

Emily Bennington on **The State of Women at Work**



Emily Bennington

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EMILY BENNINGTON ON THE STATE OF WOMEN AT WORK.

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A Look at Women And Leadership

Welcome to the Winter 2014-15 edition of *MWorld*. For this issue, we've chosen to focus on the topic of women in leadership.

I always find this subject worthy of discussion, because as far as women have come in the past century, there's still a lot farther to go. Two trending topics on my Facebook feed are #GamerGate and "OMG What Did Renee Zellweger Do to Her Face?" #GamerGate demonstrates the sexism still inherent in the video game industry. The debate about Zellweger's changed appearance shows that for women, the emphasis of who they are is still on their looks.

In this issue, there is no discussion about women's looks, but rather the real skills and assets they can bring as leaders and managers. The featured Q&A with Emily Bennington, author of *Who Says It's a Man's World: The Girls' Guide to Corporate Domination* (AMACOM, 2013), looks at the mistakes Bennington sees women making in their careers and how women can be better negotiators for themselves.

Carol Meerschaert, director of marketing and communications for the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association, reviews findings from HBA's EDGE study and identifies best practices for advancing women in their careers.

Carolyn Buck Luce, a former principal and global life sciences leader at Ernst & Young, looks at "Changing the Game: A New Approach to Advancing Women," proposing new types of careers and examining the types of job skills needed for these leadership archetypes.

Several infographics in this issue look at women among the Fortune 500 CEOs, ranging from the good news in the growth of the number of women from 1976 to now to how women compare with their male peers in salary and education.

Although the focus of this issue is on women, we've included articles with concepts and advice that are unisex. Elaine Varelas shows how companies should be reevaluating the way they hire and find talent. Max Lytvyn, head of product strategy for Grammarly, has information on how to recruit more effectively.

So despite the specific focus, managers across the spectrum will be able to derive a great deal of benefit from this issue.

Christiane Truelove
Guest Editor, *MWorld*

MWorld

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CORRECTION: In the Fall edition of *MWorld*, Don Mroz's biography should read that he is the president of Post University and founder of the Malcolm Baldrige School of Business.

Changing the Game

A New Approach to Advancing Women

BY CAROLYN BUCK LUCE

It sounds like a broken record. The numbers are not moving with respect to getting women into senior leadership positions at the company and the board level. And this in the midst of continuing new research studies showing that having more women at the top drives enhanced employee engagement, greater customer connectivity, better risk management, more innovation, and impressive bottom-line results.

For these reasons, progressive companies are increasingly committed to moving the needle by offering more training and leadership development programming for women. But will this change the flat-lined trajectory that we seem to be on, or do we have to change the game to achieve a different outcome?

Let's look at the current state of training for women professionals striving for success in a male-dominant culture. The curriculum focuses on constructive, nec-

essary skills and behaviors, such as negotiating, finding mentors and sponsors, building executive presence, networking, and self-promotion. This approach goes hand in hand with a parallel focus in companies to tackle their talent management systems and processes in order to eliminate the unconscious bias from decisions on hiring, promotion, and work assignments.

At the Center for Talent Innovation (www.talentinnovation.org), where I am the executive in residence, we know that today's approach is 100% half right. Women, and other historically underrepresented groups, need custom-designed "interventions" to develop these competencies because they do not manifest as organically as they do for the dominant culture. But just helping the women play catch-up to "level the playing field" is not getting us to our stated goals.

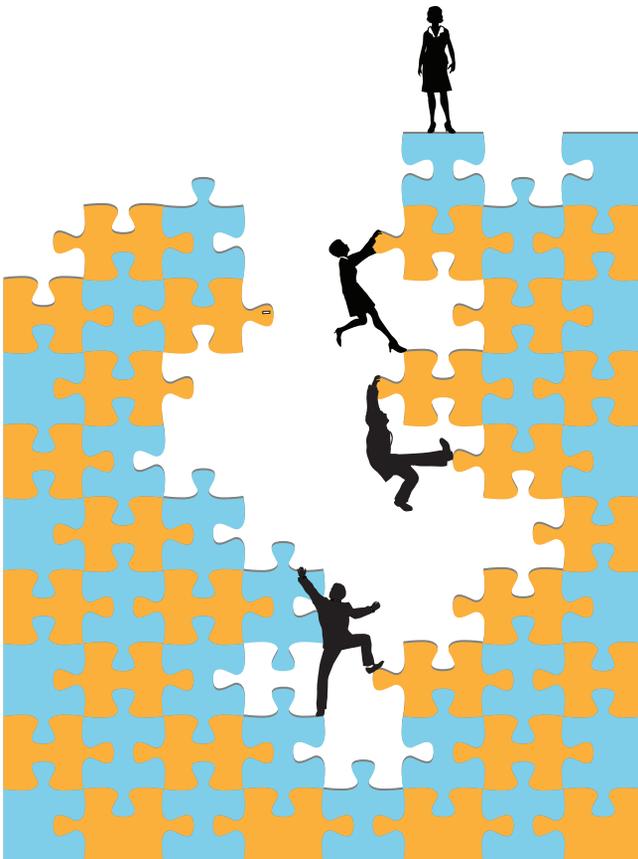
So let's redesign the game. Let's help women advance beyond the current state of play to build a new, updated set of leadership competencies and behaviors that all leaders, men and women, will need to succeed in the new economy. By doing this, we can ensure that women bring their unique, authentic gifts into leadership in a way that doesn't conform to old models but is transformative for the enterprise.

Redesigning the types of jobs, and the skills needed for them, could be a game changer. Companies in all industries are facing seismic shifts in the way business is being done. Our travels through the information age are speeding up and we are entering the imagination age, fueled by technology, data, globalization, and industry convergence. In fact, it's easy to imagine that in 10 years, 25% or more of the job titles that currently exist globally in health-care, media, telecommunications, financial services, manufacturing, and so on will be gone, replaced by something new.

To this end, the Center for Talent Innovation, in partnership with the strategic leadership consultancy Imaginal Labs LLC, has identified a few of the new job descriptions, or "leadership archetypes," that will



Carolyn Buck Luce



THE POWER OF THE PURSE

Winning the Next Emerging Market

Ten years ago, when companies were talking about capturing the next 1 billion customers, they were referring to participating in the emerging markets of India and China.



Today, the biggest emerging market is much closer to home—whether home for you is the United States, Europe, China, or elsewhere. Women are the largest and fastest-growing segment of purchasers and investors in the economy—any economy. The numbers are staggering. In the United States (with similar directional numbers in Europe), women account for the vast majority of all consumer purchases—from 65% of new car purchases, to 85% of healthcare expenditures, to 91% of new home purchases. They represent the fastest cohort of wealth accumulators, owning 75% of the nation's wealth in the U.S., and are estimated to inherit anywhere from \$12 trillion to \$40 trillion over the next 20 years. U.S. women are also now the majority in the workforce. Close to 1 billion women are estimated to enter the workforce and marketplace in the next several decades in the developing world.

These seismic economic and demographic shifts are referred to as the “SHEconomy,” and they illustrate the “Power of the Purse” of women as decision makers and influencers in many segments of the economy.

