



Words of Wisdom on Getting Extraordinary Things Done in Organizations

In the latest edition of their book *The Leadership Challenge*, James Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner offer this advice:

There are no shortages of challenging opportunities. In these extraordinary times, the challenges seem only to be increasing in number and complexity. All generations confront their own serious threats and receive their own favorable circumstances. The abundance of challenges is not the issue. It's how we respond to them that matters. Through our responses to challenges, we all have the potential to seriously worsen or profoundly improve the world in which we live and work. With the kind of leadership excellence we've observed in over 25 years of research, we're going to bet on the latter.

There are countless opportunities for each of us to make a difference. For instance, there are opportunities to:

- Provide direction and support to our teams during uncertain times.
- More fully utilize the talents of our colleagues.
- Set a positive example of what honesty and ethics mean in daily life.
- Find a better balance in our always-on, 24/7 lives.
- Put the innocence and wisdom of different generations into our workplace.

Excerpted, with permission of the publisher, from *The Leadership Challenge*, 4th Edition, by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. Copyright 2007 by John Wiley & Sons. Published by Jossey-Bass, San Francisco.

Leaders Who Transform People and Deliver Profits

BY LORETTA LOVE HUFF



An outstanding leader knows how to use **values, vision, and execution** to lead others in the workplace—and set the stage for their transformation and corporate profitability.

Here's how values, vision, and execution can play a part in your role as a leader.

Values: According to James Collier and William Lazier (*Beyond Entrepreneurship*), core values define what is important in both business and life, how business should be conducted, its view of humanity, its role in society, the way the world works, and what is to be held inviolate. Values come from inside you. They guide every decision you make; they define your priorities and shape your actions.

How often do you talk about the values you cherish? It may be easier to address tasks at hand than deal with the intimacy created when sharing what you really value, but the return is worth the unease it may bring.

Vision: A vision held within the confines of one's private mind, while perhaps personally inspiring, will fail to illuminate and transform the world. Visions must be clearly communicated in order to fulfill their potential. "A shared vision, especially one that is intrinsic," Peter Senge says in *The Fifth*

Dimension, "uplifts people's aspiration. Shared visions foster risk-taking and experimentation. They compel courage so naturally that people don't even realize the extent of their own courage."

Execution: *The American Heritage Dictionary* defines execution as "the manner, style, or result of performance". Leaders who inspire those around them make things happen. They steer organizations onto a better course of action. They not only alter the destination but also reconstruct the road traveled to get there.

Values Action: To connect with the people around you—

1. Share three things that are really important to you, both personal and professional.
2. Ask others what they value.
3. Listen carefully; you may have a lot in common.

Vision Action: On a "big picture" level, ask yourself questions like—

1. What qualities do you want to bring forth in your organization?
2. What is the legacy you want to leave?
3. What kind of person would you have to become to create that vision for the world?

continued on next page

Converting Learning into Behaviors

Dr. Donald L. Kirkpatrick's four levels have become an industry standard for determining the effectiveness of any training initiative. His son Jim is continuing his work on transforming learning into behaviors. The two recently wrote a new book *Implementing the Four Levels: A Practical Guide for Effective Evaluation of Training Programs* (Berrett-Koehler Publishing, 2007).

During a recent visit to AMA, Don explained, "The new book helps to clarify the role of managers in helping direct reports gain from learning initiatives."

The Kirkpatricks pointed to the importance of this. In their opinion, it calls for organizations to move beyond Level 1 or reaction to training and Level 2 or learning to Level 3, which represents behavioral change. According to Don, research by the American Society for Training suggests that only 25% of learning programs consider level three.

In Jim's opinion, the problem is that most companies are "pretty much stuck in a pattern of doing Levels 1 and 2 because they see themselves as training departments or corporate universities; they don't recognize their role as business partners. Rather, they believe that their responsibility ends when people leave the classroom."

Jim explained, "Level 3 is almost a missing link because nobody takes ownership of it. Business people say that they are in charge of results, which is Level 4. Training people say that they

are in charge of Levels 1 and 2. Nobody is leveraging what I consider the most important level—level 3—where the training gets executed."

