

Words of Wisdom A "Psychological Recession"

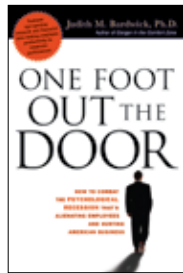
In her book *One Foot Out the Door*, author Dr. Judith M. Bardwick writes:

"Faced with the reality of a reasonably sudden but permanent loss of economic security, the nation has been gripped by a sense of dread. What started as a feeling of economic vulnerability has generalized into a deep, pervasive fear that there's no way for anyone to make themselves safe because there seems to be no way to regain control over what's happening to them.

"Feeling that way, people have become preoccupied with trying to make sense out of the chaos of their lives, as if by understanding it, they can somehow control it. But this isn't working, and it never will work. Paradoxically, people who are profoundly scared seek out worst-case examples, because that confirms their world view and gives them a sense, however fleeting, that they were right about something.

"Focusing on fears only reinforces them. In understandable but irrational ways, people who are frightened move ever-forward toward panic. In this way, a psychological recession is self-fulfilling. The discourse of threat and gloom is never challenged, which only ratchets upward the self-fulfilling nature of the phenomenon."

For the truth, check out *One Foot Out the Door* by Dr. Judith M. Bardwick. Copyright 2008, Judith M. Bardwick, Ph.D. Published by AMACOM, AMA's book division. For more information, visit www.amanet.org/books



Create a Successful Change with a "Power Team"

BY SUSAN BULKELEY BUTLER

Change is happening around us every day. Like the energy and financial crises, it seems many of the changes are bad. No wonder leaders are trying to encourage positive change—that is, change that enhances corporate services, profits, and productivity.



"team" is continually evaluating performance. Leaders must also provide advice and counsel throughout. Every day, successes and setbacks are being made by people in business. Work hard to make sure

the accomplishments are the former and not the latter.

Summing up, what are the key ingredients to successful change? Begin with the end in mind, be a good leader, and create an "empowered" team.

How do you create a "Power Team"?

Making Change Happen

How do you make successful change happen?

Using my "Make-It-Happen" model, it is simple. There are four steps:

1. Set a clear vision. As Steven Covey said, "Begin with the end in mind." So, create a compelling picture of what you want to achieve, then succinctly describe your vision, including changes needed, and finally, how and when they are going to happen.

2. Create your team. Great visions require people working collaboratively. Your task is to empower and marshal the people to help realize your vision.

3. Develop a plan. Use your "team" to align the vision with clear and precise steps, deadlines, and deliverables. This keeps everyone on track. The team must be vigilant about progress; if things change, targets change. Leadership, as well as the implementation team, must carefully monitor the plan.

4. Navigate the journey. Achieving the vision is a series of daily steps. The

Creating a Power Team

Business is a team sport. It is crucial for team members to be respected, "to see and buy into the vision," to be involved in successful change initiatives, to be well networked, and to know the nature of the business.

All of this requires the right team members. Likewise, you need the right team leaders.

To fully empower a team, leaders must lead, not manage. They must delegate the roles and responsibilities so the team not only feels but is actually empowered. Responsibility for success is felt at all levels and help, if needed, is readily available.

My organization needed to provide a toolkit for businesses to enable skill development for employees impacted

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Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders

BY WILLIAM F. BAKER AND MICHAEL O'MALLEY

The four qualities that great leaders are able to instill in others are:

- Self-confidence
- Self-control
- Self-awareness
- Self-determination

These four qualities—confidence, control, awareness, and determination—are not entirely independent. For example, leaders who are self-aware, who are attuned to their thoughts and feelings, in the context in which they are generated, are better equipped to offer calm and measured responses—that is, to stay controlled. Those who are confident are better equipped to take personal responsibility for outcomes and to take necessary action accordingly, without prodding from others. Taken together, these qualities form a cluster of abilities that others may admire as aplomb and maturity.

Self-Confidence

Successful executives naturally do not believe that they control the vicissitudes of life. What they can influence, however, is the way unpredictable occurrences are converted into meaningful experiences. It is only when the unsuspected is welcomed that it can be met with assuredness and the prospect of opportunity. Indeed, confidence in their abilities creates these situations in the first place. Those people who greet their worlds with confidence

are much more adventuresome and have the personal resources (and resourcefulness) to meet new acquaintances, locate promising deals, and acquire interesting snippets of facts—even when stumbled upon by chance.



Self-Control

A well-adjusted adult is able to control his impulses in order to maintain a healthy perspective on what is most important and advantageous to his welfare in the long run. A well-adjusted leader, who is presented daily with a host of distractions, must be able to cut through the clutter and avoid being derailed or consumed by temptations and ancillary issues. The proverbial low-hanging fruit that many managers reach for may be bad apples. Often these are diversions that use up precious time and resources and sidetrack leaders from the company's main focus.