At the Center for Talent Innovation (CTI), we are conducting research on the Power of the Purse in financial services and in healthcare, two sectors where women are highly influential if not dominant as the “chief investment officers” and “chief medical officers” of their families. We find that in each of these sectors, women feel misunderstood, undervalued, and underserved. Our multiple-country research has shown that there is huge market failure, yet huge market opportunity.

For example, women in the United States control more than \$11 trillion in investable assets, but 53% do not have a financial advisor because they don't like what's on offer—and don't fully trust the message or the messenger.

The good news is that SHE is in the house. Financial services and healthcare companies are filled with talented women who have a deep understanding of SHE, her unmet needs, and the user experience that can win the hearts and minds of customers.

Source: Carolyn Buck Luce

be critical for sustained competitive advantage in our dynamic marketplace. Imagine these future job postings:

1. Business Model Architect: This executive would be experienced in (re)organizing and (re)constructing all the tangible and intangible assets needed to deliver the most value to others and meet their unmet needs for a fair value in return.

2. Brand Designer: This executive would be able to design the optimal “user experience” for internal and external stakeholders that is authentic, aligned, attuned, and anticipatory of current and future needs.

3. Digital Executive: This executive would be fluent in the creation, curation, synthesis, socialization, and distribution of meaningful virtual content and communication that builds trust, loyalty, and engagement.

4. Trust Builder: This executive would be successful in building strong, trusting relationships—face-to-face and virtual—with all stakeholders across the divides of culture, gender, geography, time zones, and generations.

5. Talent Maker: This executive would be the master of inclusive leadership behaviors and practices that celebrate the power of difference in a way that encourages all streams of talent to work up to the level of their skills and aspirations, unlocking the illusive “diversity dividend.”

6. Ecosystem Engineer: This executive would be accomplished at designing, nurturing, and sustaining powerful networks which form the relational capital that drives competitive advantage.

The current leadership development agenda—including developing a personal brand, building relationship capital, earning sponsorship, and acquiring negotiating skills—is a good start. Now imagine the power of mastering those skills in the context of the new leadership archetypes and applying them to your company's biggest business challenges.

I bet the men would want to sign up for this leadership path as well! MW

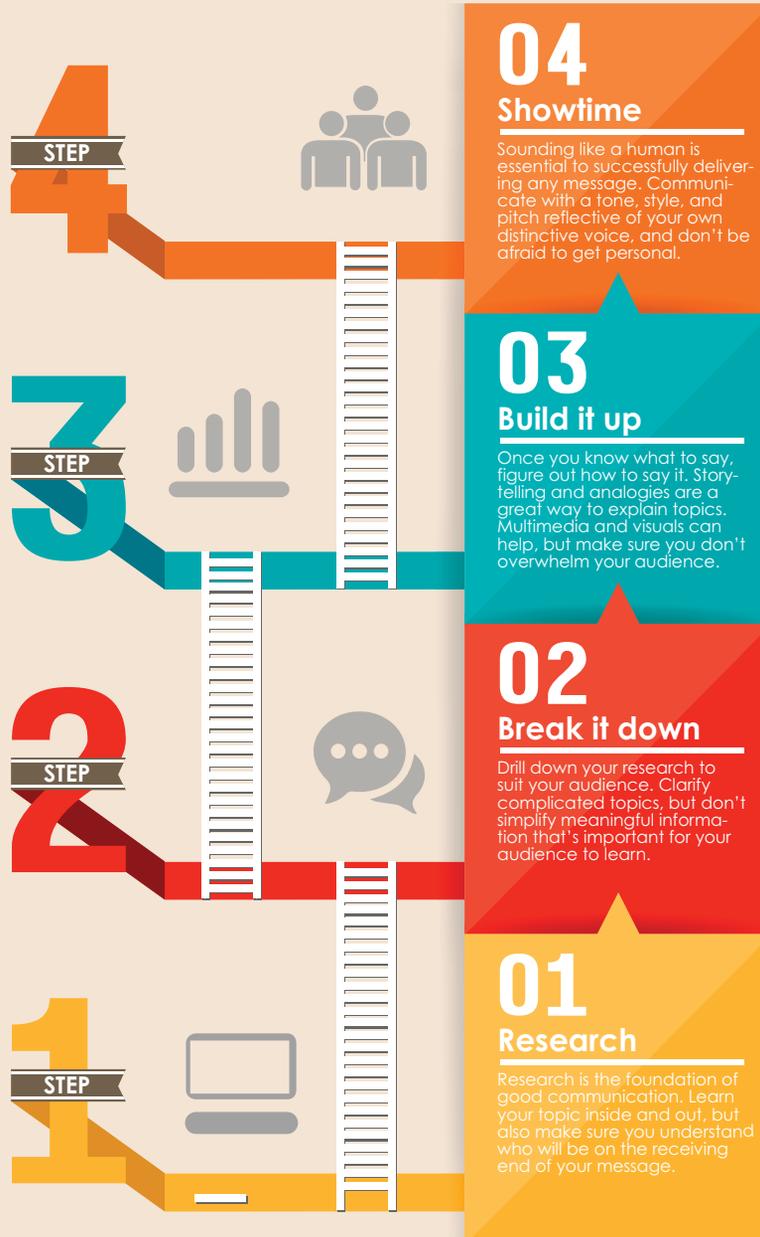
Carolyn Buck Luce is the co-founder and managing partner of Imaginal Labs LLC, dedicated to helping courageous leaders make the difference they dream of. For several decades, Buck Luce was a principal at Ernst & Young and spent the last decade as the Ernst & Young global life sciences leader responsible for serving global life sciences companies. She is currently an adjunct professor at Columbia School of International and Public Affairs, teaching Management and Gender.

Explaining the complicated so anyone can understand



The Process

Becoming a supercommunicator is all about figuring out how to deliver information in a way your audience will understand.



Source: *Supercommunicator: Explaining the Complicated So Anyone Can Understand* by Frank J. Pietrucha (AMACOM, 2014)

How to Convince Your Employees to Stay Put

BY ALEXANDRA LEVIT

Voluntary employee turnover is accelerating due to job dissatisfaction, but a shift in your employees' perspective on passion can save your company millions.

Tim Ferriss was a record-setting tango dancer and champion kickboxer before extolling his productivity principles in the bestseller *The 4-Hour Workweek: Escape 9-5, Live Anywhere, and Join the New Rich* (Harmony, 2009). In the book, Ferriss coined the term "lifestyle design" and focused on helping readers find ways to be more effective so that work would take up less time.

Ferriss wrote an intriguing article, "The Dangerous Myth of the Dream Job," in May 2007 for *Web Worker Daily* in which he talks about the concept of the dream career. "It is popular to fantasize about dream jobs, read about them, and envy those who have escaped the daily grind to revel in career nirvana. The Web offers alluring new ways of making a living, ways that may allow you to profit from your deepest passions. But how do those who have found the promised land really feel?" he said. "Converting passions into 'work' is the fastest way to kill those passions. Surfing two hours on a Saturday to decompress from a hard week might be heaven, but waking up at 6 a.m. every morning to do it 40 hours per week with difficult clients is a very different animal. Mixing business and pleasure can be a psychologically toxic cocktail."

