

# Leadership Excellence



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Winners 2018

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

What has marriage therapy got to do with workplace culture? Marriage and businesses in the 21st century exist in an environment of increasing uncertainty and face a stark reality for success. A sound strategy is simply not enough to guarantee future success.

"Every new relationship is a new culture that has never existed before. When we build a relationship together, we must decide on our own new meanings. Culture means the way people create meaning out of almost everything," according to Dr. John Gottman, one of the most influential and world-renowned relationship experts. So what does Dr. Gottman's decades of research have to do with strengthening organizations? Read our cover article, **Positive Culture: The Key To Achieving Your Strategic Goals** by Brad Deutser, for more insights on how great leaders build and drive great cultures.

Not every change in an organization has immediate or long-term benefits to the workforce. Sharing the benefits

of the change is only a small part of getting employees engaged in change. Along with the positive benefits, you can't be afraid to discuss the negatives and get stuck. Read Gregg Brown's article, **Leading Change**, for 4 strategies to get your team "unstuck" and move change forward in the face of uncertainty.

Your legacy is defined by the impact you have on the lives of others after you are gone. We are all leaving a legacy and there is no escaping it. If asked, how would you respond to the question of, "What do you want your leadership legacy to be?" Read Jeffrey W. Foley's article, **Leaving A Positive Leadership Legacy In Your Life**, for more insights.

As a leader, you need to get comfortable saying exactly what's on your mind, even when it's what no one wants to hear. Read Kevin Lawrence's article, **Why Your Company's Standards Aren't**

**High Enough**, where he reminds us why leaders should hold on to certain standards.

Also included are exclusive interviews with top winners of LEAD 2018 Awards. The winners share details of their award winning programs and plans ahead.

This is just a sneak peek into what we have in this edition of Leadership Excellence. We hope you enjoy reading all articles and look forward to hearing from you!

Last but not least, we believe that there is no better way to connect with people than by sharing your leadership story. If you have one, send it to us and don't forget to mail us your feedback.

## Happy Reading!

Write to the Editor at  
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# Positive Culture: The Key To Achieving Your Strategic Goals

Great leaders build and drive great cultures

 By **Brad Deutser**

When helping our clients prepare for organizational growth and sustainability, one of the first things we do is introduce the concept of marriage therapy. This typically elicits some bewildered reactions, but we assure them (and you) that this is a worthwhile exercise. While we aren't suggesting that our clients and their significant others need actual therapy, we bring up this discussion to point out the striking commonalities between marriages and businesses in the 21st century: Both exist in an environment of increasing uncertainty and face a stark reality for success.

Dr. John Gottman, one of the most influential and world-renowned relationship experts (known for being able to predict marital success with 90% accuracy), has an incredibly insightful take on addressing marital challenges

today: "Every new relationship is a new culture that has never existed before...When we build a relationship together we must decide on our own new meanings. Culture means the way people create meaning out of almost everything." So what does Dr. Gottman's decades of research have to do with strengthening organizations?

Everything.

Just as two people make a commitment to each other based on proven compatibility and a shared vision of their future (let's call this "strategy"), CEOs assemble their teams and build strategic plans of their own that, on paper, make complete sense. But over time, nearly half of marriages and 90% of startups will fail -- most often having little to do with strategy.

The culprit? Culture.

Logic dictates that strategy is the most important component for any business to succeed. But the reality is that organizations aren't dysfunctional; people are. If leaders are not in touch with what's happening with their people, and their people aren't aligned with the organization's expectations, then the culture is weak and it's only a matter of time until the business will suffer. Dr. Gottman suggests that newlyweds who engage in relationship therapy programs (focused on creating meaning out of their new culture) are three times more likely to succeed than those who wait for an intervention. Why should CEOs view their organizational culture any differently? If you wait to address your culture until you're confronted with an economic downturn, a threat from a competitor or an unexpected reputational issue, the instability

within the organization will make it an even greater challenge to find ways to protect your organization.

## Culture Matters

As organizations face unprecedented uncertainty in the current business and political landscapes, the speed of change increases the pressure to perform. This forces leaders to make decisions based on short-term goals and gains that oftentimes sacrifice long-term growth. As a result, employee engagement decreases when they see a disconnect between the corporate vision and operational realities. This breeds negativity and a workforce that is out of alignment, opening the door to dysfunction and a toxic environment of disengaged employees, subcultures, alliances, people with their own motives, potential lawsuits, low productivity, and high turnover. When you are then unable to attract and retain talent and struggle to overcome a poor reputation, it can be virtually impossible for the organization to reach its full potential.

Boards are demanding quarterly profits, which puts pressure on leaders to make decisions that could potentially jeopardize the long-term value of the organizations. And when incentives for leaders are different than incentives for the employees, the culture can be weakened to the point of putting products and services at risk. When the culture of a workplace is not defined, the risk is that the culture becomes what is there. But defining culture is just the first step.

## Are You Positive?

Shawn Achor, best-selling author and founder of the most successful positive psychology corporate training program in the world, has proven that positive environments enhance organizational performance -- characterized by higher productivity, less turnover and more resilient cultures (more adaptable with a capacity to see more opportunities that lead to better results).

**Logic dictates that strategy is the most important component for any business to succeed.**

We couldn't agree more. Which is why we begin our relationships with clients by focusing on uncovering the DNA of their organizations -- not by looking for what's wrong, but by discovering what is working. We help reveal what's inherently good and unique about that organization -- based on the principles of positivity.

Most organizations today are not actively concerned with their culture. Our primary objective is helping leaders understand their culture for what it is and what they want it to be. This includes an exhaustive effort to determine the level of engagement within the organization, which helps reveal what is central, enduring and

distinct about their identity. This positive approach leads to a positive culture, which puts an organization in a position to achieve its strategic goals.

Marriages and organizations are formed with the best intentions -- with thoughtful consideration of passion, long-term viability, and compatibility. But the research on both is clear: A sound strategy is simply not enough to guarantee future success. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach, the more leaders focus their attention on ensuring a positive culture, the better positioned their organizations will be to weather economic downturns, thrive during uncertain times, and grow with confidence and clarity. Not only will this embrace of "organizational therapy" impact your people, but it will also help you become a more effective leader, as well.



**Brad Deutser** is founder and CEO of Deutser, an award-winning management consulting firm, and the Deutser Clarity Institute, a think tank, idea accelerator, and innovative learning center. Deutser has transformed many prominent educational, healthcare, energy, industrial services, professional services, private equity, retail, and cause-based organizations through his unique perspective on organizational clarity. He is the author of **LEADING CLARITY**.



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Jay Greaves

**CERIDIAN**

Company: **Ceridian**

Program Name: **Sales Master Class for Sales Leaders**

Program Directorss: **Jay Greaves, Vice President, Organizational Development & Revenue Shared Services, Ceridian**

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## Building A Dynamic, Productive Sales Force



*Our editorial team interviewed Jay Greaves from Ceridian at the LEAD2018 Awards this past February. Here are some excerpts from the exclusive interview.*

### What is the overall objective of your program?

Effective leadership training is a high priority for most organizations – especially at the Sales level where revenue performance can often be mapped back to successful employee development. The Sales Master Class for Sales Leaders program gives our Sales leaders the tools to better assess the development needs of the Sales force they are leading. Moreover, the curriculum provides best practices for bringing people together for

coaching and collaboration across all areas of the organization, not just Sales.

### Who do you impact with your program?

Senior Sales leaders and front line sales employees and (people) leaders from various functions (beyond sales – i.e. Marketing, Legal, Finance, People & Culture, Procurement, Operations) at Ceridian.



### What are the lessons you've learned this year from facilitating your program?

The main lessons learned include 1) look for the opportunity that lies beyond the scope of the original business need and 2) Be sure to amplify the ROI on education investment by leveraging it beyond the original intended audience.

### How do you measure the return on investment and success of the program?

The impact of the sales training program is widely felt throughout Ceridian.

Training in this way has broken down silos, driven cultural and business changes and has given Ceridian

sales teams and others a better understanding of the customer.

Other positive effects include improved collaboration between departments other than sales. In effect, the sales training program has improved alignments within other parts of Ceridian (including procurement, finance, legal and implementation) due to a better understanding of each function and how (through negotiation training principles) all can cooperate with each other.

Before and after behavior change and bottom line results measurement (i.e. improved margins, additional revenue - being used to fund additional master classes for the sales force etc.) further validate the programs' effectiveness.

Other positive results include improved employee engagement scores, reduced cycle time in recruiting sales talent and reduced voluntary turnover – post training --- all of which are further testament to the success of the program.

In effect, people leaders have applied the sales training content and curriculums to other areas of the business, helping break down silos, improve communication, and transform Ceridian's workplace culture into a culture of empowerment and excellence.

### What lies ahead for the program and how will it continue to succeed?

Based on the success of Sales training, we plan to further extend these training programs to other audiences within Ceridian outside of Sales, where there is a need. The driving reasons for doing so include the fact that other areas within the organization have similar training needs.

Extending the training programs beyond Sales will also improve organization alignment, overall employee engagement and communication consistency, and possibly create new revenue streams from our alliance partners. ■

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# Advancing Women In STEM Begins With You

## 5 ways to succeed as female STEM graduate

By Audrey Taylor

Women hold more than half of the college degrees awarded each year, but represent only [25 percent of college-educated STEM employees](#). As a new graduate, it is daunting to enter your career not only as a woman, but a woman who is a minority among her peers.

I began my career in technology more than 30 years ago and my company 20 years ago. For context in 1998, Google was in its very first year of existence, and companies were only beginning to build e-commerce and informational websites. As a woman in STEM I strived for equality, diversity, and a successful technology company. To my peers, that might have seemed overly ambitious, but if you want to be a trailblazer, sometimes you have to do what you think is right and not focus on what other people think. Fortunately I wasn't wrong; more gender diverse workplaces have been shown to

[increase bottom-line revenue by 41 percent](#). Overall, employees are also [more productive and engaged](#) when they work in a diverse environment.

As female STEM graduates, there are four concrete suggestions I share with my organization regularly – and with you – to find support and foster an inclusive workplace and an inclusive society as a whole.

**1. Seek mentorship outside the majority:** Connect and network in areas that fit your passion and desires for a career, but aren't necessarily typical. Are you an aerospace engineer? Network with those who also engineer in software and manufacturing. You'll be surprised what you learn about solving problems from different industries. Think about other minority professional groups where your insights could be valued, and likewise their ideas and

brainstorming power will be beneficial to you too.

**2. Understand and improve your own unconscious bias:**

We all make decisions with unconscious bias. As long as we are human, this will be the case. When [men and women were asked to review](#) two identical resumes with a man's name on one, and a female's on the other, both groups rated the male resume as more capable and suited for the position, even though skills and experience listed were identical! When you understand that unconscious bias exists – even within yourself – you become aware of your own decisions and statements in meetings, when hiring new employees, advising the C-suite, or even your interaction with colleagues day-to-day.