According to Jim, "There's a gap—a big gap—between the training and the business, with business people sending staff to training and then the training people train them and send them back to their jobs. There isn't any good collaboration to make sure that the people trained apply



what they learned in order for the business to achieve the results it anticipated when it sent its people to training."

How can managers get more involved in the training process? What can they do before a person goes for training and after he or she comes back?

Don advised, "Managers need to determine the reason for the training—whether it is managing change or build-

ing teams, or increasing empowerment. Via a survey, they can determine where there is a great need for something, some need, or no need at all. They, then, can rank order the learning initiatives and specific skills required." Thus, managers get involved in the design and development of programs.

Next, said Jim, "business needs to hold people who attend programs accountable for what they learned and for applying it on the job, supporting them in doing it."

Specifically, the Kirkpatricks suggest the following responsibilities for managers:

Before the program, they should discuss the program with participants, pointing out specific areas that the participant should pay attention during the learning experience. Further, they should recommend that the participant come back with a list of any practical ideas that the organization could implement.

After the program, managers should expect training participants to offer a brief summary of what they learned and share that with their colleagues. They should meet with the participants and identify relevant material for either the individual's job or department's performance. The more time they spend with trainees, the more the training benefits the employees and company.

As the Kirkpatricks observed, "The learning of knowledge and skills is of limited value unless ways are found to get participants to transfer those learnings to key behaviors."

Leaders Who Transform People and Deliver Profits

continued from preceding page

4. What tasks will your vision require you to do?

5. With whom must this vision be shared?

A 19th century wise woman said, "A vision without a task is but a dream. A task without a vision is drudgery. A vision with a task is the hope of the world."

Execution Action: To make things happen, start at the initial state and perform each action of a generated plan—

1. Assess conditions
2. Act!
3. Detect the effects of action.
4. Monitor results and improve processes.

Follow these actions and you'll be on your way to embodying and demonstrating stronger leadership, transforming your people, and generating revenue beyond your expectations.

Loretta Love Huff works with leaders, business owners, and teams on performance improvement and leadership development. For more information: loretta@emeraldharvest.com

Strategic Risk Management: A Discipline Worth Corporate Study

Risk isn't something to avoid—it is something to manage. So Adrian Slywotzky observes in his book, *The Upside: The 7 Strategies for Turning Big Threats into Growth Breakthroughs*. As he demonstrates, risk can be turned around to achieve major breakthroughs. His book, written with Karl Weber, is based on original research on companies around the world, including Tsutaya, Continental AG, and Samsung.

In a recent interview, Slywotzky, a director of Oliver Wyman, described the most common strategic risks and provided examples of specific countermeasures that corporate risk masters have used to turn the moment of maximum risk into the moment of maximum opportunity.

Project risks. Most companies overestimate their odds for success. A few know the true odds and invest appropriately. He says, "They use such techniques as a 'stepping-stone' technique, organizing a series of project efforts, each building on the previous one, to change the odds in their favor."

Customer risk. Today's smartest companies are able to see the next customer shift and respond before it occurs. Their secret is knowledge. Sporadic data equal high risk, whereas continuous proprietary information on customers means low risk.



Transition risk. Said Slywotzky, "Virtually every industry will face a landscape-changing shift from one technology or business design to another. The key to survival is 'double-betting,' hedging bets by putting money on two or more outcomes."

Unique competitive risk. There's nothing like having to face a powerful competitor in your market. "If you can't beat the company at its game," said Slywotzky, "then invent a different game." As a case in point, Slywotzky mentioned how Wal-Mart became incredibly good at logistics, information technology, and gathering and using customer information, thereby outmaneuvering the Price Club and an assortment of regional competitors.

Brand risk. Slywotzky noted that today's brands are more vulnerable than ever. To defend and grow them, organizations need to do more than invest more in advertising. They need to build and service great products, develop a great business design, and support a relevant and appealing brand signal. Slywotzky calls this the "Golden Triangle of brand value."

Industry risk. Sometimes, entire industries become no-profit zones, according to Slywotzky. In his opinion, the answer here lies in collaboration with rivals. Too often, he said, this logical solution is taken seven to ten years too late.

Stagnation risk. When markets mature, growth slows and ultimately ends. The answer here is "demand innovation," in Slywotzky's opinion. "Demand innovation," he said, "is about focusing your economic creativity on finding ways that expand your company's value to customers, thereby radically broadening your market and strengthening your relationship with them."