WHY DREAM CAREERS AREN'T SO DREAMY A person who is fortunate enough to start making money at her dream career often finds that the situation isn't so wonderful after all. She begins to expect that her job will fulfill her personally and professionally at all times, and when she experiences the agita that's inevitably associated with working, she may sour on the very thing she's loved all her life.

For instance, a gifted musician who manages her successful band may find herself so overwhelmed with administering bookings that she prefers to spend any leisure time she has watching Netflix rather than practicing her instrument. And the more pressure she feels to keep the band afloat so that it can pay her mortgage, the more she may long to escape from music and do something else entirely.



MESSAGE FOR DISILLUSSIONED EMPLOYEES

In my work-satisfaction seminars for employees who are gainfully employed in a corporate setting, I share the following: If you believe that there's only one perfect job out there for you, and that once you find it you'll jump out of bed in excitement every day, you may be in for disappointment. For one thing, no job will thrill you 100% of the time. Every job has its ups and downs.

Before you buy into the concept of a dream career too readily, consider this: Do you really think there's just one job out there that you can do incredibly well? There are literally millions of vocations, so there must be at least a few dozen that you could do proficiently in a state of emotional contentment and financial security. Also, don't fall into the trap of assuming that there is an objective definition of a dream job, or that a terrific job situation must involve something you're passionate about, because that may not be the case. In fact, one of the happiest employees I ever met was a night janitor. He told me that cleaning office buildings was a dream job because it paid well, allowed him to work in peace and quiet, and got him home in time to see his children off to school in the morning.

HOW TO LOVE WHAT YOU DO

It is very likely that your employees could be happy doing a wide variety of jobs. In his December 6, 2007

article, “Do What You Love and Starve,” for Kiplinger.com, career expert Marty Nemko suggests that the best path for most people is to pick a nonglamorous career with these characteristics:

- Moderately challenging
- Meaningful work
- A kind, competent boss
- Pleasant co-workers
- Learning opportunities
- Reasonable pay
- Reasonable work-hours
- A short commute

Nemko says a job with even half of these characteristics will make employees more likely to love their jobs than if they had pursued a long-shot career. He also comments that finding career contentment is often a matter of diving in wholeheartedly to whatever job is available. Nemko shares the story of Gary, a young man who graduated from Michigan State with no clue what he wanted to do. His cousin told him that a job was open in a dashboard manufacturing plant. Gary wasn’t passionate about dashboards. Who is? But he was tired of living on his parents’ sofa, so he took the job. Because he was bright and curious, he asked lots of questions and soon became the go-to guy on the factory floor. Soon after that, Gary got a promotion and a raise and felt genuinely excited about his future in the industry.

Apparently, feeling expert at something—even something as mundane as dashboards—and being recognized for that expertise are more likely to create career passion than going after a lottery-odds career. So instead of doing what they love and expecting the money to follow, your employees should be encouraged to stick with a job that pays well and find ways to create a more meaningful work experience.

YOUR ROLE AS MANAGER According to Hay Group, worldwide employee turnover is accelerating after broadly flat levels in recent years. The number of workers taking flight is expected to reach 161.7 million in 2014—a 12.9% increase compared with 2012.

This trend is set to continue. Average employee turnover rates over the next five years are predicted to rise from 20.6% to 23.4%, and the number of global departures in 2018 will stand at 192 million. Most of the time, employees will cite job dissatisfaction or dis-

“Research has shown that we enjoy our work more when we have an opportunity to teach it to others.”

engagement as a primary reason for departure.

Few managers understand that it’s possible to stop this train in its tracks and conserve the organization’s talent by helping employees realize the potential and promise of the jobs they currently have. Encouraging skilled employees to serve as a spokesperson on a topic of expertise, to develop a new product or service with company support, and to adjust negative thinking patterns are great places to start. Here are some additional suggestions to take to heart as you assist your employees in “loving what they do”:

■ **Reengage emotionally.** Employees should imagine they are a few of the hundreds of people who apply for jobs with your organization every day. What is going through these candidates’ minds? What do they view about your job as desirable? Employees should think back to when they first started their jobs, pretending it’s the first day and echoing their initial enthusiasm for the work.

■ **Look outside the box.** Employees should think about the skills they want to develop in their careers over the long term, and determine how your organization might facilitate these skills in the form of classroom instruction, job rotation, lateral moves, sabbaticals, or volunteering.

■ **Become a mentor.** Research has shown that we enjoy our work more when we have an opportunity to teach it to others. Get your employees signed up for a preexisting organization-wide mentorship program, and if you don’t have one, start a program with just your group. You’d be surprised how mentorship can be the spark that reignites your whole team’s passion for the work you do every day.

Alexandra Levit is CEO of Inspiration at Work, a workplace satisfaction and employee engagement consultancy. Her goal is to build stronger relationships between organizations and top talent. She has authored several books, including the best-selling They Don’t Teach Corporate in College (The Career Press Inc., 2014), and has spoken about workplace satisfaction at hundreds of organizations around the world. Visit her at www.alexandralevit.com



Emily Bennington

Emily Bennington on the

*Emily Bennington is the author of **Who Says It's a Man's World: The Girls' Guide to Corporate Domination** (AMACOM, 2013).*

Bennington is a mindful leadership expert and the founder of the motivational consultancy Awake Exec Conscious Career Design. Her work deep dives into the space between stimulus and response, where she challenges professionals to choose intentional, values-centered action.

Bennington recently sat down with *MWorld* Guest Editor Christiane Truelove for an AMA podcast in which they discussed Bennington's book and the challenges women continue to face in the corporate world.

Q What inspired you to write a book about this particular topic?

EB: What inspired me to write a book about women's success was actually my own mother. Growing up, I watched her attach herself to situations and people that didn't necessarily serve her, based on the fact that she didn't have a career of her own. And as a result of that, she was at the effect of what those circumstances and those people did. She did have a good relationship with my stepfather, but he passed away from a heart attack on his way to work one day. I watched as she picked up the financial pieces of that or the lack thereof. Watching her go through that, it just really impressed upon me, *A*, that I never wanted that to happen to me—I wanted to take ownership of my own career—and *B*, that I wanted to show other women how to do the same.

Q What are the most common mistakes you see women making when it comes to their careers?

EB: The biggest one that I see is self-awareness. I think that self-awareness is one of the most important things that anyone, regardless of your gender, can bring to your career. And what I mean by self-awareness is an ownership of your emotional state, so that regardless of what happens, regardless of whatever situation or circumstance you find yourself in at work—or at home—that you don't become unzipped, that you have some composure. And obviously, the higher you go in your career, the more important that becomes, because the higher you go, the more complex your challenges. That composure becomes more important. So if you don't learn it right out of the gate, then it becomes really, really difficult to escalate in your career.

State of Women at Work

Q Do you think that women are discouraged from learning this type of composure?

EB: No, I don't think that women are discouraged. I just think that it's not as available to anyone in business as it should be. I think that a lot of companies tend to think we come into the workforce, or stay in the workforce, maintaining everything we need to know about how to comport ourselves when we're there. And that's simply not true. We see that from the anecdotal stories, the boots-on-the-ground stories, from people who are in business who are finding it really tough to get along.