**3. Progress, not perfection:**

Avoid striving for perfection all the time. That isn't the way the world works, especially



in innovative career fields like science, engineering and technology where trial and error are key. Don't be afraid to take risks when you think you have a solution or want to try something new. Failure doesn't mean you've failed, it means you've found something that doesn't work. Use it as an opportunity to improve your methods about a business challenge. When you know what doesn't work, you open your mind to other ways of interpreting and resolving challenges.

**4. You're in the room for a reason:** Use your voice and raise it when you want to share your insight and perspective. That's how you'll be heard and start a real dialogue to solve complex business issues. Maybe everyone else hasn't heard that idea

before, or maybe no one has considered something you see as a barrier to solving that issue. True invention and progress requires all the brains in the room, not just brains from one gender or race. Find ways to ask what others have to say, and don't be afraid to ask questions if you want clarification or more information about something that interests you.

**5. Sponsor and mentor young STEM minds:** Whether it's a woman or someone else in a minority group, lead the charge and [help others gain footing](#) where you've already learned to connect. It takes more than one empowered woman to make a difference. By fostering young minds, you're helping STEM grow faster and healthier, with more diversity. Get involved in urban groups

that help youth make career decisions, or join Big Brothers Big Sisters. Invite your friends to come along. Humans are inherently designed for relationships with others, and one person you listen to or advise could easily become a future leader.

More than ever, women are taking CEO positions in companies all over the world, but it still isn't nearly equal. There will be discouraging times in your career, but the only way to increase female STEM graduates and business leaders is to become one yourself. Keep your foot in the door by seeking professional development opportunities and speaking out when you have something to say. Remember where you came from and help other women along the way. After all – to paraphrase – we have to be the change we want to see in our world today.

...



**Audrey Taylor** is founder and CEO of netlogx. Founding the company in 1998, she has served in the information technology discipline for over 25 years and is currently the president of the board of Women & Hi Tech. She is also active on the board of the Indianapolis chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO).



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**David Sheridan**

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Company: **Ceridian**

Program: **Developing Leaders Program**

Program Directors:

- Lee Marcus, Senior Learning Consultant, People and Culture, Ceridian
- David Sheridan, Senior Learning Consultant, People and Culture, Ceridian

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## Best Mentoring Program

# Bringing Leaders Together

Our editorial team interviewed *Lee Marcus* and *David Sheridan* from *Ceridian* at the *LEAD2018 Awards* this past February. Here are some excerpts from the exclusive interview.



### What is the overall objective of your program?

Ceridian's Developing Leaders Program gives participants a deeper understanding of their potential roles as leaders within Ceridian, regardless of their current official position.

Participants gain exposure to a range of key leadership principles and concepts with a focus on how they might apply these in their own everyday management and leadership practices.





In addition, participants are provided with opportunities to gain exposure to and mentoring from Ceridian's executive leadership.

Besides being highly interactive, the program also draws upon the existing knowledge of participants and is designed in such a way as to provide learning which 'sticks'. Some curriculum methodologies include the use of case studies,

group work, classroom teachings and self-directed learning.

**Who do you impact with your program?**

The Developing Leaders program doesn't just affect managers and leaders, but it also has a ripple effect that trickles down to all levels. The influence of Ceridian's leadership programs impact how other employees feel and function

in their roles. It also affects the type of leaders we help develop and who these people will or will not become as they advance their careers throughout the company and beyond.

All Ceridian employees are impacted by the Developing Leaders Program – directly, by participating in the training, or indirectly through working with a manager/teammate who has been through the training.

The target audience for training includes employees at the manager level and below, who have been at Ceridian for at least six months and who are meeting or exceeding their current performance objectives.

One of the most popular elements and positive impacts of the Developing Leaders Program is that it brings together leaders from across Ceridian's global organization and allow these leaders to meet and work alongside colleagues from other teams, functional areas and geographies. Participants tell us the chance to work with and learn from others is the most engaging part of the program.

### What are the lessons you've learned this year from facilitating your program?

One key lesson we learned is that the curriculum cannot remain static. Our program and sessions for the most part remained the same. However, we realized that elements need to be adapted according to what our leaders felt they needed. We decided to include extra time into our sessions to allow us to "go off track" from what was planned. This gave us the flexibility to adapt to new learning objectives established by the participants or allow for more time on a topic.

We also learned the value of not having people start learning only when they walk in the door—giving them work to do ahead of the session that both helped them get their teams up and running and

get them engaged with topics and materials was a winning idea.

### How do you measure the return on investment and success of the program?

The success of Ceridian's Developing Leaders Program is widely felt throughout the organization. Positive results include improved employee engagement scores and reduced voluntary turnover, post training.

Examples of how Ceridian's People Academy team have impacted our organizational success - through programs such as Developing Leaders – can also be seen in the growth of our NPS numbers.

NPS scores improved over the course of the four cohorts in 2017, from 50% for the first cohort to 100% for the last. This reflects both the development and fine-tuning in our delivery of course material, and the tweaks we made to the Developing Leaders program based on experience and feedback.

The module "Conversations that Engage" within the Developing Leaders Program received an NPS score of 100.

Post training, more than 82% reported that the program led to changes in their management practices and over 13% indicated that they would be making significant changes to their management practices, post training.

We also received great interest and participation in the program this past year. Close to 100 Managers, Directors, Vice-Presidents and senior executives took part in the Developing Leaders 2017 program.

### What lies ahead for the program and how will it continue to succeed?

The future is very bright for the Ceridian's Developing Leaders program. In 2018, we anticipate this number to be even greater as we continue to offer basic programs as well as additional continuing learning opportunities.

We will also plan to review and modify the curriculum as the needs of the business change. For example, when Ceridian introduced our new brand promise and values set known as Our Way – it played an important role in leadership style and behavior in order to honor our promise to our employees and customers...that is that: Ceridian. Makes Work Life Better™. ■

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# Culture Is A Skill, Not A Possession

A look at what culture is and how to cultivate it slowly, habitually, and communally

By **Aytekin Tank**

When a complex, messy, misunderstood buzzword like “culture” has become an issue, you need to look in unusual places for perspective. One place is the word itself. If we unpack what “culture” means, we gain a better handle on how to shape and solidify genuine cultures.

## Roots in the Land

Culture comes from the Latin word *coltere*, meaning “to tend” or “to cultivate.” It has agriculture roots. Today, we talk about cultivating virtues, skills, and teamwork as if they were crops.

When businesses talk about their “culture,” the word is vacuous by comparison. Judging by company “About” pages, culture is what marketers say a company is. Companies that lie tout their “integrity.” Companies that treat their customers like dirt talk about their culture of “service.” The real culture lies in actions, behaviors, and beliefs.

Based on the etymology, culture is supposed to be a long, arduous process of growth, filled with obstacles. The agriculturists who used that word in biblical times would have suffered from crop failures, pests, wars, and other hardships we scarcely can imagine in a corporate setting. Growing crops was dangerous, risky work.

Arguably, the word “culture” is incomplete without a cultivation process. An HR exec who thinks his



company is “imaginative” or “unconventional” because he chose those words is deluded. I wouldn’t be a “pro basketball player” or “the world’s greatest CEO” if one day I got cocky and stated that I am. Culture without cultivation is a lie.

## The Nature of Culture

The agricultural roots of “culture” give us some clues about what it is and what it is not. To be clear, I’m not attacking the value of words and communication. I think companies should declare their (real) culture. Rather, I’m suggesting that culture is a crop that has to be cultivated before you can harvest it. Culture is more of a skill than a possession.

If we think of culture as a skill, we can deduct some things about how it’s acquired and spread:

**Slowly.** Like shooting a bow or typing code, culture requires a high degree of skill and practice. It cannot be rushed, and attempting to ‘hack’ it can backfire. Culture might grow a lot slower than revenue, a user base, or VC funding.

**Habitually.** Culture needs high degrees of reinforcement. At my company JotForm, I try to instill a culture of kindness, creativity, and quick execution. If I don’t model those behaviors, no one will pick them up.

**Communally.** If you want to reach an elite skill level, you train in a community of like-minded people. Even in individual sports like golf, martial arts, and tennis, the best players train in great facilities with other top athletes and coaches.

By reimagining culture as a skill, we can see what it takes to make a genuine culture. Speaking from personal experience at JotForm, I can discuss how these attributes might show up in your business. I’m *not* suggesting you copy me, but you might model some cultural institutions on ours.

## Slow Culture in Practice

The slowness of culture, the first quality, gets manipulated in young, fast-growing companies. When the next “Uber” of whatever raises \$20 million in

venture capital with an idea on paper, it *has* to spend that money. The investors want at least a 10x return on their investment. So, you get ‘industrial’ cultivation as entrepreneurs hitting the cultural crops with fertilizer and pesticides. The culture ends up being unwholesome and even poisonous to employees, customers, and equity holders.

I had the good fortune to bootstrap my company rather than take VC money, so we grew slowly by Silicon Valley standards. In fact, we didn’t hire anyone unless we had their first-year salary in the bank, and we still abide by that rule.

In part, we hire slowly because it protects our culture. If you hire five new employees in a company of 100, they get acculturated. If you have 100 employees and hire 80 more in three months, they will form their own cultures and eschew the genuine one.

## The Habitual Side of Culture

Culture ends up being a set of invisible norms, behaviors, and institutions before you ever capture it in writing. We discover culture in retrospect, which is why habits, not declarations, matter most.

The problem is that business leader can conflate ‘popular culture’ or ‘consumer culture’ with the behavioral kind. Think of a community like “hipsters” that, from outside, appear to have a culture. You might imagine traits that identify a hipster: moustache, skinny jeans, avocado toast, thick-rimmed glasses, record shops, etc. That’s a *weak* culture in if its dependent on appearances, and maybe that’s why no one identifies as “hipster” (or at least they won’t say it!).

Culture supersedes appearances and crosses what you might call ‘tribal’ zones. I could hire a practicing Muslim from Turkey and atheist from California, yet they could still share the norms, behaviors, and institutions of JotForm’s culture and work together brilliantly. Culture is what is left when we figuratively strip naked, leaving the consumer, popular, and fad cultures on the floor.



## Culture in Community

If you want to absolutely, positively *destroy* a good culture, here's what you do (I learned this the hard way, albeit under *much* less extreme conditions):

- Cordon off your executives and long-term employees. Make sure they spend a ton of time together and not with new employees.
- Make the BIGGEST teams you possibly can. If team members don't know each other's names and roles, you're on the right track.
- Hire and fire people quickly based on a performance metric that puts employees in competition. Become known for churn.

I start from the negative angle because it's so common! Surely there's someone in your life who feels unsupported, isolated, powerless, and fearful at work.

Under such conditions, the original culture of the founders or new leadership won't transmit anywhere. The cultural leaders are barricaded behind gatekeepers; the teams are anonymous and unwieldy; the churn instills cutthroat culture and prematurely expel peoples who might 'grasp' the genuine culture.