Self-Awareness

Great leaders recognize self-awareness and personal examination as virtues because these keep leaders attuned to the kinds of people they wish to be. Conversely, leaders who become divorced from their moral centers are able to justify any act, no matter how reprehensible it may be.

Self-Determination

By self-determination, we mean that ownership of results resides with each individual. Responsibility for one's actions can't be carved up or displaced. It means there is always choice.

Rather than hold people accountable, some managers often let employees off the hook by rationalizing or avoiding employees' failings and thereby becoming duplicitous in excuse-making. But if you really want others to succeed, you have to fight your way through all of the obstacles that prevent honest feedback, and to combat the tendencies people have to deny personal obligation.

William F. Baker, Ph.D., is president emeritus of Educational Broadcasting Corporation. Michael O'Malley, Ph.D., is executive editor for business, economics, and law at Yale University Press. Excerpted, with permission of the publisher, from *Leading with Kindness* by William F. Baker and Michael O'Malley. Copyright 2008 by William F. Baker and Michael O'Malley. Published by AMACOM. For more information: www.amanet.org/books

Create a Successful Change with a "Power Team" continued from preceding page

by new SAP technology solutions. The ultimate vision was for end-users to deliver enhanced customer service, revenues, and profitability. We had to define the toolkit, "productize it," and get it accepted by our global clients.

I assembled a group of SAP implementers who had successfully changed behaviors of end-users from "the old way of doing business to the new way." This was critical to meet the client's vision. This group evolved into our SAP Power Team.

My team and I worked together to create our vision and provide training

and documentation solutions to "jump-start" those responsible for changing the behaviors of the end-users. The team was empowered to define and develop the tools and work with leadership to provide the resources to "make it all happen."

The members were experienced with the items needed in the toolkit. They also knew one another. And, because they liked each other, they easily came together as a team. Once the solution was agreed upon, the team took responsibility for creating and executing the prototype, and communicating their

conclusions to leadership as well as the organization's client. Members weren't micromanaged, so they felt empowered by the leaders of our organization.

In addition to creating the right solution, another goal of the SAP Power Team was to receive personal and professional satisfaction from the experience and have fun. Which also happened. In fact, the team was so successful, other groups wanted to create their own "Power Teams".

Susan Bulkeley Butler is the CEO of SBB Institute and author of *Become the CEO of You, Inc.* For more information: www.sbbinstitute.org

Who the Heck Are You? And Why Should I Listen to You?

BY VICTOR CHENG

Every business conversation, whether it is a phone call, sales presentation, or speech, begins with someone thinking about the speaker, “Who the heck are you? And why should I listen to you?”

As a CEO, former chief information officer, and former chief marketing officer of private and publicly traded companies, I have been on both sides of the table—as the buyer who asked this question and required a good answer before continuing the conversation, and as the seller who needed to answer those questions to establish credibility.

Your personal credibility is what commands attention from prospects and makes the rest of your company’s sales and marketing process possible.

Credibility is the single most important part of your marketing effort for the simple reason that it comes first. If you fail to establish credibility, the conversation stops. Period. You don’t get the audience you seek. You don’t get prospects’ attention. The rest of your marketing and sales efforts go unnoticed.

To learn about credibility, look to one of the most credible professions in the world—medicine. Have you ever noticed that doctors have more influence with their patients than used car salesmen do with their customers? Both are in the business of selling. The doctor sells procedures, medical tests, and medications. The used car salesman sells cars. Given that both sell for a living, what’s the difference between them?

In a word: authority. The doctor has it. The car salesman does not.



In short, the only answer to the credibility question is one that firmly establishes you as an authority figure—a credible expert in your field.

Here are six ways to turn yourself into an authority figure:

1. Be quoted in an article.
2. Write and publish articles.
3. Give speeches.
4. Be interviewed.
5. Have high-profile/celebrity clients.
6. Publish a book.

You’ll notice that the first five authority-building methods work because you become associated with a publication, an organization, a media outlet, or a client that has a higher profile than you do. This process of authority by association is the big shortcut to authority building—but it can be out of your control.

More in your control is method #6: the publication of a self-authored or ghostwritten book.

In the United States and most cultures around the world, authors are instantly perceived to be experts in their fields. Perhaps it’s because of all those textbooks we studied and exams we took in school. This perception influences your prospects’ perceptions of you. Once you have published a book, you have not only established your authority but also opened doors to other authority-building activities. These activities will open doors to even more opportunities, and so on.