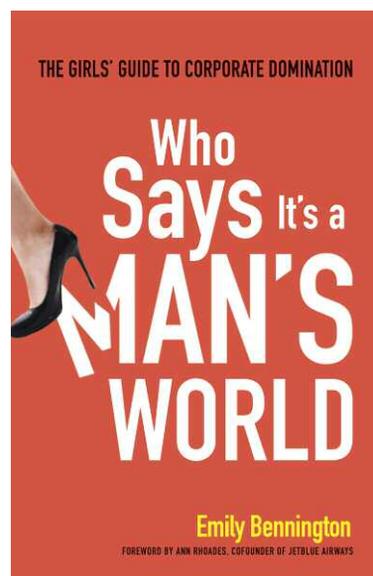
I've been working in career management for the last 10 years, and in the evolution of my career, I would say in the last two years, the topic that I'm asked to speak on the most is interpersonal relations, how people can get along. It's something that employers are really struggling with. And I think maybe this stems more so from coming out of the recession we had, where companies are running leaner and meaner and people are doing jobs that maybe two people did prior to. They're stretched thin. And when you're stretched thin, obviously there's more pressure on you. It's when we're in those pressured situations that we tend to react emotionally versus respond strategically and to say or do things that perhaps we regret later. And so, for me it's just more important for companies to embed intelligence—I teach mindfulness, but it's the same way of saying “emotional intelligence”—into the training programs of their workforce, so that people can learn these skills.

So it's not that women are being dissuaded from learning it. It's just that I think employers have underestimated the need for emotional-intelligence training at work.

Q How do women fight against a societal tendency in which their actions get characterized in a more negative light than those of their male counterparts? For example, a man will be called forceful as a leader, but a woman exhibiting the same behaviors gets called pushy or worse?

EB: You know, it's interesting. When I wrote *Who Says It's a Man's World*, I did a survey of 750 executive women, and I asked them the question, “If you could choose your boss based on gender, would you?” I found the results of that survey really fascinating, because while 56% of the respondents said that they wanted a smart boss—they just wanted to work for somebody smart; they didn't care if it was a man or a woman—44% said that they would choose their boss based on gender. Now, that is almost half. That is not an insignificant number. And of that number, men won out three to one. So these are women who would choose their boss based on gender, and even women preferred to work for men three to one.

Now, obviously this is a small survey; 750 people is not all that statistically valid when you talk about a country as broad or



internationally broad as our world. But that, to me, is incredibly significant. When I asked why the women who would choose their boss based on gender chose men, what they said was that men were more direct, that men were less emotional, and that men were less competitive.

When I deliver these results to women's groups, one of the things I say is that when we talk about emotion in the workplace, which is something that women get knocked really hard for, it's not that we are less equipped for leadership roles. Because statistically women are more emotional than men, this doesn't make us less equipped for leadership roles. It just means that we're hard-wired differently. So, for example, both men and women have a hormone in the body called prolactin; it's a tear trigger that says to your body, "Ping, it's time to cry." Well, women have six times as much prolactin in our bodies as men do in theirs. We also have tear ducts that are twice as large, which explains why we tend to gush tears whereas men tend to trickle.

Again, sometimes I think we get judged for being more emotional, but when you understand that we're just hard-wired differently, you're able to take a more strategic look at your own behavior and say, "This, again, doesn't mean I'm less equipped for leadership roles. It just means that I'm hard-wired differently."

Q Women are not known for being good negotiators for their careers. How can women become better negotiators for themselves?

EB: Negotiation starts with knowing what you want. When I have traveled the country and spoken to women and asked them point-blank, "Where is it that you see yourself going? What is it that you want to do?" a lot of them don't have concrete, clear, solid answers to that. So if we take a reactive approach to our careers—"Oh, I'll just take whatever comes along"—well then, you're at the effect of whatever comes along.

When it comes to negotiating, particularly for our career, it helps to know exactly what it is that you want to do and where it is that you want to go. And I say that with the caveat of not being so attached to where it is you want to go and the specific form your career's going to take that you become unzipped when it doesn't fall in line according to those dominoes. We all know that life doesn't necessarily unpack the way that we want it to at any given time.

Q Another thing women are noted for not doing effectively is networking in the office. What is the secret to effective networking, and what should women be doing that they usually don't do?

EB: Well, the secret to effective networking is being of service. So, it is finding somebody that you want to connect with and figuring out what it is they need that you can help with. What is the pebble in their shoe that you could not necessarily solve—if you can solve it, that's fantastic—but you can just assist with?

Q Part of a good career also involves getting a mentor. What are the characteristics you should look for in a good mentor, whether they are male or female?

EB: I think there are two things. One is that you're looking for a mentor who has gone where you want to go, and also that they are somebody who takes an interest in your career. Both of those things have to be in alignment, or the relationship would be broken. You could have somebody who has done amazing things that you aspire to do, but if they're not interested in reaching back and lending you a hand, then that's not going to be useful. And on the other side, if you have somebody who's very interested in helping you in your career but they don't have the leverage or the connections to get you where you want to go, then that's useful but not altogether effective either.

When you have both of those things together—somebody who has progressed in their career, has gone a path that you want to walk, and they're interested—that kind of synergy is remarkable. And it's completely transformative to both individuals if it's done right.

My first book, *Effective Immediately: How to Fit In, Stand Out, and Move Up at Your First Real Job* (Ten Speed Press, 2010), was written with my mentor, Skip Lineberg. One of the reasons why that relationship worked is because I made myself such a good student for him, even to the extent of following him around at one point with a notebook, just taking notes on how he handled particular business situations because he navigated them so well. The notes from that notebook were put together into *Effective Immediately*.

And again, it comes back to what I was saying before about finding ways to be of service. If you're a mentee and you're just taking from the relationship, that's going to get really draining for the mentor, and they might not be as invested as they would otherwise. But if you're constantly finding ways to infuse energy back into the relationship by being of service, you're probably going to find that you not only have a mentor for the short term but have a mentor for life.

You had mentioned in your book about strategies to avoid having co-workers take advantage and dump work on you or take credit for what you do. How can you build true cooperation with your co-workers?

EB: Well, I think the way that you build cooperation with co-workers is very similar to what I described before about building a relationship with a mentor. I mean, at the end of the day, what we're all looking for is effective ways to get our work done, and we like to like the people that we're working with. And so, if you're an employee and you're trying to develop a good relationship with your colleagues, find a way to be of service to them. Now, I say this with one caveat, and that is, you have to establish boundaries.... I think that one of the most destructive elements I'm seeing in business today is when employers and employees view their co-workers as competition. And the more you come into work with the attitude of "me against them," then the harder it's going to be to get along with your co-workers—and, as a result of that, the harder it's going to be to rise in your career. I'm a huge believer in the old adage that great leaders don't have to claw their way to the top; they're carried there. I think too much of our culture is focused on what you need to do to claw your way to the top.

What are the advantages women can bring to the corporate workplace, and how can they bring those advantages to play most effectively?

EB: This is a sweeping gender stereotype, and I'm not a huge fan of those, but I do think that women tend to bring a more collaborative, inclusive approach to business. Leadership is like a North Star. It doesn't care what your gender is. It's just that there are certain qualities of leadership that you have to have, end of story, if you're going to be a good leader. If you're going to have the influence that enables you to be effective and successful in your career. Inclusiveness just happens to be one of them, and women just happen to be really good at that.