So, do the opposite. Mix your top leaders and long-term employees into small, cross-functional teams and hire with a long-term mentality so that new people can acculturate in a community.

## Deliberate Words

Culture is one of many words businesspeople use incessantly without much attention to what it means and where it came from. By looking at the agricultural roots of culture, reframing it as a skill, and translating the skill mindset into actual practices, we can use and live the word more powerfully.

I suggest this exercise not just for culture but for any word that has become a thorn in your company. Terms like service, collaboration, connection, leverage, customer-centricity, change agents, ideate, drill down, etc. all have a lot of fluff on the surface but important ideas hidden below. If deconstructing culture can help us run better businesses, maybe all our buzzwords deserve a closer look.



**Aytekin Tank** is the founder and CEO of [JotForm](#), the first and only full-featured online form building tool that is completely mobile friendly. JotForm allows anyone to create forms and collect their data, without writing a single line of code.



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# Act Now For A Great 2019

## | Core focus areas for faster growth

 By **Bill Blades**

“An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest.” Benjamin Franklin

Here’s a few statistics to ponder. Fifty percent of Fortune 500 companies from 2006 no longer exist per AEIdeas. And 44% of leaders consider their companies more sluggish than agile per DDI. Those numbers may seem staggering, but they also reflect opportunities for proactive organizations.

Leadership is all about your people achieving their maximum potential even if many of them don’t know what their real potential is – yet.

If you’re selecting the right talent, you must remember that over 80% of them want the opportunity to learn and grow. That responsibility lies with you; not Human Resources. And you, and your next layer down, should learn of everyone’s goals and aspirations so that your mentoring is targeted.

Having the right talent also means hiring people that bring different strengths – not just “my kind of people.” If they know you embrace change, they will bring improvement suggestions to you regularly and you want changes not from just the top rungs of the ladder, but from the ones at the bottom too. And when ideas are brought up, don’t forget celebrations. If the idea came from the shipping dock, go visit that person at the dock – or in your office.

And, everyone needs to be accountable for mentoring the next layer of personnel. Very simply, such leaders are even providing education so that someone takes your place as you move up. When you provide mentoring and education you are then entitled to raise expectations. Did you know that dolphins are so smart

that within a few weeks of captivity, they can train people to stand on the edge of the pool and throw them fish? That’s targeted training!

Culture is talked about abundantly, but only a small percentage of firms are serious about it. Even if a company has a Mission Statement, very few (if any) can tell me what it says. So, it’s a tool to gather snickers from the troops.

It’s the CEO’s responsibility to serve others and help them grow. Weekly – not just when you can fit it in. William Craig wrote in Forbes (May, 2018) that “Culture reflects the leadership. Leaders need to honestly assess how they are perceived and not many are prepared to face it.” He warns, without great care and professionalism, leaders can easily become the destroyers rather than champions of an organization.”

On the other hand, a toxic culture brings frustration, stress, anxiety, fatigue, turnover, and even health problems. A leader who truly cares must never let anyone in the corporation be subject to these abuses. Not even the janitor. You really want your janitor to be #1 in the #2 business.

Communication is often ranked at, or near, the top of employee’s frustration. The top 3 most stressful areas are tight deadlines, waiting for information and nonproductive meetings. See how these are related?

More than anything, leaders need to understand that their personal style of communication must be adapted to other’s needs of communication. For example, you can’t communicate with a salesperson as you would with a technical employee. It can be taught, but it takes a lot of reinforcement as everyone



has been speaking the same way for decades. I speak with energy and commitment, which is great...in most cases. If I did such with a slower-moving group or person, they could feel threatened, as I would be invading their safety zone too fast.

One of the top reasons for one's success or failure is communication. Whether applying for a position, dating, selling or leading, communication is usually the #1 differentiator.

Even words matter. The word "deplorables" backfired and helped Donald Trump win an election. Just one word.

Creativity brings a spark to both employers and corporations.

Then, why don't we see more of it? Only a small percentage of individuals are blessed with it. Most people do the same things by habit and most are afraid of trying new things. This is especially true with creative ideas as most people think, "it's too far

out for me." But let me go out there a bit with a few creative ideas.

- When I suggest that salespeople get postage stamps with their photo on them, eyes go crossed. I have my own stamps.
- When I suggest that salespeople write their own newsletters, I hear, "I'm not an author; I'm a Salesperson" to which I reply "Are you really?"
- When I read that an executive has been promoted, I send a congratulation note on a post card I picked up from France (or wherever) and just sign it "Bill". When I call Mr. John and the Assistant asks, "Who may I say is calling?" I reply, "It's Bill. I sent him a post card from France." I then hear, "Who are you? It's been driving us nuts!" Uhm, I know.
- When the client says, "You can come anytime between 8:00 am and 10:00 am" reply, "I'll take 8:03 am."
- If you have a single parent in your employ and you know her little Johnny's birthday is today, advise her to take off an hour early – with pay – celebrate Johnny's big day.

All of the ideas above are simple and easy to act on. None of them takes extra time to be different. But, I can share that it's challenging to teach creativity and tough to get people to do creative things. Most business people haven't acted on a single, creative idea in years. They get up, go to work, go home and repeat that scenario the next day, the next week, the....

So, get ready for long-haul mentoring on creativity. A small percentage, on your team, will act faster than others. Keep working on those few as, at least, they're showing they are not afraid to try new things. As they try another and another, the foot draggers will eventually follow. It's a tough path for many to take, but it pays dividends inside the organization and with clients. Fun is all around us. I read that 4,153,437 people got married last year. I don't want to cause any trouble, but shouldn't that be an even number? A fun question (to me at least).

Sales challenges are really the easiest ones for us to tackle because if there is a *need* for your product, we can turn that into a *want* proposition.

An association recently called and asked that I provide an 8-hour sales seminar for a very handsome check. I naturally said, "No". Why? I would easily provide 50 ideas that the 30 attendees would find interesting, 25 may take notes, but only 1 or 2 would take action when they got home. Well, maybe 1.

Those that took notes put them on the corner of their desk at work, then move them to the credenza, then move them again to a desk drawer when they clean out their office at the end of the year. So, that's why I said, "No".

I prefer just speaking for corporations for just 90 minutes and holding everyone accountable for acting on e.g. 6 new skills/ideas in the next 30 days and then another 6 after that. No implementation and no follow-up equals no new sales. After 30 years at teaching sales and leadership, I do know what works – and what doesn't. Please note that my therapist just told me my narcissism causes me to misread social situations. I'm pretty sure she was hitting on me.

What's going on with training and education? Ave Rio, Chief Learning Officer Business Intelligence

Board, reports that 59% of their business skills training is accomplished in the classroom with coaching/mentoring coming in at 42%. But, 79% of Chief Learning Officers expect a change in those percentages by the end of 2018. And, classroom-based training will decrease by 24%. On the other hand, 58% have/will boost their coaching/mentoring efforts. I whole-heartedly agree as 1 on 1 coaching beats the classroom, almost every time, for sales and leadership education. Every "student" has different needs and the needs keep evolving, which is why mentoring usually beats classroom training.

Most interesting is that 72% of senior leadership have the strongest voice in determining how learning is delivered. Rio wrote, "Shockingly, in an era supposedly moving towards more employee-centered learning only 25% of respondents said employers are involved in how learning gets delivered to them. The more things change, the more they seem to stay the same.

Just note the trend. It's moving rapidly towards investing in repetitive mentoring. I vouch for this trend 100% as I know what ideas I throw out at 9:53 am, Mary loves it, while John thinks it's stupid. What's stupid is thinking that either of them will act on it, anyway. Follow-up mentoring and accountability cures that.

I've given brief ideas for 5 components for success. Benjamin Franklin sums it up best: "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I may remember. Involve me and I learn."

• • •



**Bill Blades**, CMC, CPSP, is a speaker and consultant specializing in sales and leadership.



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## Developing Leadership Talents

*Our editorial team interviewed Susan Martin from Saint Leo University at the LEAD2018 Awards this past February. Here are some excerpts from the exclusive interview.*



### What is the overall objective of your program?

The overall objective is to develop the leadership talents of university

managers and directors. The program focuses on having the class learn about leadership styles, self-reflect upon themselves

### Video



and ultimately identify their own leadership style. The program also serves the purpose of developing strong peer relationships between our managers across the entire university. After completing the program together, the participants have developed relationships that will help encourage collaboration between the different divisions of the university.

### Who do you impact with your program?

Mid-level directors and managers

### What are the lessons you've learned this year from facilitating your program?

For the class of 2017, we opened up the selection process to self-nominations, and it helped us to identify employees who really wanted to be part of the program. By selecting from a group of candidates that self-nominated we have found that it improved the program as everyone

selected genuinely wanted to be there and was 100% enthusiastic about being a part of the program.

Using a third-party vendor is an outstanding way to conduct a leadership program. Our third-party vendor has a healthy relationship with the university and is knowledgeable about our needs. They partner with our executives to deliver crucial lessons specific to the organization. In addition, the third party vendor model allows for more open conversations between the participants during the class as the program is not facilitated by other employees of the university.

### How do you measure the return on investment and success of the program?

The ROI is measured by following the careers of our graduates. The majority of our graduates move on to higher level management opportunities at Saint Leo or move

on to leadership positions at other companies.

### What lies ahead for the program and how will it continue to succeed?

The Leadership Saint Leo program is considered a prestigious program at our university. We are always looking for ways to improve upon the program. We request feedback from our participants and our university coaches. Currently the program serves two very important purposes, helping our leaders identify their leadership point of view and developing relationships with other university leaders. The content in the program really helps our participants to understand their leadership style and gives them the tools they need to be a strong leader. The experience itself builds a support network of managers across the university who have interacted and formed relationships because of this program. In future years, we look to develop these two aspects as the central focus of the program. We are also examining the ways we can continue to have the program alumni meet in quarterly with our executive staff to discuss current university challenges and brainstorm together on possible resolutions. This will ensure that we continue to engage the leaders of our university and keep those relationships intact. ■

▶ Would you like to comment?



# The Seven Qualities Of Great Leadership

A collage of what great leadership looks like

By **Bruce Hartman**

During my thirty-five years working for Fortune 500 companies like Footlocker and Yankee Candle I had a ringside seat in watching great CEO's lead. During almost two decades of being the CFO with many of these wonderful leaders, I observed that there are seven qualities that exist in inspiring leaders. While no one person embodied all these qualities, my experiences with many terrific leaders create a collage of what great leadership resembles. These seven qualities are:

- Strongly rooted moral compass
- Ability to get things done
- Listens to learn
- Develops other people
- Analyzes effectively
- Engaging and open
- Delegates effectively

Great leaders possess a high competency in most of these traits. Some instinctively had them and some worked hard developing these traits.



