc.). If a project did not go well, let them know it's OK. Talk to them about what happened and how it could be done better next time.

5. **Contribute to the company's internal newsletter**: Write an article for the company newsletter regularly – have a "Letter from the CEO" section where you discuss what's going on in the company, upcoming projects, praise employees, highlight special events for employees such as birthdays, birth announcements, upcoming weddings, etc.

6. **Share your vision**: Share your vision for the company – excite your employees with the possibilities for the future and how you will get there. Make them part of that vision. Make sure everyone understands what the future holds and the possibilities!

7. **Make it happen**: Ensure that the employees know how to reach the future goals of the company. How can they help? What should they do? Do they know how to get the company where it needs to go?

8. **Motivate others**: Especially in tough times people are scared about losing their jobs, the future of the company, etc. Talk with employees regularly – keep them motivated. Let them know what is being done to survive the tough times – what are your plans for the company. Get their suggestions on how to survive the tough times. You don't have to sugarcoat it when times are tough, but they need to know you are there to get them through it and you have a strategic plan to do so.   Motivate your employees to be the best they can be. What is their talent? What are their strengths? Inspire them to be the very best they can be. How can they help the company grow and prosper and how can the company help them? (Remember: it's a 2 way street!)

9. **Invest in your employees**: Prepare your employees for future roles within the organization. Help them develop and grow both personally and professionally. (Part of Motivate Others above.) Employees whose organizations invest in them are motivated to be the best they can be!

10. **Visit clients**: Talk about the company, see how the client is doing, share with them where your company is heading, find out where their company is heading – how can you help each other? Talk about the future – what do they envision they need to ensure success in their organization. How can your company help them? What works well between the two companies, what could use improvement?

11. **Don't micromanage**: Let people do their jobs – be there to support them, guide them and encourage them, but don't look over their shoulders constantly – let them get to the end result in their own way. Meet with them to see how things are progressing – offer your assistance if needed. Be practical about what can be accomplished. But be ready to roll up your sleeves and pitch in to help when needed!

12. **Develop a true team environment**: Create an environment where working as a team is valued and encouraged; where individuals work together to solve problems and help move the organization forward. Individuals who will challenge each other and support each other….which leads us to #13….

13. **Surround yourself with people who complement each other's and your own skills**: Don't surround yourself with "yes" people. Surround yourself with individuals who will challenge you, who think about and do things differently than you do. These will be your problem solvers and the individuals who can work to grow the organization and help it prosper.

14. **And don't forget about yourself**: You aren't perfect and can never be perfect. Build your own skills and become better at what you do. This is required in order to ensure your company can grow and prosper and compete effectively in a global competitive marketplace.

I'm sure you can add to this list! Please share with others what else a leader must do to be effective! Use the Comments field below. Thanks!

Interpretation: Creating Leaders – An Ontological Model

Werner Erhard, Michael C. Jensen, Steve Zaffron and Kari L. Granger have created a fascinating course that teaches leadership. Teaching is probably the wrong word since they use an ontological approach (ontology is the *science of being* and their model "reveals the *actual nature* of being when one is being a leader and opens up and reveals the *source* of one's actions when exercising leadership.")

Erhard   Jensen   Granger

I would be way over my head trying to summarize or fully understand this model. But I'd like to write about it; it helps me to think and discover. (Read the paper here: http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1681682 via HBS Working Knowledge:http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/6570.html)

Why did this research fascinate me?

- I personally experienced that *knowledge* about leadership was an obstacle when trying to be the leader I needed to be. Knowing about leadership and *being a leader* are two different things.
- It answered many questions that I had.
- It's executable.

As I'm exploring the concept further, this shall be my playground to make sense of what I'm reading. In an attempt to wrap my head around the ideas, I'll share what I've digested/perceived/thought this far. (Access the course materials here:http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1263835)

BECOMING A LEADER

The course, first taught at the University of Rochester Simon School of Business, consists of three parts.

I. Foundation – master the factors that form the foundation for being a leader.

> The three factors are integrity, authenticity, and being committed to something bigger than yourself.

> Three of my favorite quotes:

Integrity is achieved by "honoring" your word when you will not be keeping your word.

The only actionable access to **authenticity** is being authentic about your inauthenticities.

Leaders are ordinary people who are given being and action by something **bigger than themselves**.

II. Framework – build a framework that becomes your *context* for leadership situations; your leadership lens.

> The framework has four aspects. When you have built the framework for yourself, it becomes the *context that uses you* (as in: you can drive a car without thinking about it).

> It is essential to realize *[that you might be on Shutter Island]*: "The way a situation occurs for me is colored and shaped by my context for that situation, and my way of being and acting is correlated with the way that situation occurs for me."