And so, rather than consider that a weakness or fall into the trap of thinking that decision making by committee is ineffective, I think that the more we can encourage inclusiveness in business, the better off we're going to be.... But I know that we sometimes view ourselves negatively if we are too inclusive. I just think that it should be something to be celebrated rather than discouraged. *MW*

Women Need an **EDGE** to Get Ahead In Business

BY CAROL M. MEERSCHAERT

Companies are struggling to accelerate the advancement and retention of senior executive women, even though evidence shows that hiring and promoting women pays off.

According to “The Bottom Line: Connecting Corporate Performance and Gender Diversity,” a 2004 study from the nonprofit organization Catalyst, Fortune 500 companies with the highest percentages of women corporate officers yielded, on average, a 35% percent higher return on equity and a 34% percent higher total return to shareholders than those with the lowest percentages of women corporate officers.

In 2007, the Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association, a nonprofit global organization whose mission is to further the advancement and impact of women in healthcare worldwide, commissioned the “Empowerment, Diversity, Growth, and Excellence (EDGE) in Leadership

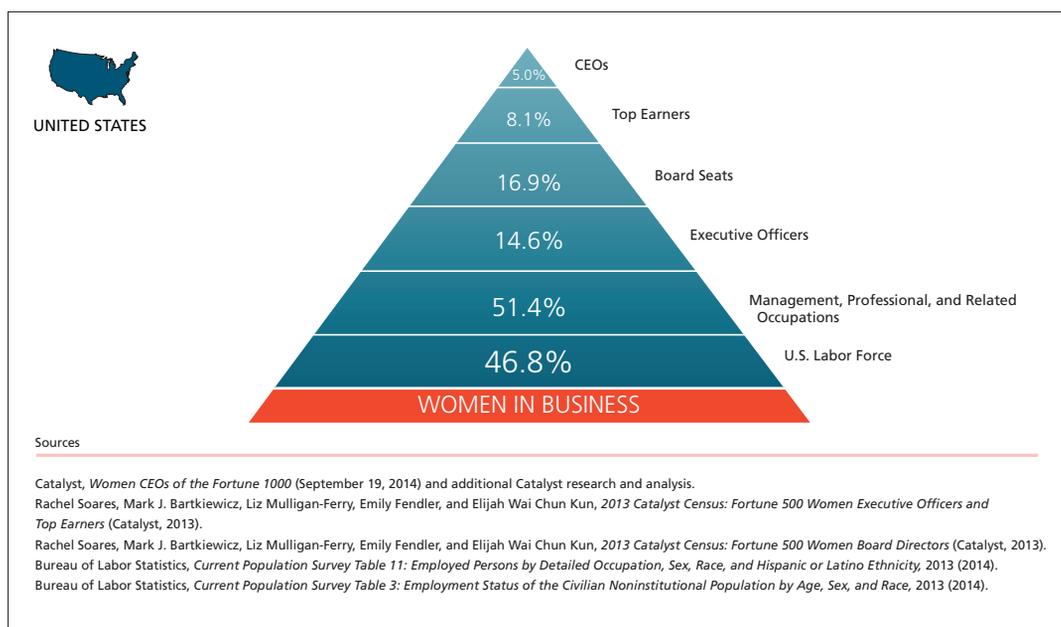
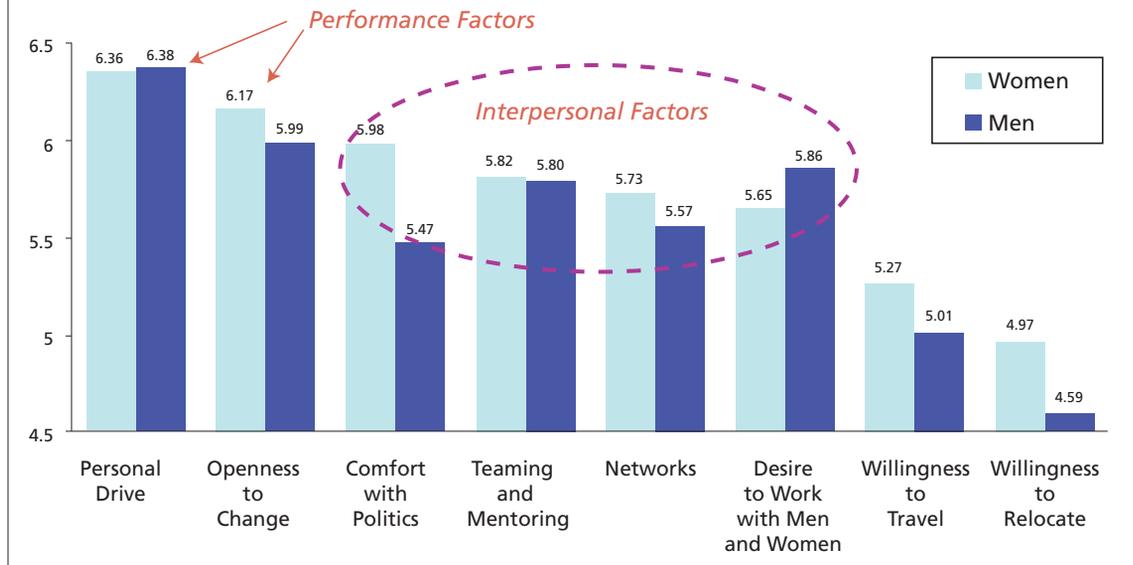


CHART: COURTESY OF CATALYST

Middle Managers' View of Success Factors



Study.” The study examined 19 leading healthcare companies in the United States and Europe not only to benchmark the current state of women’s advancement but also to understand the attitudes and motivations of companies in order to develop actionable recommendations for both individuals and companies. The study remains the benchmark report of best practices for recruiting, retaining, and advancing women to the top ranks of life sciences corporations.

OVERALL ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

In the EDGE study, healthcare executives said their organizations are eager to advance women executives. Most senior executives believed their organizations support women striving to reach the top leadership ranks. On average, middle managers also believed this to be true, although there were sharp differences in the level of agreement between men and women within the companies studied. Only 56% of women in middle management said their firm supports the rise of women managers, compared with 85% of their male counterparts.

There were strong differences based on functional area as well. More than 90% of managers in the areas of supply chain and manufacturing reported that their company supports women’s advancement. Sales and marketing staff reported the lowest level of support, with less than 30% of men and women in those areas saying their company is open to advancing women.

Interviews conducted during the EDGE study indicated that the travel requirements and limited flexibility associated with senior sales and marketing positions in the healthcare industry may be an obstacle for women who wish to move into executive roles.

MANAGEMENT’S VIEW OF SUCCESS FACTORS FOR WOMEN

The EDGE study also revealed intriguing differences of opinion about what factors matter in reaching the executive rank. Differences were noted both between top managers and middle managers and between men and women.