## **Strongly Rooted Moral Compass**

No single leadership trait is more important than having a moral compass that is always pointed in “doing the right thing.” At Yankee Candle, which has the highest customer acceptance rating of any consumer product company, this was always evident. Craig Ryden and Harlan Kent who were the CEO’s during my tenure as the Chief Administrative officer, demonstrated this on a daily basis. While earning profits was always a high priority, providing a quality product to our customers was more important. If any process or decision that we made risked customer satisfaction or the safety of our employees, then we didn’t approve. Both Craig and Harlan recognized that not only would it disappoint our customers and employees, it would also hamper the sustainability of our enterprise. Employees watch very closely what leaders do and act accordingly.

## **Ability to Get Things Done**

Great leaders can be counted on! They do what they say and say what they do. You learn to count on them to accomplish their responsibilities. For those who are being led, this trait is inspirational. It inspires their organization to have the same focus of completing committed tasks.

Early in my career, I worked for a great CFO named Jerome Loeb. The one thing I always knew was Jerome would be ready at any meeting. He was always the most prepared. If something was committed to by Jerome, it was

done and ahead of schedule. In turn, for those of whom worked for Jerome, we knew this was the standard. We met this standard, because Jerome led with this standard of getting things done.

## **Listens to Learn**

Great leaders listen. Jim Hageman, an early influence in my career, would sit still and listen until nearly the end of a meeting. Then he would summarize what he had heard and suggest future action steps. Jim’s concern was that as the senior person in the meeting, if he expressed his point of view he could influence others before they had a chance to express their opinion. Jim also knew that there was much to be gained by getting all points of view and not stifle conversations.

Jim once told me that he couldn’t learn anything if he was talking. People became accustomed to Jim’s listening style and felt comfortable that they could speak their minds without fear. In turn, the company culture developed into a listening to learn mode.

## **Develops Other People**

Great leaders and organizations focus intently on their biggest asset, people! Great leaders ensure training and programs exist that help people learn to be effective executives. They intentionally make this a priority and part of the company’s periodic review process. Organizations that have an effective and honest feedback system, when administered on a regular basis helps create an

aligned culture and an engaged organization.

Great leaders also inspire others by their own actions. They encourage others’ success and help them overcome weaknesses. Their primary goal isn’t their personal fame, but making others better.

Most importantly, they know that being surrounded by great people makes the company better and able to navigate through difficult times.

## **Analyzes Effectively**

Matt Serrawas the CEO of Footlocker while I was the CFO. He had a thirst for knowing the facts about where the company was going. He would evaluate every trend and probe constantly for our thoughts. He knew that in every number there was a trend. This trend would indicate our future. He would always double check his opinions with a group of us to make sure he didn’t miss anything.

What was most interesting, if a trend was different than his opinion, he didn’t force feed his opinion back to the staff. He admitted he was wrong and would adjust course. Matt knew that a good analysis of where we were going was more important than his ego.

## **Engaging and Open**

One of the most important safeguards for any corporation is to have an open work environment. Great leaders make people feel comfortable delivering

news, including bad news! The hardest thing for a corporation is to establish a culture where all news is received equally and without emotion. Delivering bad news to the boss is one of the hardest tasks for an employee. A culture of open conversations can stop bad situations in their tracks.

When we consider the recent Wells Fargo scandal, where some overly zealous employees opened bogus accounts, I wonder if the board or top leadership allowed employees to provide frank feedback about business operations. Certainly if they had an open environment there would not have been a scandal.

Great leaders don't hide from bad news, they encourage open dialogue.

## Delegates Effectively

When an organization grows above ten employees, the management style has to change to effective delegation. Otherwise it will stop growing. Effective delegation ensures that the company is "focused on what counts" and moving in the same direction. The leader has to move from being the doer to the organizer.

Over the years, I have witnessed some wonderful executives who know how to delegate. They evaluated tasks and assigned them to the people who can effectively get tasks completed. As part of this inevitable management style, great delegators put people in a position where they can succeed.

Great delegators don't abdicate the responsibility, they coach and ensure the right resources exist for the person doing the task. They are also willing to walk with the people in difficult times.

Delegation isn't passing the buck, it is both instruction and ensuring success isn't based on luck. While it is hard for any leader to rate at the top of the scale for all seven of these traits, great leaders still try to emulate these seven traits.

Great leaders understand their responsibilities and take them seriously. They don't hide when things are going poorly, they appear at the helm. They don't claim success for themselves, but for the team. Leadership is hard, great leaders are riveted on everyone being successful.



**Bruce Hartman** is the founder and creator of Gideon Partners, an advisory firm committed to "walking with people into a brighter future" as they navigate life and career transitions. Hartman was the Executive VP and CFO at Yankee Candle Company, Cushman and Wakefield, and Foot Locker, Inc., where he established global banking and capital market structures and contributed to significant increases in enterprise value. He is the author of a new book called *Jesus & Co.: Connecting the Lessons of the Gospel with Today's Business World*.



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## Aiming to Build a Stronger, Connected Team



Our editorial team interviewed *Gary Steele* from *BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee* at the *LEAD2018 Awards* this past February. Here are some excerpts from the exclusive interview.

### What is the overall objective of your program?

Our goal is to make My BluePath the premier career development program in Tennessee. Through My BluePath

the company offers numerous training opportunities, resources and programs that advance employees' skills and work to build a stronger, more connected team.





We value our peoples' experiences as BlueCross employees and hope they will choose to grow and develop their careers here. In turn, we want to support their goals by providing meaningful work and continuous learning that enhances their skills and leadership competencies, in a workplace culture that fosters diversity and inclusion, ensures employee engagement, and rewards and retains top performers.

In addition, these development opportunities are linked directly to

the measurements designated for the employee's position. That way they can focus their efforts in areas that will benefit them the most.

**Who do you impact with your program?**

We offer programs for employees at all levels in the company. Our Lead Blue for Leadership is available for directors and above, our Lead Blue for Management program is for supervisors and managers, and Lead Blue for Individual Contributors is for individual contributors with

leadership responsibilities. We also offer development opportunities – such as Situational Leadership and Thinking About Becoming a Leader – that supports our Succession Planning initiative to strengthen today's leaders and help prepare tomorrow's leaders to successfully step forward and up.

We offer mentoring programs for all levels of employees, helping us maintain an inclusive culture where employees feel respected and appreciated for their contributions.

Our four core programs are Corporate Mentoring, Achievers in Motion, Minority Mentoring, and Executive Shadow program.

- **Corporate Mentoring** has the goal of developing future leadership, retaining employees and introducing them to executive management and the business side of multiple divisions throughout the company. This year-long program consists of up to 12 mentors who are paired with mentees selected through a nomination process.
- **Achievers in Motion** is designed specifically for the development needs of non-exempt employees. This nine-month program is comprised of up to 15 mentors paired with mentees selected through an application process.
- **Minority Mentoring** aims to create a diverse pipeline of talent while preparing individuals for future opportunities. It promotes the professional growth of under-represented minority groups, and includes career development support, communication with executives, and first-hand exposure to decision-making processes.
- **Executive Shadow program** is a bi-annual on-the-job shadow program that allows employees from around the company to host senior executives in their area. The goal is to embed our leadership team to experience live customer interactions while forging direct relationships

with some of our highest performing employees.

### What are the lessons you've learned this year from facilitating your program?

Our employees place a high value on opportunities for professional growth and advancement – and this is reflected specifically in our corporate engagement results as well as our career program evaluation results. Almost 90% of our workforce completed our recent engagement survey and 93% of those said they plan to stay at the company.

### How do you measure the return on investment and success of the program?

Experts say it takes three things to create a high-performing company: Engagement, alignment and agility – more easily described as:

- Employees' pride, optimism and energy that drives their work efforts
- The connection people make between their work and the company's goals
- An organization's ability to lead, sense and respond to change

Overall, our engagement index rose significantly in 2017, this time to a favorable index of 92%. As a company, BlueCross outperformed the external benchmarks on every item with an available benchmark to compare against – by an average of 16 points.

### What lies ahead for the program and how will it continue to succeed?

In response to feedback from employees, we're doing more to sustain and grow our My BluePath career development program. These improvements are all intended to support employee educational needs and help them navigate and grow their careers here. We now offer engagement surveys on a yearly basis, we have improved the employee experience and access by listing all My BluePath information in one centralized location on our corporate intranet, and we have added an Emerging Leaders program to expand the opportunities even more. In addition, we enhanced the tuition assistance allotment to \$10,000 per year to include tuition, fees and books, and expanded the job rotation program to include additional grade levels. We are also in the process of adding a formal job shadowing program with a corporate-wide focus that will incorporate front-line employees.

As we continue to gather and act on feedback from our employees, we anticipate developing other high quality support programs and opportunities that will benefit our employees so they can grow, thrive and succeed at BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee. ■

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**Crystal Killingsworth**



Organization: **Dimension Data**  
 Program: **Dimension Data Americas Mentoring Program**  
 Program Director: **Crystal Killingsworth, People & Culture Business Partner**  
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**Best Mentoring Program**

# Building a Successful Mentoring Relationship

Our editorial team interviewed *Crystal Killingsworth* from *Dimension Data* at the *LEAD2018 Awards* this past February. Here are some excerpts from the exclusive interview.



## What is the overall objective of the program's curriculum?

The objective is to help cultivate meaningful relationships between experienced business leaders and new, upcoming talent in the

organization; as well as to explore self-driven opportunities for personal and professional growth. The program's curriculum focuses on providing resources including videos, articles, books, etc. that help



support the mentoring relationship and career success. When paired with the experience and guidance of a mentor, we expect mentees to be better positioned to achieve what they set out to accomplish as part of the program.

**Who do you impact with your program?**

We are targeting talent in the organization interested in receiving guidance and insight from experienced leaders within the business. The mentor program provides exposure for employees who may not otherwise interact with leaders in the company in such a deep and meaningful way. We look at

the program as a way of formalizing relationships that may already exist or to serve as the catalyst for starting new ones. We are also tapping into experienced and successful leaders in the company to impart their knowledge and insights into upcoming leaders to foster more career success across our talent, as well as our business.

**What are the lessons you've learned this year from facilitating your program?**

Having completed the second year of the Americas mentoring program, we learned the importance of maintaining communication with the mentoring pairs and providing

a formal framework to maximize the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship. We also learned that this is the "beginning" of a career "best practice" and more than a process that is complete within the mentoring session timeline. We also learned improved ways to maximize visibility of the program across the Americas region through technology (Yammer, DDU, SharePoint) and branding of the program.

**How do you measure the return on investment and success of the program?**

ROI and success of the program will be measured through percentage of overall employee population participating; retention; promotions; participant feedback from surveys; and overall employee engagement.

**What lies ahead for the program and how will it continue to succeed?**

A continuation of the program in future "cohorts" – ideally we will continue to raise the awareness level of the program and increase sponsorship from more members of the senior leadership team. We will look to grow the executive mentor "portfolio" to leverage effective mentoring relationships. We will increase the level of engagement of those within the program for the benefit of mentee, mentor, and the company. ■



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# Leading Change

## Change we initiate vs. imposed change

By **Gregg Brown**

Leading change within an organization can be a struggle, especially if your workforce feels the change has been imposed upon them rather than at their own initiation. The success of your change initiative will often boil down to how your employees direct their mental and physical energy levels while trying to accept and adapt to the change your organization is planning.