In Slywotzky's opinion, strategic risk management is critical because of the cost of growth initiatives that failed or, sometimes even more frequently, unanticipated strategic threats that weren't well managed. "We're getting to the point today when most companies spend most of their time recovering value lost rather than creating new growth," he said.

A Dozen Ways to Become a Contagious Leader

BY MONICA WOFFORD

What you do as a leader is extremely important. Why? Because your behavior is contagious!

Here are a dozen ways you can impact those with whom you work and become a contagious leader:

1. Refer to your employees as "those people who work with you."
2. Stop calling employees "my employees" or "my people."
3. Set goals with others.

4. Teach your followers to write their own goals down.
5. Ensure goals are measurable. Otherwise, they are worthless.
6. Hire the right people for the right jobs.
7. Encourage mentors at all levels.
8. Provide value to others before you demand value from them.
9. Don't assume you know what people value.

10. Be genuinely interested in the needs of others.
11. Have sincere desire, authenticity, and integrity in what you do.
12. Allow for the opinions and ideas of others in all matters.

Monica Wofford heads up Monica Wofford International, Inc. She is the author of *Contagious Leadership*, *Contagious Confidence*, and *Contagious Customer Service*. For more information: www.monicawofford.com



Here's what you'll find on the
AMA Members-only Website www.amamember.org

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Understanding and Adapting to a New Organizational Culture. Joining a new company is like moving to a foreign country: the sooner you learn the customs and language of the new land, the more successful you'll be. Use these strategies from The Five O'Clock Club as a roadmap.

LEADERSHIP

The Seven Secrets of Inspirational Leaders. Carmine Gallo shares what he discovered while researching his new book *Fire Them Up*—how the most respected and successful leaders inspire their employees, clients, and investors.

HR/TRAINING

How to Navigate the Sea of "Too Much Information." TMI (too much information) during a job interview is almost certain to take the discussion off course, away from the real business at hand: whether or not the candidate is suitable for the job being offered.

SALES & MARKETING

Eleven Selling Secrets. Whether you're selling number 2 pencils or IT consulting services, incorporate these 11 tactics into your sales plan and watch your number of sales and customer satisfaction ratings soar.

Book of the Month

Disagreements, Disputes, and All-Out War: 3 Simple Steps for Dealing with Any Kind of Conflict
 by Gini Graham Scott
 (AMACOM, 2007).



The potential for conflict exists in practically every interaction. Scott shows readers how to identify the reasons behind the conflict, recognize and control the emotional factors, and find the best solution.

AMA Conferences/Special Events Calendar

JAN. 16, WEBCAST • Effective Performance Reviews: What Managers Can Do to Start the Year Off Right. For most managers, the toughest discussions are coming up soon in the form of annual performance reviews. Turning these from a difficult conversation into a positive, goal-setting activity requires planning and practice. This Webcast provides rules of thumb to help you prepare for your discussions in a way that invites balanced participation, stays true to your message, focuses on performance, and reduces defensiveness.

JAN. 23, WEBCAST • Building a Qualified Sales Pipeline: What's Working Now.

Finding and qualifying new leads is critical to driving your sales success. This Webcast explores fresh prospecting strategies to jumpstart your 2008 business: who to call, what to say, powerful networking techniques and proven approaches to using customer-centered messaging.

JAN. 30, WEBCAST • Charles Handy on Life, Work and Organizations. Charles Handy is one of the world's most influential living management thinkers, having inspired and enlightened others for decades. In this Webcast, he shares his special brand of wisdom, giving you uncommon insight into

management...as well as the choices we all have to make in our lives.

FEB. 20, WEBCAST • Making the Transition from Selling to Sales Management. Sales organizations are often compared to sports teams. As sales manager, your role is to arm your team with the tools and resources it needs to attain peak performance and stay in the game. This Webcast explores the new skills, expectations, and characteristics associated with successful sales managers in addition to proven techniques for managing in, out, up, and down your organization to accelerate sales performance.

115129

Executive Matters
Member Newsletter
 December 2007 Issue

1601 Broadway
 New York, NY 10019-7420

AMA
 American Management
 Association International®

Nonprofit
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 American Management
 Association International