> The four aspects of the framework are illustrated here:

A Context That Uses You
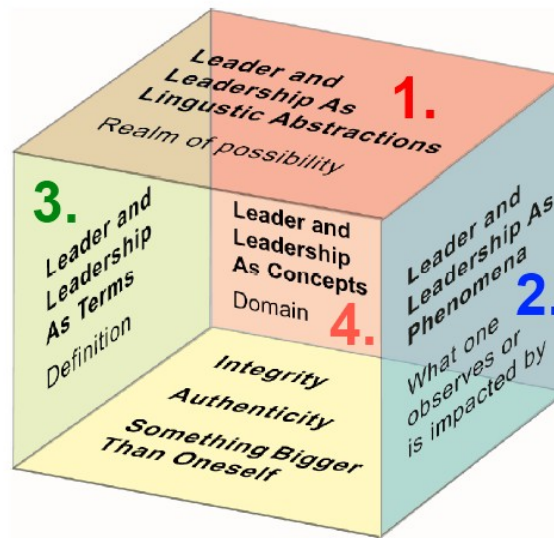
Now it gets complicated. In essence, your *leadership lens* needs to be *clean* to be effective. What these four walls mean to me (*thoughts to myself*):

1. Possibilities – don't let leadership knowledge/ideas/speculations get in your way/limit your actions or being. In this *realm of possibilities*, you are free to be and free to act.

2. Perceptions – how leadership "is lived". Leadership is experienced in the *sphere of language*: speaking, listening, thinking ("a certain mastery of language is required"). For example, "authentic listening leaves the speaker with the experience that he or she has actually been 'gotten'".

3. Future – 'spend more time' in the future and create a new context for the present that is not derived from the past, but from the future. Leaders create new realities so that a shared vision will be the *output value.* "Being a leader and the exercise of leadership is all about realizing a future that wasn't going to happen anyway."

4. Definition – leadership defined as a term:

Bring into being as a reality a future that,
in the prevailing "context" was not going to happen,
that is, did not occur as an authentic possibility
(did not call into effective action those required to act
in order to realize that future),
which future fulfills (or contributes to fulfilling)
a matter of fundamental interest or importance
to the relevant parties
including those who granted the leadership
(those who lead you and those you lead).

III. Constraints – remove or manage what limits or distorts your natural self-expression (so you can respond spontaneously and intuitively as a leader).

This is where you have to dig deep and find out what gets in your way; learn what *runs you*. Three categories: physical perceptual constraints ('you see what your brain sees'), ontological perceptual constraints ('your frame of reference constrains your perception'), ontological functional constraints (behavior triggered by threats real or imagined).

Yes, all this sounds highly abstract and I don't understand a lot of it. But it seems that this model can give you access to *who you are* as a leader. That's pretty cool.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

Is your foundation already poured? Do you know what integrity, authenticity and being committed to something bigger than yourself feels like? Do you know someone who is authentic and *complete* as a person?

Have you started building your framework? Tossed out concepts that limit you? Learned to perceive information untainted? Eliminated patterns from the past to make room for the future? Spent time in the future? Do you know a leader who has achieved mastery of his/her leadership framework?

Do you know what *runs you*? Are you aware what can delude your perceptions and behavior? Do you know someone whose 'being and acting' is *in-a-dance-with* 'how a situation occurs for them'?

The Creative Leadership No-Brainer, Part I
By ***Jack Shaw***

Even more creativity is going to be needed if we are to continue thriving in the business market. According to **IBM's Institute for Business Value,** a survey of 1500 CEOs revealed that "creativity is the single most important attribute to lead a large corporation."

Training our creative corporate staff how to lead and our leaders how to be creative and innovate to increase productivity must be high on our list. To get there we need the best of creative types–especially in our leaders; however, a recent study by Jennifer Mueller, a professor at the Wharton School of Business, Jack A. Goncalo of Cornell University, and Dishan Kamdar of the Indian School of Business conducted a series of experiments to find out how creative people were viewed by their colleagues. The trio's results tell a different story that should cause us some concern.

The road to Innovation needs the creative efforts of both leadership and staff. What began as a vibrant new idea is the standard. Where do we innovate from here?

In the study, individuals who expressed creative ideas were viewed as having less leadership potential than individuals whose ideas were less creative. This left me wondering if we were ready mentally to take on the training challenge that goes with changing the way we view people in our organization.

What are your perceptions of creative people? Are they leadership material? Recent studies say, "NO." Are leaders creative, again, "NO." None of this is absolute, of course. There are always exceptions.