On top of that, people are coping with shifting priorities and dwindling time, which can lead to fluctuating energy levels. We're almost always expected to do more with less in both our personal and professional lives, and so we need to expend our energy in the most efficient way to meet our goals.

This also applies to facilitating a smooth change in the workplace: focus energy where it's needed to have a successful change. It might sound easy in theory, but in reality your employees may be unconsciously or consciously putting up barriers that could stunt the change process. Your employees, just like you, respond faster and easier to change

they agree with vs. change they disagree with or that is imposed upon them. Most change at work comes from above!

As you introduce change, your workforce will likely be asking "[What's in it for me \(WIIFM\)?](#)" If they see the benefits that come with the change, chances are the process will go a lot smoother.

But not every change has immediate or long-term benefits to the workforce. Some involve restructuring and job changes. If they don't see or are unaware of the benefits, they'll be asking the more impactful question, "What's the *impact* on me (the WIOM)?"

This is when people start to get a little antsy over change and will spend time and energy stressing over the effects your plans may have on their work lives, even before the change has been implemented. Sharing the benefits of the change is only a small part of getting employees engaged in change. Answering "What's the *impact* on me?" which includes the positive and negative aspects of the change is most often overlooked.

You can't be afraid to discuss the negative! This is the point where people get "stuck".

If your employees get stuck on change, you can help them refocus with strategies that will quickly and effectively get your change process back on track. Here are 4 strategies to get your team "unstuck" and move change forward in the face of uncertainty:

**Managing emotional response:** The workplace overflows with emotions that are often bubbling beneath the surface, behind closed doors, and never more during times of change.

There may be a particular part (or parts) of the change strategy that is triggering the emotional part of your employees' brains. Experts [David Rock](#) and [Daniel Goleman](#) have both noted that when our emotional brain is engaged, we lose working memory because of the cortisol and other hormones flooding in.

Fortunately, you don't have to become a clinical psychologist to manage your employee's emotions. David Rock's [SCARF model](#) is very effective at identifying possible emotional triggers and how to

minimize their impact on the change process

- a. **Status:** Your employee may feel that their status is being threatened, or that they'll somehow look less than competent before, during and after the change. Encourage them to build on what they already know so they'll be fully prepared when the change actually occurs. Let clients and others know that someone is on the learning curve, so they don't feel less than competent in someone else's eyes.
- b. **Certainty:** Many people don't like uncertainty, especially when it comes to their work routines. Itemize for them everything that will stay the same, as well as what will change, so they feel reassured that some things will still be familiar.
- c. **Autonomy:** How much is your workforce worrying about losing control of certain aspects of their job? Let them know which things they will retain control over so they can focus their energy in that direction.
- d. **Relatedness:** Moving people around always stirs things up in a company. Implement ways to make everyone feel like they're part of the new group so they can start Forming, Storming and Norming before the change happens. No one wants to feel left out.
- e. **Fairness:** Some employees may feel the change isn't fair, or that others will be treated more "equally" than others. Being fair, doesn't always

mean being equal. Explain the difference *equitable* and *equal* so people know when each concept is being used.

Overall, you should expect some negativity when change is introduced. Managing the emotional brain of your employees will help them maintain their productivity and stay focused on the tasks at hand.

**Examine their past strategies:** If you find people are stuck because they don't know what to do to help move the change forward, help them identify ways they dealt with major or minor challenges in the past.

Coach them by having them itemize which talents, strengths, and skills they brought to these past situations. Then help them see how they can apply these same traits and abilities to the change happening now. The situations need not be similar, as our underlying strengths are transferable.

**Allow time for ideas to collide before making decisions:** Does the change require innovation and idea generation, decision-making, or both? People tend to try doing both creative thinking and critical thinking at the same time, which keeps them (and your change process) stuck and going around in circles. I call this the 'Ping Pong Ball Effect'. Ideas and decisions being passed around ineffectively.

Think about unproductive meetings you've been in. They are often not functioning properly

because people are shutting down ideas before they've had a chance to be discussed: "I've been here 10 years; that won't work". You then have to have a meeting to discuss what happened at the last meeting. Talk about not being productive!

If you are in a meeting, and this happens, say "Let's just discuss the idea for two minutes. THEN we will determine which part of the idea we may want to action". Even if "bad" ideas are introduced, treat them with value because even the worst suggestions usually contain one or two usable elements, or the person would've not brought the idea up. In the end, you might cobble together enough of these nuggets to create a whole new, innovative idea!

Only then should you do your decision making to determine which ideas are the best to act upon. It doesn't need to take a lot of time.

**See what lies underneath any complaining:** Do you have people on your team who seem stuck in "complain mode"? Although some people just live to complain, you may be able to stop most negativity by discovering what actually lies *beneath* the complaint.

When people complain, chances are there's something unspoken that's important to them but not being addressed.

As an example, if someone complains to you about the bad working relationship they have

with a colleague on their change team. The individual wouldn't be complaining about the situation, unless it was important to them to have a good working relationship with that person. If you identify that for them, it will help move to positive action.

Allow them to express their concerns and try to solve the situation together – if you can. You'll demonstrate a willingness to listen at a deeper level without shrugging them off, siding against them, or labeling them as a "complainer" or "being negative".

During workplace change, be sure to get to the heart of your team's concerns.

No one is 'change ready' when the impact on them is negative. Try one or more of these strategies to help your employees respond to imposed changes at a faster pace. You can do it!



**Gregg Brown** is driven to change the way we think about change. Gregg is a best-selling author, inspiring speaker and award-winning expert in the fields of leadership, resilience and change. With a solid background in change management, Gregg has worked extensively in the US and Canada and spoken hundreds of times at conferences and led sessions with Fortune 500 clients in sectors such as finance, insurance, retail, real estate, health care as well as numerous public sector clients. Over 25 years ago, Gregg was part of the ground breaking team that opened the first wave of Starbucks stores in Canada.





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**Jessica Jones**



Company: **Conductix-Wampfler**  
 Program Name: **Mentoring Matters**  
 Program Directors: **Jessica Jones**  
 Visit: [www.conductix.us](http://www.conductix.us)



**Best Mentoring Program**

# A Great Program for Mentors and Mentees

Our editorial team interviewed *Jessica Jones* from *Conductix-Wampfler* at the *LEAD2018 Awards* this past February. Here are some excerpts from the exclusive interview.



## What is the overall objective of your program?

The first purpose of the program is to provide a trusted resource for new employees to serve Mentees in the following capacities:

- Help integrate into Conductix Culture
- Provide networking and social opportunities to meet those in the company that will be an integral part of their position
- Assist in goal setting and coach to reach goals and objectives
- Answer questions and be a trusted resource

A secondary purpose of this program is to provide Mentors to those in the company that are identified as High Potential Employee's and would like to learn and grow. Mentees have identified a career path they would like to pursue but need some

development opportunities to achieve these goals.

## Who do you impact with your program?

Regardless of the purpose of the mentorship, whether they are a new employee or high potential employee, the Mentors are selected based on the position the Mentee has, personality and skills that we feel the Mentee will benefit most from learning. Once selected, both the Mentor and Mentee are given training to help them be successful including online learning, scheduled coaching and feedback sessions three times throughout the one-year mentorship as well as a checklist of suggestions to ensure consistency.

Mentors and Mentees meet weekly for 12 weeks and then monthly (or as needed) for 9 months. Mentors also provide feedback to Supervisors

to help improve job satisfaction, address training needs as well as give performance information if applicable.

### What are the lessons you've learned this year from facilitating your program?

Participants really appreciate the program! Most Mentee's have given nothing but very positive reviews of the program. Participants feel that the program gets them up-to-speed quicker in their positions, helps them network with those most important relationships within the company and helps them feel more comfortable and part of the team. It's never easy to leave the comfort of an existing position or organization, so having a trusted resource from the first week of work to get them started and involved is appreciated!

For those that are mentored to grow within the company, they too have had positive comments. Many of these participants have secured a new position within the company. For those that haven't, they are growing and developing their skills and very happy to have the opportunity.

### How do you measure the return on investment and success of the program?

Conductix has a 7% turnover, which is much lower than the average manufacturing industry turnover of 15% or higher. We have also been able to make smarter decisions for new hires that aren't a good fit for the company. We would much rather



put them in another position that is better suited or worst case scenario, terminate and minimize lost costs. Lastly, the program has provided invaluable information back to supervisors and human resources to help build stronger training programs. These improved programs help new employees learn quicker resulting in safer employees, increased capacity and product as well as better safety records as a company.

For those that are being mentored to grow within the company, this too has had positive effects. We have been able to promote within the company on a regular basis due to the information and growth employees experience through mentoring. We get to keep and grow great talent instead of losing them. The tenured employee's knowledge

that we retain is also very critical to the success of the company as well.

### What lies ahead for the program and how will it continue to succeed?

Conductix-Wampfler plans to sustain and grow the Mentor Program by continuing to add training to Mentors to ensure they are providing the very most to Mentees, specifically addressing how to coach and give feedback. Lastly, like all successfully programs, we will continue to take the suggestions and feedback from current participants and implement changes as we see fit. ■

▶ Would you like to comment?

# Leaving A Positive Leadership Legacy In Your Life

## | Wield the five keys

 By **Jeffrey W. Foley**

Many successful business people have pondered their leadership legacy—how do they want to be remembered. And many of them struggle to find the answer.

Your legacy is defined by the impact you have on the lives of others after you are gone. It is how you will be remembered. We are all leaving a legacy and there is no escaping it. If asked, how would you respond to the question of, “What do you want your leadership legacy to be?”