Let me give you a concrete example of this snowball effect. A year ago I recognized that other people’s perception of my expertise in the field of marketing was lower than my actual expertise. Determined to address this problem, I wrote and published several books, including the one I’m best known for: *Bookmercial Marketing: Why Books Replace Brochures in the Credibility Age*.

Once I became a published author, I was invited to speak at Harvard Business School. That connection with a well-respected institution allowed me to be quoted in several national business magazines, and eventually led to my appearance on national television.

While there are many different paths to becoming an authority figure, here are two tips that apply to everyone: (1) decide you want to be an authority figure, and (2) start with any of the six strategies mentioned previously and build from there.

Victor Cheng is the inventor of the Bookmercial (www.bookmercial.com), an innovative way to market your company through ghostwritten books. For more information: victor@bookmercial.com

How Foreclosures Are Impacting the Workplace

Last July, banks repossessed 77,295 U.S. homes, a 184% increase from a year ago. An additional 272,000 homeowners received default notices, putting them at risk for foreclosure.

We know that the skyrocketing number of foreclosures has led to significant job losses in the financial sector, real estate, retail, and construction industries. But these foreclosures are

also having a profound impact on the workplaces where foreclosure victims are employed.

In an interview, John A. Challenger, chief executive officer of Challenger, Gray & Christmas, noted how anxiety over foreclosure or the threat of foreclosures can weigh heavily on the quality of work, productivity, and morale of those affected. Besides the emotional

impact, some victims of foreclosures may have to move, leaving hard-to-fill vacancies. Relocation is also difficult as companies aren’t always able to help buy homes for desired recruits—in some instances, it is a matter of the costs, in other instances, it is that suitable homes can’t be purchased because current owners aren’t able to get out of mortgages.



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

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Personal Energy Management: How to Stop Killing Yourself at Work. To perform at your optimal level, sometimes you just have to say "no." Embrace the principles of "personal management" and vow to choose career sustainability over burnout.

LEADERSHIP

Multitasking vs. Singular Focus: And the Winner Is? The theorists who sold Americans on multitasking may have done us more harm than good, writes Sander A. Flaum. Wise leaders should vow to do one thing exquisitely well each day.

HR/TRAINING

Holding on to the Best and Brightest Young Employees. If you're not doing all you can to keep talented young employees from flying the coop, your organization's reputation and productivity will suffer. Here's how to "keep the keepers."

MANAGEMENT

Stop Fighting Fires. More organizations are using new enterprise-wide applications of DMAIC (Define-Measure-Analyze-Improve-Control) to identify the efforts that will make the greatest contribution to their bottom line.

Book of the Month

Quick Meeting Openers for Busy Managers: More Than 50 Icebreakers, Energizers, and Other Creative Activities That Get Results, by Brian Cole Miller. The effectiveness of a meeting depends on the tone set within the first few minutes. Miller's book will help you pave the way to productivity every time.



AMA Conferences/Special Events Calendar

OCTOBER 15, WEBCAST • Communicating Across Generations: How to Get Your Message Understood. More generations interact in the workplace than ever before, often leading to misunderstandings and conflict. The fact is that these diverse groups sometimes barely speak the same language (figuratively, if not literally). This webcast examines different perspectives and motivators for each group and offers advice on engaging, motivating, and communicating with each one effectively.

OCTOBER 22, WEBCAST • Coaching Your MVPs: Lessons for Leaders from Coaches of Champions. Just as in sports, coaching can be employed to achieve performance improvements in business. Leaders and high-achieving employees greatly benefit

from coaches who help shape their talents and fine-tune their skills. This webcast explores key qualities of "real leaders" and offers advice for encouraging top performers to step up to the plate and stop playing it safe.

OCTOBER 29, WEBCAST • Social Networking: Using the Latest Tools to Support Learning and Talent Management. LinkedIn, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Digg...it's difficult not to notice the explosion in both the number and notoriety of these tools designed to support and enhance our ability to form social networks. Do these tools have any use within your company? Bersin & Associates believes that they do. Join this discussion as we explore social networking tools as a concept, outline a few corporate

applications of these technologies, and offer some action-oriented advice to help you develop a strategy for implementing similar projects in your organization.

NOVEMBER 5, WEBCAST • Fired Up Leadership: How to Make Your Team Thrive. Scientific research has validated the powerful effect of emotional connections on human beings. When individuals feel a connection with their organization's identity, their colleagues, and their day-to-day tasks, they thrive and so does their organization. The results, "Connection Cultures," help organizations attract, engage, and retain the employees they need to meet growth opportunities. This webcast explores how to create a "Connection Culture" as well as the best practices that increase connection.

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