We should encourage creativity in staff as well as leaders. That becomes difficult in a culture that tends to view the creative types as quirky, nerdy types lacking in leadership potential. So who's to lead these groups. Leaders have **retreats** designed to bring out their creative ability—but we should also be expected to train company creatives to to lead, and others to tolerate and respect what each individual brings to the table, and leave the old corporate culture competitiveness behind. (That's probably the toughest chore.) This is a new corporate culture, tolerant and bright–maybe even a bit quirky. You can't get rid of it all. And, to some extent, we are already doing the training we need to do in the near term. In creative environments where non-creative managers are in the minority, we train creative people to lead and manage because we can't have them be "just one of the guys."

Can you train someone to be creative? I think you can pose scenarios, offer meditation techniques, reflection and observation techniques. There are tons of training tools available off the shelf or in our creative minds already. As for teaching the creative types leadership and management? Sure, you can teach organization and time management skills as well as effective communication, collaboration, mediation, negotiating and facilitating skills. We've been training leadership for years, but maybe it's time to take another look and re-evaluate the importance of creative thinking and expression. We shouldn't ignore the good old standards that work either, but let's use them to bring out the creative solutions we need.

The creative geek and the leader. We tolerate the geek. Some of the most successful companies today put the geek in the chairman's seat.

Typically,we hire people who fit, people who are team players—not necessarily the creatives unless we have a specific job for them, and then we tolerate their idiosyncrasies? Obviously, there are companies that are creative by nature—they deal in artistic and graphic representations, problem-solving… Wait that's still most of us. So, while we can look to obviously creation-based companies, there are elements in all companies. All deal with a measure of problem solving, which is a key point of creativity. Solutions are "ah-ha" moments, therefore, creative.

Because of my arts background, one would probably think that my situation is different from your situation. Actually it's not; I just see it partitioned a little different. Sure, I work with creative people all the time in theatre and not-so-creative people in my day job with the federal government. Easy to believe—but I think it's not so much the case anymore. Just as there are non-creative people in theatre, there are creative people in government. To be honest, some are just not in a "position" that would allow such creativity.

But why not? That is a management training question. Ironically, someone demonstrating creativity can threaten another employee by simply getting attention, if the creativity is work-related, of course. Leaders—even creative ones—must stick to certain protocols that are expected to keep the non-creative type workers happy. Remember, creativity is out-of-box thinking (read change) and change is hard to accept. Companies, and I include government here, do much by committee (or a group of managers) so unwarranted attention doesn't go to one person or a small specific group. The reason for that is that we want everyone to feel a part of the company's successes, but sometimes it isn't productive. Too many cooks…and the fact that rank has its privileges and influence–not exactly the best prescription for creativity to flourish.

I worked on a communication steering committee, whose sole purpose was to change the way the organization presented itself to others. We had every division represented and if they weren't, it just wasn't fair. It took us over a year of bi-weekly meetings rubber-stamping sub-committees work or having one division try to diminish its effectiveness. It became a power play that ended well only for the chiefs; the lower-level creatives who did the real work of making the product given honorable mention, "It couldn't have happened without you." A small group of creatives could have put together a proposal in a couple of weeks.

It may be time again for a culture change, and trainers of leadership and creativity skills will be key players.

Creative people can be leaders and often are, but the perception of someone who exhibits that creativity too openly is not of the norm; he or she is seen as odd—useful but odd. Think of creative people who suddenly have been thrust in a leadership position. Did their behavior change? How were they perceived by those creative people around them? Those theatre people chosen to run the board were most likely creative people before, my experience has been—if they are creative now—they don't exercise it openly because of the business nature of theatre. It's almost as if they must overcome their creative nature to be acceptable to the rest of us.

Theatre is obviously a business that encourages creativity—as is any business such as advertising or marketing who wants to get people's attention. We can only conclude many businesses have creative leaders who don't necessarily exercise their creative thinking and problem solving. It's time they did and learned to use that ability well.

The Creative Leadership No-Brainer, Part II
By **_Jack Shaw_**

You have heard it all before every time business goes through a rough patch.

"It's time our leaders got creative." Actually, it's time we all got creative.

Creative people just drive you crazy. They have no social skills–well limited ones. However, you know *creative* people so you have to watch getting them angry. They could do *creatively* bad things to you. I'm kidding, of course. I doubt if anyone actually says that, but…

It's almost as if being creative is a bad thing. We like what creative people can do for us. We find it most entertaining, but when it comes to leadership, we want serious business. It seems it's always been that way.