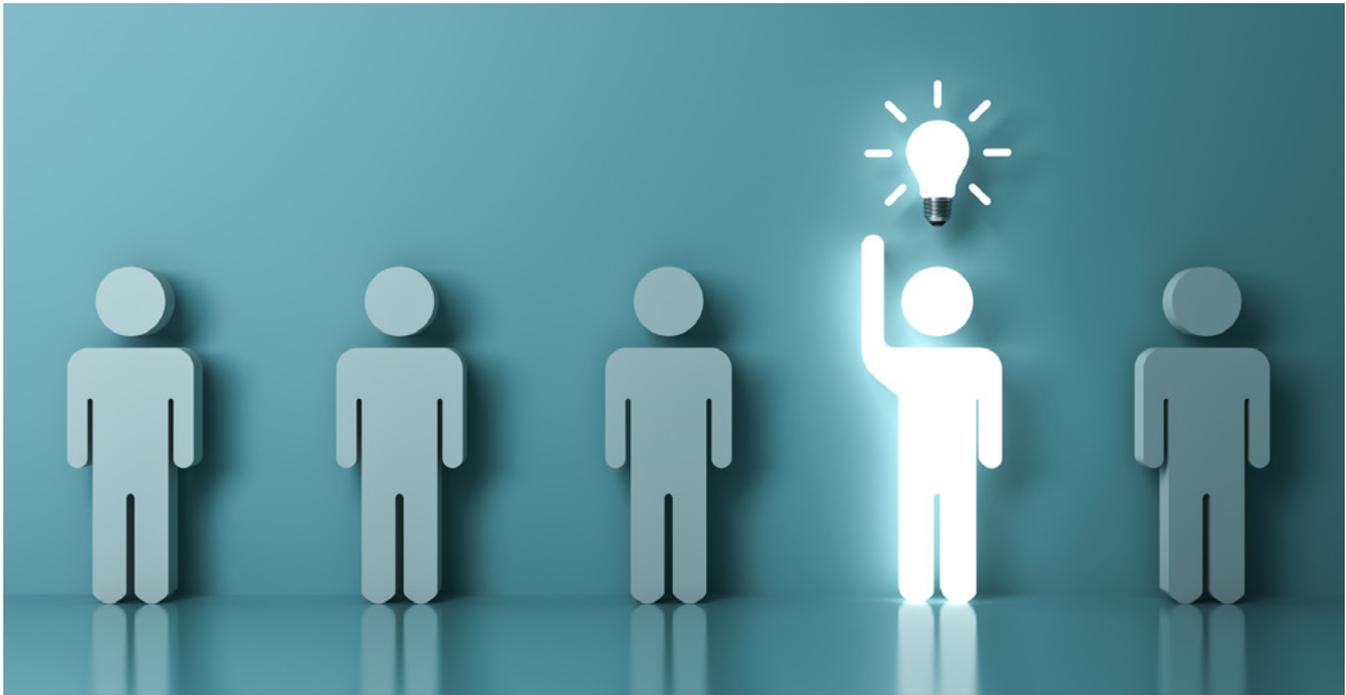
However old or young, you have the opportunity to raise the bar on the legacy you are leaving. Whether you are a senior executive, in a new position in your business, a new parent or grandparent, a student or recent graduate, you can choose your legacy. Or perhaps you have had a setback in your life, it is never too late to refocus on what you can change - your legacy.

The most effective business leaders are people who ultimately pursue five separate but related behaviors. These five can provide the framework for you in your pursuit of creating a positive leadership legacy in life.

- **Character.** Being a person of character is at the foundation of building trust with others. Character is who we are and what we stand for.

It is comprised of many things but its foundation is values; those deep beliefs like integrity, loyalty, and respect. Values do not change overnight; rather they are forged in one’s heart and soul over time. They ultimately drive how we behave. When you think of those people who left a wonderful legacy for you, was not character the essence of the memory?

- **Attitude.** Your attitude can change everything you do and everyone you meet. No one enjoys hanging out with chronic complainers or naysayers. A positive attitude can be a force multiplier in daily interactions or long-term strategies. A positive attitude creates passion, enthusiasm, and a call to action. It can change outcomes. You have a choice in your attitude. Make it positive!
- **Vision.** We all need a vision, or a plan, for our future. A saying attributed to the great Yogi Berra goes: “If you don’t know where you are going, you are likely to end up someplace else.” A vision provides clear direction for your future. Create your future by putting a mark on the wall of where you want to be 1, 2, 5 years from now. Craft an action plan that identifies your objectives and critical decision points. Establish a set of milestones that will help you achieve your objectives, and then celebrate each of their achievements as you progress along the way!



- **Excellence.** Both championship teams and successful businesses do not drift to greatness; they commit themselves to excellence. Commitment means tireless pursuit of doing your absolute best, every day, all the time. Excellence matters in everything you do. If you don't commit to excellence yourself and demand it from others you will create a culture of mediocrity. Most people are not interested in mediocrity.
- **Relationships.** Building trusted relationships with others trumps everything else when it comes to leaving a positive leadership legacy in your world. Serving the needs of others builds trust in relationships. You serve by knowing your people, genuinely caring for them, reaching out to those in need, sacrificing and celebrating with them, exercising humility, are all important aspects enabling strong relationships. Nowhere is trust between leaders and followers more profound than in the military. You can learn, just like US Military Academy graduates at West Point are required to learn, that is Schofield's Definition of Discipline. Major General John Schofield in his address to the Corps of Cadets in 1879: "The discipline which makes the soldiers of a free country reliable in battle is not to be gained by harsh or tyrannical treatment. On the contrary, such treatment is far more likely to destroy than to make an Army." You

know you will have achieved the goal of building trust when you can feel the spirit of cohesion that permeates the hearts of who serve together.

These five keys will provide a framework for establishing your approach to leaving a positive leadership legacy in your life. ON a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not so good, and 5 being great, how would you assess your behavior in each of the five areas? An action plan should follow your assessment that focuses you enables you to grow your ability where needed.

I wish you the best in your leadership journey.



**Jeffrey W. Foley** is a recognized speaker, executive leadership coach, and author of *Rules and Tools for Leaders*. He is a West Point graduate and retired as a Brigadier General having served thirty-two years in the Army. Drawing on his unique military experience, Jeff uses his singular insight to build better leaders.



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## Boosting Leadership Development and Business Results

*Our editorial team interviewed Sharon Johnson from Nationwide at the LEAD2018 Awards this past February. Here are some excerpts from the exclusive interview.*



### What is the overall objective of your program?

Executive coaching has proven to impact a leader's development and ultimately business results. It does so by leveraging learning that comes from a leader's experiences. Through coaching, executives have the opportunity to understand themselves and their experiences more fully, so they can intentionally and effectively use their strengths, improve areas of development and develop untested potential.

### Who do you impact with your program?

High performing executives.

### What are the lessons you've learned this year from facilitating your program?

Leveraging key stakeholders for feedback and development

suggestions throughout the coaching process is critical to the executives success.

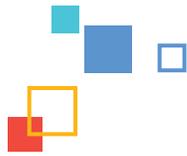
### How do you measure the return on investment and success of the program?

We use a mini 360 survey at mid-point and at the end of the coaching engagement.

### What lies ahead for the program and how will it continue to succeed?

We launched a 360 feedback process for our external coaches, so we can measure how they are coaching and demonstrating the ICF coaching standards. ■

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# Centralization vs. Decentralization

| Are you asking the right questions?



By **Jim Clemmer**

Operating inside the centralized versus decentralized paradox and finding the right balance has been a perpetual conundrum for many organizations. Deciding which model to use is often a values issue centered on issues of control, trust, and autonomy.

We're working with a high growth international resources company acquiring and adding new sites and divisions across the globe. Their new

CEO is leading a major culture shift. Part of that transformation is moving to a decentralized model with head office functions serving the local business units.

A strategy retreat of these key leaders was set up to agree on the company's evolving "decentralized model." A key starting point was getting agreement on the roles and responsibilities of the local business units and the roles and responsibilities of each

corporate function in providing local service and support as well as corporate governance. To prepare for these discussions and move the corporate leaders toward serving the local business units, functional leaders needed perceptions and feedback on their function's effectiveness along with current and expected services.

Albert Einstein once said, "If I had an hour to solve a problem and my life depended on the solution, I would spend the first 55 minutes determining the proper question to ask, for once I knew the proper question, I could solve the problem in less than five minutes." In preparing for a strategy retreat with corporate function and local business leaders, an assessment survey was developed.

Time and effort was invested in developing assessment questions that best framed the issues/opportunities and prepared everyone for the planning discussions. This survey was designed for learning and development only. It wasn't being used to measure performance or hold leaders accountable. Each local business unit rated each corporate function. Each functional leader also rated each corporate function including their own.

Their ratings were confidentially sent to us and only we saw the ratings and comments. We tallied the ratings and provided corporate functional leaders with a feedback summary along with personal one-on-one coaching. The focus was on helping corporate leaders prepare a development plan on how their function could best serve and support the local business units.

In conjunction with the confidential ratings, each local business unit provided for each corporate function, they were also asked these questions for each function:

- Please list the 3 to 5 most effective corporate services provided
- Please identify any critical shortcomings or serious gaps of this corporate function
- What additional services should this function provide to improve local usefulness/service levels?
- Other comments/observations/suggestions

## Operating inside the centralized versus decentralized paradox and finding the right balance has been a perpetual conundrum for many organizations.

If you're leading a support function like HR, IT, engineering, accounting, procurement, safety, training/OD, etc. you might want to use a variation of these questions. You could have a neutral third party consolidate and feedback the responses or use an anonymous reporting service like SurveyMonkey.

This is "servant leadership" in action. As Baseball Hall of Fame player and manager, Casey Stengel (nicknamed "The Old Professor"), put it, "managing is getting paid for home runs someone else hits."



For over three decades, [Jim Clemmer's keynote presentations, workshops, management team retreats, seven bestselling books, articles, and blog](#) have helped hundreds of thousands of people worldwide. The Clemmer Group is the Canadian strategic partner of Zenger Folkman, an award-winning firm best known for its unique evidence-driven, strengths-based system for developing extraordinary leaders and demonstrating the performance impact they have on organizations.



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**Melissa A. Thompson**

## MOOD:MEDIA

Organization: **Mood Media**

Program: **Mood Lunchtime Learning: Express MBA Program**

Program Administrators: **Melissa A Thompson, PHR, SHRM-CP, Human Resources Manager**

- Hillary Maxwell, Training & Development Manager
- Kimberly Wolff, VP Marketing & Business Operations
- Michelle Schoggin, Human Resources Manager

Visit: <https://us.moodmedia.com>



**Best Executive Coaching Program**

# Boosting Your Career Development

Our editorial team interviewed *Melissa A. Thompson* from *Mood Media* at the *LEAD2018 Awards* this past February. Here are some excerpts from the exclusive interview.



### What is the overall objective of your program?

The Mood Lunchtime Learning: Express MBA Program offers employees an opportunity to learn more about all aspects of the business as a means to further their career development at Mood. As the world's leading in-store media solutions company dedicated to

elevating the Customer Experience, Mood translated its creative prowess in the marketplace toward developing this 28-week training program. Led by executive staff, it caters to employees looking to increase their understanding of general business principles and practices (Finance, Marketing, Operations, Licensing, etc.) and helps them gain a more comprehensive understanding of our

### Video



**Melissa Thompson**

Mood Media

business and why we operate the way we do. The courses not only give students a chance to connect with Mood leadership, but also enable them to learn more about specialized areas and functions of the company.

The curriculum includes 16 virtual classroom sessions with department executives and leaders. At the end of the classroom sessions, teams are tasked with putting their newfound knowledge to use by preparing final projects that propose a solution to improve a product or process within the company, which are presented to Executive Staff and classmates. In this regard, the program also serves to empower employees and give them a direct voice with Company leadership regarding ideas for improvements.

### Who do you impact with your program?

This Mood Media program is targeted toward employees who are looking for opportunities for personal growth and professional development. It aims to provide up and comers in the organization with additional tools to understand the business, gain valuable access and exposure to company leaders, and make connections across departments.