Senior Executives' View of Success Factors



Middle managers—women, in particular—believed that performance factors including personal drive and openness to change are the qualities needed to get noticed by senior management and earn a promotion (see chart on page 13). However, senior managers, who can call on their own experience, believed that performance-related factors are a prerequisite for reaching any level of management and that interpersonal skills make the real difference in the effort to get ahead (see chart on this page).

Senior managers also believed that a level playing field is the key to women’s advancement. However, the female middle managers seeking to move up instead wished they had acceptance of different leadership styles, work/life balance, and flexible work arrangements.

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMPANIES TO ADVANCE WOMEN

The EDGE study shows that a successful agenda for advancing women executives depends on the following best practices:

Senior leadership support: Companies must ensure unambiguous senior leadership support of cultural norms within the corporation that bolster the women’s advancement agenda. Top management needs to be a vocal champion.

Merit-based culture: A merit-based culture with transparent evaluation systems must be reinforced with accountability and metrics to track success and drive results. Companies should create individualized career-development plans to promote advancement and offer formal programs to identify high-potential women across different levels, functions, and regions; they also should monitor and track the progress of these individuals as they move through the organization.

Fair recruiting practices: Companies should require a diverse slate of candidates in all recruiting efforts. Developing diverse recruiting teams will infuse fairness into the process and protect against “like hiring like.” A key suggestion is to institute minimum targets for women as a “sanity check” on the process to ensure fairness. Then periodically reevaluate targets to make sure they do not become a quota exercise and remain relevant and appropriate.

Work flexibility models: Companies need to recognize that a significant portion of their workforce seeks to better balance their careers with family commitments.

Companies must make it easier for talented women to leave the organization for a few years and return when they are ready to. According to the Center for Talent Innovation’s report “Off-Ramps and On-Ramps: Keeping Talented Women on the Road to Success,” in the March 2005 *Harvard Business Review*, 37% of highly qualified women voluntarily leave their careers for a period of time and another third take a flextime or part-time option. Note that 93% of these women want to return to work. Sadly, only 74% of those seeking to get back to work find jobs, and only 40% find mainstream, full-time jobs. While most women leave their careers for only two years, on average, they lose 18% of their earning power. If they are out of the workforce for three years or more, the earning penalty is a staggering 38%.

CHARTS: COURTESY OF HEALTHCARE BUSINESSWOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

BEST PRACTICE COMPONENT	Recommendations
1 Increase visibility of senior leadership support for change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness of diversity and gender issues across the organization • Develop a strategy and plan for women's advancement that includes a corporate vision and milestones across functions, levels, and regions • Lead by example via championing initiatives, creating diverse teams, and actively demonstrating the value of diversity
2 Ensure merit- and performance-based processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all selection criteria and key people processes are based on performance and merit • Define and communicate performance expectations • Strengthen performance evaluation processes • Maintain pay equity mechanisms to prevent gender-influenced compensation structures • Ensure transparency of criteria and processes
3 Introduce measurements and accountability to drive behavior and results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set clear objectives for advancing women • Develop meaningful metrics to track progress • Set up mechanisms to hold managers accountable
4 Establish recruitment practices to support representation of women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a fair recruitment process • Institute minimum targets for recruiting women • Leverage female executives in recruiting efforts; representation is important to recruits • Import talent from other industries as needed • Break down gender stereotypes regarding functions and skill sets
5 Establish advancement programs for high-potential female employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify women with high leadership potential and follow their progression • Focus on individual development and offer key programs to support advancement • Provide the tools and infrastructure to encourage advancement • Do not brand these programs specifically "for women only," though some skill-building may be gender-specific
6 Establish career and work flexibility models to retain top female talent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop flexible career paths • Provide flexible work options and arrangements with the necessary structure and processes to allow them to succeed • Communicate success stories internally and externally

BEST PRACTICES FOR WOMEN TO USE IN THEIR CAREERS

Based on the EDGE results, the Healthcare Businesswomen's Association has developed best practices for women to use in achieving impact and advancing in their careers:

Build a professional network. This should be a 360-degree network where senior management in your company and industry know who you are. Remember, it's not who you know that counts, but rather who knows you. Attend events, join cross-functional and cross-department teams, and get involved with professional associations.

Develop a variety of skills so that you are valuable in many departments and many organizations. Accept lateral transfers. Bring team members onto your projects from across the organization. Being able to offer your employer a diverse skill set makes you more valuable.

Seek feedback. Then seek mentors who can assist your development in weak areas. A great method is to look for someone who demonstrates the quality you need to improve upon and ask for mentoring in that specific area.

Cultivate advocates and sponsors. These are people senior to you in your company who will use their political capital to put you forth for promotions, teams, and other opportunities. Working on side projects that put you in front of influential people is a great way to cultivate advocates.

The best practices from the EDGE study apply not only to healthcare companies but also to organizations in many disciplines. Advancing women helps the company's bottom line. When women succeed, we all succeed. *MW*

Carol M. Meerschaert is director of marketing and communications for the (www.hbanet.org), whose mission is to further the advancement and impact of women in healthcare worldwide and to empower more women as business and thought leaders in healthcare.

Women as STRATEGIC LEADERS

The Need and the Critical Skills

BY YULIA BARNAKOVA, FRANKLIN SHEN, AND STEVEN KRUPP

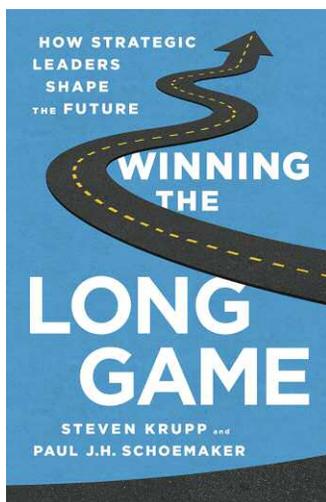
Organizations are facing a new business landscape defined by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA).

No matter the industry, change is happening faster in today's VUCA world than ever before. Markets are shifting as geographic boundaries erode. Disruptive technologies are flooding the market. Nontraditional competitors are emerging everywhere. Consumer behaviors and preferences are evolving.

Despite these conditions, most leaders and organizations still focus on the short term and make plans as if the world were predictable, developing point forecasts, budgets, and initiatives that will succeed only in stable situations. Yet, what this environment requires is truly strategic leaders—women and men—who can adapt to changing conditions and navigate this uncharted terrain to succeed in the long term.

The importance of strategic thinking is not disputed. In fact, it's widely cited as the most valued skill in leaders today. However, our research and experience show that many organizations face a major skills gap when it comes to strategic thinking. This point is well illustrated in the opening of *Winning the Long Game: How Strategic Leaders Shape the Future* (PublicAffairs, 2014) with the story of a leader named Jane, who is sitting through her performance review. Although she receives positive feedback overall, when her boss talks about her development needs, she is simply told, "You need to be more strategic." While this example is fictional, the experience of hearing that "being strategic" is important is very real. We hear this over and over in our consulting work with leaders and teams around the globe.