There are actually people who think "the creative people I work with are nice and can be fun to work with, but they are not detail-oriented and it drives me nuts! Let them tilt at windmills, but don't ask them to draw a detailed map to the windmill because you'll never get there – even if you stop and ask for directions…"

It's almost as if being creative is a bad thing. We like what creative people can do for us. We find it most entertaining, but when it comes to leadership, we want serious business. It seems it's always been that way.

We expect our leaders to reign with dignity, to relish a vision, and motivate us to do the same–but remain above it all. We don't expect them to be creative–until we need them to be creative. Someone has to. And we've alienated those who–but for fear of getting laughed at or otherwise ostracized–could come to our aid and offer creative suggestions. About that vision we expect leaders to have… Where did that come from? One of the creative members of their staffs? Or, from themselves? I'm guessing the latter.

Okay, this does sound sensible. To a point, but wait for it. I've heard it said or read it in a social media comment somewhere:

"For creativity to be appreciated, it needs to be planted, nurtured and cultivated throughout the organization. Relegating it to just the leadership levels creates dreamers who don't have the resources to execute."

What no dreamers? If that's the case, there is no Thomas Edison. No Alexander Graham Bell. No Steve Jobs. I'm a little slow remembering all the creative geniuses who made big changes to our lives, but I'm sure I'm not the only one.

If there ever was a time in the corporate world of business for proactive managers and leaders–and creative energy drives action–that time is now. Haven't you heard? I read this somewhere recently. All leaders should be creative, passionate, sensitive and self-confident–especially in today's world market. Most of us would probably agree that creativity is applying an innovative approach to an established view—a view by the way that was probably once thought to be creative itself.

Some would even say for a leader to demonstrate that creativity, he or she loses credibility.

In Part One of this blog, I talked about the study that said the person who demonstrates creativity is not perceived by others (peers, especially) to be leadership material. Just as the leader is not perceived to be very creative. Some would even say for a leader to demonstrate that creativity, he or she loses credibility. I had a leader who used to dress up in a silly costume on Halloween and pass out candy to his employees. I thought the act was silly–humorous even, but I didn't think it made him someone else. Yup, he was still the boss. And, he is still the-follow-him-anywhere guy.

If we accept the leader should not be creative in practice once he's laid that creative egg, what's next? In other words, once a leader has found that creative vision, how can he or she transfer that "creative" vision to the rest of the company without being creative and have it heard. That requires a different skill, or does it?

We train leaders to be creative, but usually only when we need them. What if creativity is inherent, and can't be trained? Are wasting our time instilling creativity in leaders instead of hiring potential leaders already equipped with that ability?

A little creativity thrown in with normal leadership traits might help. Our perceptions that leaders cannot be leaders and be creative, too, may be just flat wrong. Leaders with vision must be creative and often are in other ways, but that ability to use that creativity in his or her job is restrained by a corporate culture that has determined for years what a leader should look like. Times have changed. The world is more accessible–a mouse click away. Business and market trends change almost instantaneously. Are we seriously in the same position we were years ago?

There have always been signs creativity was necessary in the problem solving arena. Leaders and key staff have**retreats** designed to bring out those hidden abilities—and in times of trouble we are expected to train them to be even more creative, too. Can you even train someone to be creative? I believe you can to a point. Some leaders show a natural talent for it. Some ability is inherent. If it is, then we should look for potential leaders who already have it rather than try to train those who do not.
I think you can pose scenarios, offer meditation techniques, reflection and observation techniques. Maybe those same techniques can be used to train those who surround the leaders and creative types about tolerance and openness to new ideas.

The training team is hampered by that the norm is to hire "team players." While this hiring practice sounds reasonable on the surface, in a company built around rigid processes and policies it just breeds conformity. And conformity we know is not a producer of creativity. If you try changing the corporate dynamic, you may find yourself on the list of those who don't deserve the company's attention any more.

This is why companies built on a foundation of creativity and ingenuity are making us all take notice. Maybe they're doing something right.

I'm afraid this is the Computer Age no longer--but the Age of Innovation. We need innovation as well as creative ideas to gain and hold consumer attention.

Obviously, there are companies that are creative by nature—they deal in artistic and graphic representations, marketing products or services, or problem-solving for others… That's still most of us!

While we are debating the merits of training creativity to our leaders or training our creatives to be leaders, maybe we should be training tolerance and acceptance of all the roles people play in an organization—each being important in its own way.

Let's not forget that companies that succeed in the first place began and thrived because of a whole lot of creative spirit, an attitude that stood the company apart from other companies. Creativity began the day; it can save the day. Unique solutions to company problems, unique attention-getting communication to the public about who we are and what we can do for them will save the day.

Website: http://managementhelp.org