### What are the lessons you've learned this year from facilitating your program?

The executive facilitators of the Mood program are diligent and dedicated to garnering feedback, suggestions and critiques from all

participants (students and faculty) in order to proactively make the program as successful and impactful as possible. Feedback surveys are distributed following each class in order to gauge how they resonated and uncover potential areas for improvements, which can be submitted anonymously so as to encourage true and honest opinions, even if critical. Since its inception in 2015, student feedback has resulted in us expanding the time given to students for their team project work, adjusting select course presentations as well as incorporating international employee students from our Romania office into the program.

### How do you measure the return on investment and success of the program?

Student feedback received in the end-of-program survey is consistently overwhelmingly positive, as many appreciated the chance to learn more about areas of the company that they wouldn't have learned about had they not participated. Students expressed that their general understanding of different business disciplines has definitely increased. Specifically, participants gained a deeper grasp on how things work at Mood and why we employ some business practices over others. From an interpersonal standpoint, the students also built lasting relationships with other members of their class – many in different departments that they never would have encountered otherwise – and are more comfortable approaching Leaders for insight and feedback due to the facetime they

had during the program. They are now encouraging co-workers to join upcoming classes as well as going directly to each other to collaborate and resolve issues.

This program reinforces that Mood leadership is invested in our staff. Additionally, the team project component has already led to uncovering some strong, purpose-driven proposals for improving the company that are actively being explored.

### What lies ahead for the program and how will it continue to succeed?

We are now in our third year of Lunchtime Learning: Express MBA and we continue to grow the program through the student surveys. We've found it to be quite successful because the students are driving the changes they desire with their open and honest feedback.

With the inclusion of our international employee students this year, we look to explore having international executive staff to teach or co-teach classes in the future. While the Lunchtime Learning: Express MBA has been a great success for us, we have also built other training programs under the umbrella like our LEAD – Manager/Supervisor training and will continue to do as such. We have several concepts around inter-departmental training that could be a great addition to the Mood offering as well. ■

▶ Would you like to comment?

# Leadership In Exponential Times

## | Five critical behavioral guidelines for leaders

 By **Joan Marques**

I recently had the opportunity to make a close comparison in leadership needs between two nations that operate on completely different levels: the USA and Suriname, in South America. In many regards, it would seem as if these two nations reside on different planets. Yet, at the conclusion of a keynote speech I was conducting in Suriname, I was bombarded with questions that revealed to me just how much commonalities there are in leadership needs, regardless of development, size, or operation levels of any society.

Here are some of my findings about the needs that exist in today's and near future's leadership performance:

Leadership is no longer limited to the acts of those who happen to fulfill direction in formal settings. There are many assigned "leaders" (corporate, national and regional) that have no clue about the behavior real leaders should exert. In our day and age, we should realize that leadership begins with our

own performance when no one else sees or hears what we do. True leadership is an act of responsibility, drive, resilience, and moral awareness, developed over time, and continuously polished to the current and future needs of society. Wrapped in this perspective we find elements of compassion, emotional intelligence, empathy, and a will to constructively elevate the living and performance qualities of as broad a group of stakeholders (human and non-human) possible.

Leadership requires frequent and clear communication. Within this scope, it is also critical to understand that communication is not a one-way street. There should be room for reciprocity in respect, clarity, good intentions, and understanding. There should be an opportunity to clear all "noise" that inevitably emerges when communication happens. Good communication in leadership regard happens in a timely manner, with constructive aims, and with fairness, honesty, and courtesy. Today's and future

generations of "followers" are well-educated, determined people, who oftentimes fulfill leadership positions in different settings as well.

Leadership is most admirable when it is implemented with a balance of dignity and simplicity. Dignity illuminates the way you carry yourself, knowing that there are numerous avenues through which your actions can and will be exposed, and understanding that today's people, more than ever before, deliberately choose who they want to see and accept as their leaders. Simplicity enhances accessibility. It sets those to whom you provide leadership at ease, and reveals to them that you want to connect with them at a level that ensures collective and constructive growth.

Leadership is a mission of inspiration, to the self as well as to others. Self-inspiration can be a challenge at times when setbacks seem to be abundant. Yet, leaders are aware that there will always be sunshine after the rain, and

they look for ways to re-emerge with refreshed vitality. Inspiring others can also bring challenges, since not everyone gets inspired by the same words, acts, or actions. Yet, as long as you focus, and demonstrate goodwill, and as long as you carry yourself in a manner that others experience as authentic, you have a good chance that you will be a source of inspiration.

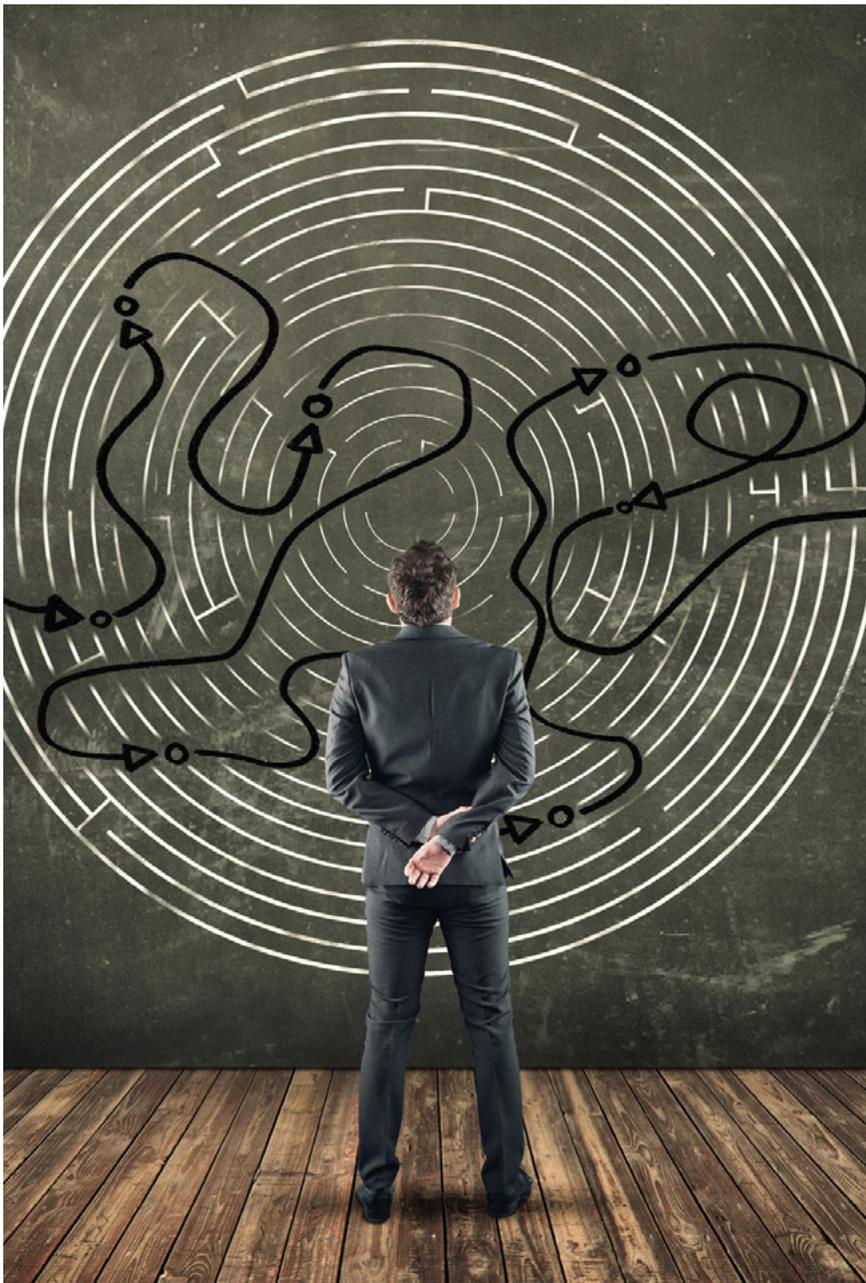
Leadership is an act of intense focus. There are multiple interpretations to the concept of focus here:

Focus on your own path: are you doing what fuels your passion? Do you feel content with your overall purpose? Do you see a future in what you are doing?

Focus on others: Do you pay attention to the actions of those who matter in your performance? Do you listen to others with undivided attention? Do you reflect on your daily encounters in order to evaluate their purpose?

Focus on directions: Do you have a clear aim regarding the direction in which you and your dependent are heading? Do you keep an eye on alternatives in case current directions don't work out?

These five findings are, of course, not by far a complete list of leadership in our times. Yet, hopefully they will encourage you to consider thinking of additional qualities, tasks, and behaviors that are incorporated in leadership, the way you consider it most appropriate in a world that moves toward greater awareness, increased compassion, and enhanced betterment for the quality of life for all the living.



Joan Marques is Dean and Professor of Management at Woodbury University School of Business. Her most recent book is titled, *"Ethical leadership: Progress with a Moral Compass"* (Routledge, 2017).



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**Kristen Knowles**



Organization: **Asurion**

Program: **Masters**

Program Director: **Shawn Hawley**

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**Best Executive Coaching Program**

## Developing Team Members at Every Level

Our editorial team interviewed *Kristen Knowles* from *Asurion* at the LEAD2018 Awards this past February. Here are some excerpts from the exclusive interview.



### What is the overall objective of your program?

Masters, Asurion's leadership development program, strengthens and develops team members on all levels of the organization,

driving improved engagement and customer experience. Since 2011 the program has introduced over 750 leaders to the concept of flexible, tailored coaching to help team members achieve goals and deliver customer satisfaction.





**Who do you impact with your program?**

All levels of our organizational department has exposure to the Masters program, including front-line employees, managers, and senior leaders. As we developed Masters in the early stages, stakeholders from the front-line levels, senior and executive levels, as well as the management levels were all consulted regularly regarding their training experiences. What was working? What was not? Most importantly, what did they need the most that was not present in any of

the current models? This meant that the employees most directly affected by our new training initiative were also involved in a large portion of the development process.

**Front line supervisors:** Receive training to support them as new people leaders. Courses are offered to teach them the basics: coaching, feedback, how to develop their employees, communication skills, and managing excuses.

**Managers:** Supported by coaching consultants who ensure that the

skills that they (and their direct reports of supervisors) are learning are being implemented and adhered to. Coaching consultants also practice with the managers and offer guidance if they are unsure whether they are hitting the mark on our coaching requirements.

Senior leaders Supported through Masters-led pop-up courses which offer quick, digestible lessons to help them both reinforce the coaching basics to their teams, and also provide continued development opportunities.



### What are the lessons you've learned this year from facilitating your program?

We've learned so much in the past year, through the launch of a new certification level. Here are the top takeaways shared by our developers and faculty.

"Leadership Development is a skill that most people don't know they want until they have been in a course. Once they take one course, they keep asking for more!"

"It's easy to forget that coaching is different from managing, and our courses help remind our leaders of this and regroup them."

"Sometimes it's not the content but the gathering of new people and ideas that get people motivated to practice their leadership skills."