Fortunately, more women like Jane can fill this gap by honing their strategic capabilities and helping organizations succeed in the new business environment. This process is already beginning to happen, and the evidence is all around us. Although women are still outnumbered by men at the top of most organizations, the number of female CEOs at Fortune 500 companies reached a record high in





Yulia Barnakova



Franklin Shen



Steven Krupp

2014. There were 25 women at the helm, compared with 20 women in 2013, according to research from Catalyst, a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding opportunities for women in business. A September 2012 Dow Jones study, “Women at the Wheel,” found that the median number of women executives at successful companies was significantly higher than the median at unsuccessful companies. Companies with female board representation outperform boards without female board representation, according to a July 2012 study, “Gender Diversity and Corporate Performance,” by the Credit Suisse Research Institute. Funds are even investing more aggressively in companies led by women, as reported in “Men Had Their Chance; New Funds Bet on Women,” an August 3, 2014, article in the *Wall Street Journal*.

So how can women further develop their strategic thinking skills and close the leadership gap? Based on our research with more than 25,000 executives around the world, we have distilled some of the most critical behaviors that exemplify strategic thinking at its best.

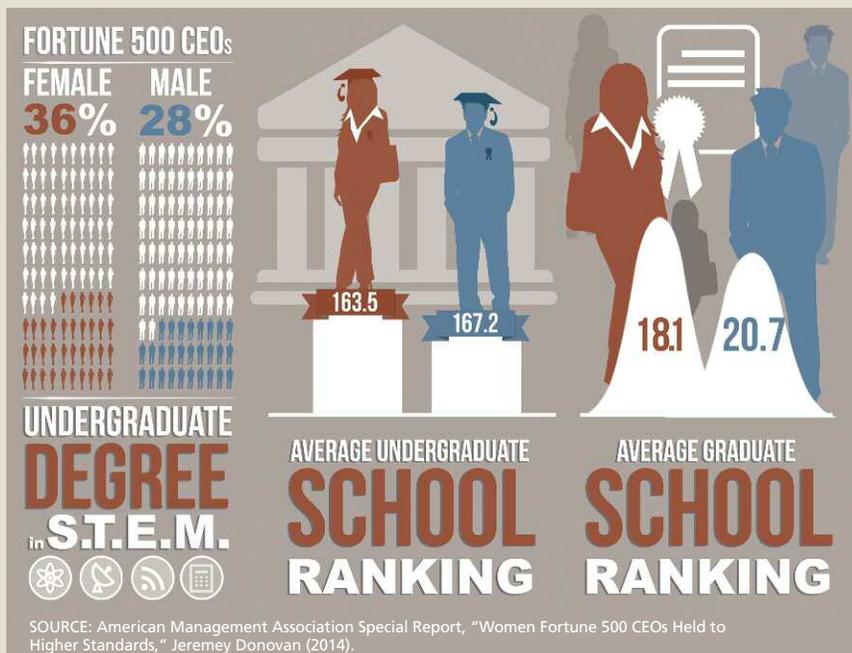
UNDERSTAND LEADERSHIP STYLES: LEAN IN—OR LEAN BACK

In her book *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead* (Alfred A. Knopf, 2013), Sheryl Sandberg, chief operating officer of Facebook, describes the need for a more assertive type of leadership, encouraging women to believe in themselves, challenge biases, and speak their minds. With messages such as “fortune favors the bold,” Sandberg encourages women to take initiative and overcome negativity. She preaches that women must engage in the strategy debate, take strong positions, and not feel guilty about it.

However, “leaning in” is not the only answer for strategic women leaders. In October, we attended the biannual meeting of the James Brister Society, a minority/diversity organization at the University of Pennsylvania, where the issue of women’s leadership came up. Some women actually felt they needed to “lean back” instead of “lean in” to be effective. Often, we hear that women need to speak up and be loud to be a leader—a dangerous interpretation of the concept of “lean in” and of what it means to be assertive.

Sandberg’s recommendations may fit better for the extrovert, but women should not hesitate to lead as introverts, as writer and lecturer Susan Cain describes in her writings and her popular TED talk, “The Power of Introverts,” from February 2012. The most effective women

Women's Technical Skills Are Strong



leaders understand various leadership styles and confidently embrace those that best suit their personality, the situation, and the organizational culture as they pursue their strategic agendas.

ANTICIPATE WHAT'S NEXT

Based on our research, the skill most often associated with being strategic is the proverbial ability to "see around the corner." This means being able to anticipate market shifts concerning customers, competitors, regulations, politics, and the economy. But our research also shows that developing this ability to anticipate change is a weak area for many executives.

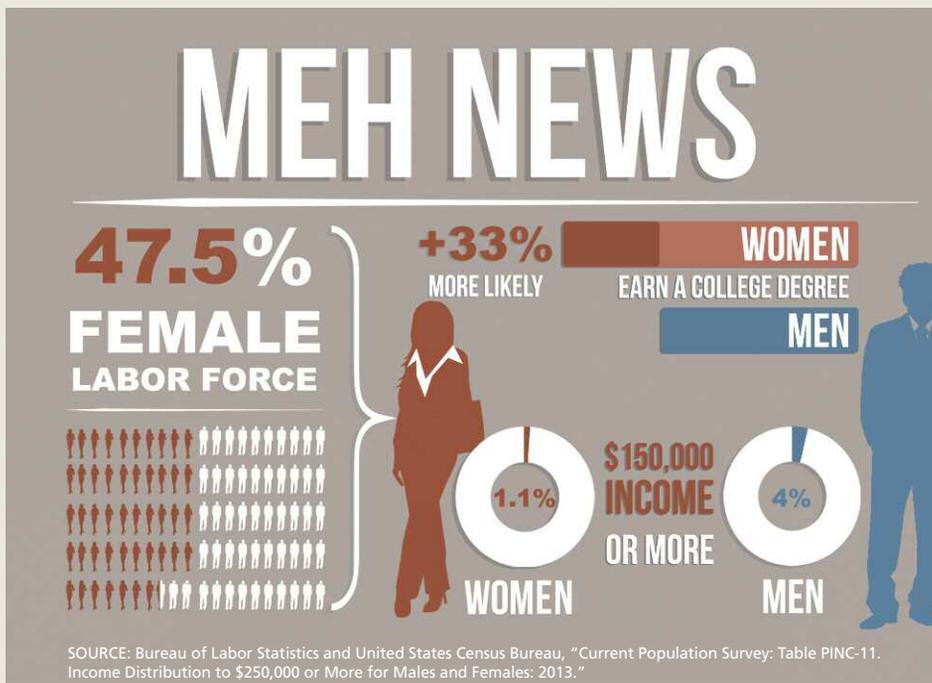
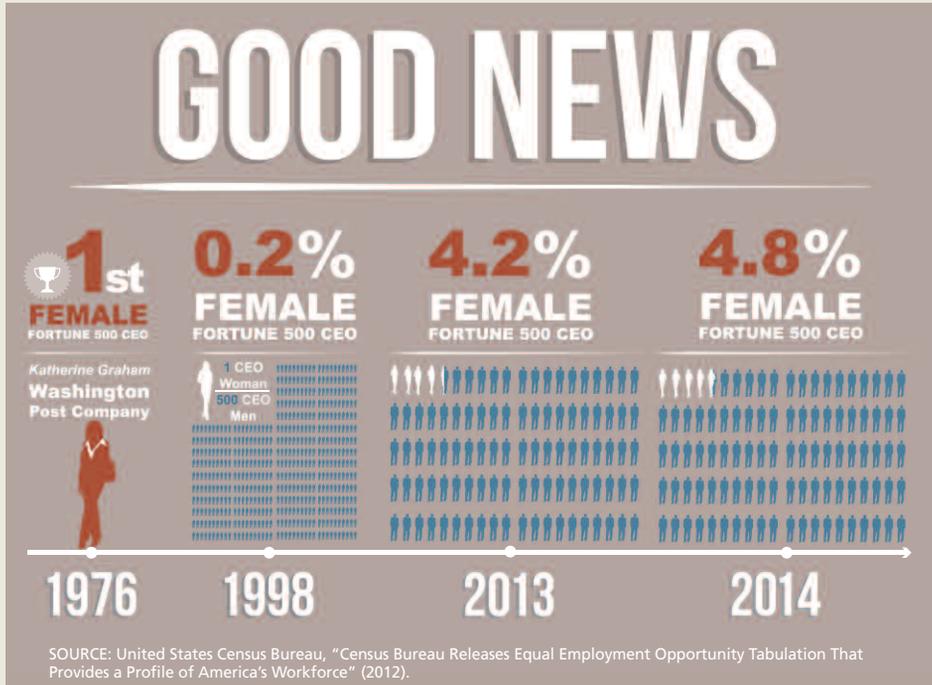
One way to stay at the forefront of key trends and better foresee what may come is to look at information sources that others may ignore. Beyond the usual literature that everyone reads, leaders should tune in to a diverse set of news sources, including social media, to obtain insights sooner. One leader we know dedicates 30 to 60 minutes early each morning, before her kids get up, to reading news headlines as well as posts from thought leaders on Twitter and LinkedIn to see what trends are on the horizon. Through this practice, she often views vital information before it hits the mainstream media and can get a head start on thinking and planning before the insights are more widely publicized and picked up by competitors.