### How do you measure the return on investment and success of the program?

The first business goal linked to Masters is employee retention. Precision coaching through the Masters program has shown clear improvements in employee attrition rates. For every percent increase in coaching we were able to drive 0.107% increase in monthly attrition. This is attributed to our standard of ongoing feedback.

The second goal that Masters has influenced is providing valuable customer service. Focusing on strong, consistent coaching has led to happier, more self-directed employees who find improved ways to assist our customers. To date, feedback scores have improved dramatically as supervisors move through the coaching program. Success is revealed in the customer NPS which is at an all-time high, conversely, customer level of effort

is at an all-time low. This attention to how our leaders coach and develop our people has created an enriched environment for our associates and customers.

### What lies ahead for the program and how will it continue to succeed?

In 2018 Masters has joined with Asurion's Everyday Leadership team to promote and facilitate Pop Ups: short, approachable, fun, and engaging facilitator-led courses for managers and Senior Leaders. One of our goals through this partnership is to help bring awareness and drive more frequent performance conversations, moving away from performance appraisal. We also plan on measuring the attendance of leadership development courses against key KPIs such as attrition, manager effectiveness, etc. The hope is that leaders will speak a common language—this will help shape our culture into one that is inclusive, motivating, and one that facilitates others' success.

In sum, the ongoing evolution of our program, positive feedback, and commitment to leadership development at all levels all ensure that this growth will continue. And we're that confident because we're continuing to watch it happen. As we roll out the next Masters certification level right now, we're confident that our potential for leadership strength will continue to improve across the company at all levels. ■

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# Why Your **Company's Standards** Aren't High Enough

**“Have no fear of perfection. You'll never reach it.” - Salvador Dali**

 By **Kevin Lawrence**

**Y**ou need to get what you want—your business depends on it.

You wouldn't be where you are today without a keen intuition about what makes customers happy. That gut sense is absolutely crucial to who you are as a leader. You've used this sense to set the standards that make your company successful.

Never back down from these standards. For anyone. Ever. Greatness requires exacting standards, and your customers love you for this—even though other people think you're a pain in the butt sometimes.

As a leader, you need to get comfortable saying exactly what's on your mind, even when it's what no one wants to hear.



You cannot win if you accept mediocrity. So you need to be a bold, clear voice articulating what excellence looks like. This can (and should) be done kindly and respectfully.

Get your expectations out on the table early with employees, consultants, suppliers and other collaborators. When something isn't quite right with someone's performance, tell them right away. Don't let it fester, and then explode later from frustration.

There's a shocking lack of honest conversation in the business world. It's an epidemic. Leaders have too many pent up opinions. Teams hang in the balance wondering how they're doing.

People want real feedback. They want to do the best job they possibly can, but need to know where the bar is set.

And please, don't bother sweetening hard feedback with forced compliments, before and after. People see this coming a mile away, and most prefer the simple truth.

### **Practice Graceful Disappointment, and Never Lower Your Standards**

People will try to meet your needs, and sometimes they will fail. You need to accept this reality and develop workarounds.

Backing down and accepting sub-standard performance is not the right approach. Instead,

practice graceful disappointment and re-requesting.

I'll admit I'm an extreme case. I'm disappointed in the customer service I receive 98% of the time. If I didn't carefully monitor my attitude and behaviour, I would go through life as a big jerk. But this is no way to live, and it wouldn't help my cause.

When shoddy service happens in restaurants or stores, I do my best to be compassionate, and not take out my frustration on the person trying to help me.

I remind myself employee training might be lacking. I remember that everyone has bad days. People are often doing the best they can.

I've learned to calmly explain when something isn't quite right, and make a specific request about how to fix it. I make sure my word choices focus on the outcome, not anything personal about the individual, or their performance.

### **State Your Expectations Up Front**

Don't let people flail about guessing what makes you happy. It is a waste of everyone's time.

Get clear about the standards that matter to you most, and write them down so they can be easily shared with your team.

You know who's great at articulating their needs? Musicians. These people know how to get what they want. Van Halen is famous for an extensive

written list of needs, including M&Ms at every venue – but *absolutely no brown ones*. Mary J. Blige requires Red Vine liquorice, Diet Dr. Pepper, and Aveda candles wherever she plays.

Think of your standards list as your very own tour rider. The more specific you are, the more likely you'll get what you want.

Your list should be required reading for everyone who works with you, including full-time employees, contractors, consultants and suppliers.

Make sure you include big picture stuff like your company's core values, with a simple explanation of what these mean. Your core values should give people a clear understanding of the behaviours that are acceptable to you.

Don't bother with ambiguous, stuffy or stereotypical core values (e.g. 'superior customer service' and 'innovation'). Vagueness won't help anyone align to your expectations. Also make sure you include nitty-gritty instructions about your personal preferences.

For example, I make sure my team knows I prefer text to email communication, and phone calls to in-person meetings.

Some CEOs stipulate that meetings should never exceed 60 minutes, and must end with at least five clear action items. Others have extremely specific guidelines about product development and delivery.

The key is to know yourself, and know what drives you crazy, when it's not done correctly.

### Know When to Fold 'em

Over time it will become clear who is capable of meeting your expectations, and who isn't. Even with patient requests and re-requests, you'll find some people can't meet the bar. It's just not in them.

In situations where you've been crystal clear, and someone can't deliver, you need to modify their role so they can deliver, or find someone else entirely.

Do not beat yourself up about this. Some people aren't a fit for you.

It's a big world out there. Someone else will be able to meet your needs. Break ties. Test out some other options.

Most leaders aren't nearly as tough on their teams as people think. In fact, if you're like most, you've gone to great measures to avoid conflict with your direct reports, because you care about these people. You don't want to offend anyone. It's understandable—you're human.

Most of us would rather have a root canal than say something difficult to someone we care about.

But the reality is, sometimes people do things that aren't

okay. They do things that make you frustrated, uncomfortable or angry. You can't let important transgressions go unaddressed, or resentment will build up inside you until, one day, you snap.

Tough conversations are the nastiest annoyances you'll ever have to handle as a leader. There's no way out. Just do what needs to be done and move on.

The secret is to find language that makes it easier for you to deliver the information, and easier for the recipient to hear it. Be direct and compassionate, not just one or the other. Focus on facts and feelings, not opinions. Opinions only lead to disaster.

• • •



**Kevin Lawrence** is known for combining business acumen with a no-holds-barred, tell-it-like-it-is style. With a career spanning twenty years and four continents, he's helped hundreds of CEOs and executives break through challenges, grow their companies, and find personal success along the way. Lawrence is a Coach Emeritus with Gazelles, the world-renowned strategic planning and coaching organization, and a key contributor to the book *Scaling Up (Mastering the Rockefeller Habits 2.0)*.



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**Heather Brown**



**Michelle Jackson**



Company: **City of Lynchburg**

Program: **Government on the GO!**

Program Director: **Heather Brown, Director of Human Resources**

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**Best Use of Classroom and Traditional Training**

## Helping to **View the City in an Exciting Way!**

Our editorial team interviewed *Heather Brown* and *Michelle Jackson* from *City of Lynchburg* at the *LEAD2018 Awards* this past February. Here are some excerpts from the exclusive interview.



### **W**hat is the overall objective of your program?

The City of Lynchburg's new employees are required to complete seven foundational classes within their first year of employment. In

late 2016, we decided to take a look at these classes and how we could make them more engaging. One of the classes was Civics, where employees learned about government and what it means to be

### Video



a public servant. We wanted to find a way for employees to learn this information as well as see the City in a different and more exciting way.

Through Government on the GO! we are providing employees with knowledge about working for the City of Lynchburg while they are on a bus tour. Our departments are in different locations, so this tour gives employees a chance to see where they are located, as well as learn more about them. Employees can follow along with the tour on their smartphone, and between learning about departments and landmarks we give them a short civics lesson.

### Who do you impact with your program?

This is one of seven foundational classes that new employees are required to take within their first year of employment. Any employee can sign up to take Government on the GO!, but our target audience is new employees.

### What are the lessons you've learned this year from facilitating your program?

Since this course is not in a classroom, our biggest challenge has been logistics. We are using a bus that belongs to our Parks and Recreation department, and it only holds 12 people. There have been times where we have had a larger group and another department paid to have a bigger bus. We have been fortunate to have an employee from Parks and Recreation as our driver,



and an employee from Community Development as our tour guide. We've had a positive experience with this class so far, and learned that we have a lot of people who work for the City who are willing to use their talents to help us out.

### How do you measure the return on investment and success of the program?

We have received positive feedback from participants. They have said that this is a fun, fresh new class and enjoy being able to learn more about the City. Approximately 50% of our full-time employees live outside of Lynchburg, so they may not be very familiar with our City when they come to work. We have been able to utilize resources within our organization

so we have not had to spend extra money to develop and sustain the class.

### What lies ahead for the program and how will it continue to succeed?

We recently revamped our new employee orientation and decided to include Government on the GO! as part of that program. Employees are now able to have a tour of the City on their first day. We had to change the order of the route and the website to make this happen. In order for the class to continue to be a success, we will stay flexible and open to changes when needed. ■

▶ Would you like to comment?



**Frank Brennan**



Company: **Reynolds Lake Oconee**  
 Program Name: **Fearless: Creating Storyleaders**  
 Program Directorss: **Frank Brennan**  
 Visit: [www.reynoldslakeoconee.com](http://www.reynoldslakeoconee.com)



**Best Use of Classroom and Traditional Training**



**Innovation in Deployment of Leadership**

## Conquering Leadership Fears

Our editorial team interviewed *Frank Brennan* from *Reynolds Lake Oconee* at the *LEAD2018 Awards* this past February. Here are some excerpts from the exclusive interview.



**W**hat is the overall objective of your program?

Overcoming the fears leaders face when communicating, empowering,

coaching, counseling, and providing feedback to their Storytellers while learning how to effectively prioritize tasks, praise their staff, and train on accountability.

### Video



**Frank Brennan**

Reynolds Lake Oconee (Biltmore Hotel)



**Who do you impact with your program?**

130 Managers and Supervisor positions

**What are the lessons you've learned this year from facilitating your program?**

Leaders are usually forgotten when it comes to training & development. So much fear exists when expectations are high for leaders who are thrown into their role. We began developing training manuals and standard operating procedures specifically for managers to ease their fears as they enter their roles based on the

feedback and insights gained from facilitating this program.

**How do you measure the return on investment and success of the program?**

We use leadership surveys to Kirkpatrick's Level 2 of learning and created quarterly small group sessions to evaluate Level 3 behavioral changes in result of the program. We dive deeper into each specific topic presented in Fearless and brainstorm ways to achieve the desired results in the six areas of focus: communication, prioritization, empowerment, feedback, Coaching, and Accountability.

**What lies ahead for the program and how will it continue to succeed?**

"Fearless" will be adapted to meet the needs of a much larger company with different leadership challenges. It will birth a sister program entitled "Courageous" which will penetrate the heart of leadership through experiential based learning techniques. ■

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