SEEK DIVERSE VIEWS TO BUILD A WELL-ROUNDED TEAM

One of the most critical disciplines of strategic leaders is their intellectual curiosity and acceptance of people who see the world differently. Hala Modellmog, former president of Arby's Restaurant Group and now president of the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, believes in surrounding oneself with people of different backgrounds and different personality types to help round out one's perspectives. Leaders should seek input from diverse stakeholders

Status of Women in the Workforce

The good news is that the number of women Fortune 500 CEOs reached an all-time high of 4.8% in 2014, up from 0.2% in 1998 and 4.2% in 2013. The “meh” news, of course, is that 4.8% is paltry relative to women representing 47.5% of the labor force (according to the most recent statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau). This is more disturbing when you look at education. Despite the fact that more women than men graduated from U.S. colleges with bachelor’s degrees in every year since 1982, only 1.1% of women earn \$150,000 or more, compared with 4% of men.



to help broaden their thinking. By staying open to different viewpoints, leaders help ensure they can diminish known or unknown biases that may hinder them.

RALLY YOUR TEAM AROUND COMMON GOALS

Although diverse viewpoints are critical to a well-rounded perspective, strategic leaders must also know how to align these divergent interests toward a common goal. They understand how to engage stakeholders and manage differences to create buy-in to new initiatives. Many studies show that women are naturally adept at empathy and collaboration. The best strategies can fail because stakeholder alignment is not properly addressed from the start. Aligning stakeholders involves identifying everyone affected by an initiative, thinking through how their interests align (or do not) with the ultimate goal, and then bridging any differences.

Actively encouraging an open dialogue with stakeholders helps build trust and increases the engagement needed to make a business strategy successful.

FAIL, LEARN, REPEAT

Leaders who take big risks must also be prepared for missteps along the way. The previous examples illustrate exceptional successes, but most startup and social change efforts fail. Sara Blakely, founder of the shapewear company Spanx, has noted that her father would often ask her and her brother, “What have you failed at this week?” He reinforced the message that the essence of failure is not trying, rather than experiencing a bad outcome. His view, said Blakely in an October 2013 interview with CNBC’s *Squawk Box*, “really allowed me to be much freer in trying things and spreading my wings in life.”

How to Get the Best Out of Introverted Women

BY JENNIFER B. KAHNWEILER

Introverted women face many hurdles in our Type A, extroverted organizations, where there is strong pressure to be sociable, outgoing, and friendly.

In male-dominated workplaces, their comments often are passed over and ignored.

Yet these introverted women are an untapped resource, and if you aren’t harnessing their powers, your organization is losing out on the competitive edge and the many potential contributions they can bring. As a manager or team member, how do you bring out the talented introverted women in your midst?

Here are five effective strategies to tap into their wisdom and influence:

1. Give her space. Introverts think first and talk later. So in meetings, conversations, and even casual chats, slow down, pause, and give them time to reflect and respond. If you are an extrovert, you’re probably tempted to fill in the silences. Resist that urge, and introverts will freely express themselves. You can even try putting a space between your questions—counting “1...2...3” to slow yourself down. Avoid barraging them with fast-paced questions, which can make them feel like they’re being cross-examined on the witness stand.

2. Offer the gift of solitude. Introverts want and need to spend time alone. They frequently suffer from people exhaustion, so allow them to retreat to recharge their batteries. If you see a female co-worker hanging out by herself at lunch, for instance, don’t assume she wants to chat. She may need that time to recover from all the stimuli of the day. As the Kelly Clarkson song goes, “Doesn’t mean I’m lonely when I’m alone.” Instead of stopping by her office throughout the workday, bundle your nonpriority items and schedule a single conversation.

3. Write more, converse less. Try expressing your thoughts in writing to give her time to digest information. Introverts let their fingers do the talking. They prefer writing to conversation, and gravitate to email and social networking over the telephone and face-to-face meetings. Build on this preference, and whenever possible, communicate with her in writing. Take the time to read her emails and respond thoughtfully.

4. Give her prep time. Play to the introverted woman’s preference for preparation by sharing in advance the agenda and relevant materials needed for meetings and conference calls. Let your introverted colleague know what areas you would like her input on in a meeting. During the meeting, encourage her comments by directing questions

On her road to success, Blakely flunked the law school boards twice, had a failed venture with Disney World, and struggled to sell fax machines for seven years by cold-calling companies. Like most entrepreneurs, she did not give up due to failure and kept experimenting—ultimately hitting it big with Spanx. Women often feel the need to be perfect because the odds are stacked, but strategic leaders don't let mistakes derail them. Rather, they embrace the opportunity to learn from both failure and success.

BE BOLD AND COURAGEOUS

Strategic leaders boldly pursue their vision, even in the face of risk. Elizabeth Holmes, the youngest female billionaire to land on the Forbes 400 list, dropped out of college to start her own healthcare company, Theranos, which provides a new type of diagnostic blood testing that uses only a few drops of a patient's blood. As reported in *Fortune* in June, she told her chemical engineering professor, "I don't want to make an incremental change in some technology in my life. I want to create a whole new technology, and one that is aimed at helping humanity at all levels regardless of geography or ethnicity or age or gender." Her professor initially balked at the idea, but believing in her vision, she pushed on. A few semesters later, she dropped out of college and started what has become one of the most successful companies in Silicon Valley. Today, Holmes is worth roughly \$4.5 billion.

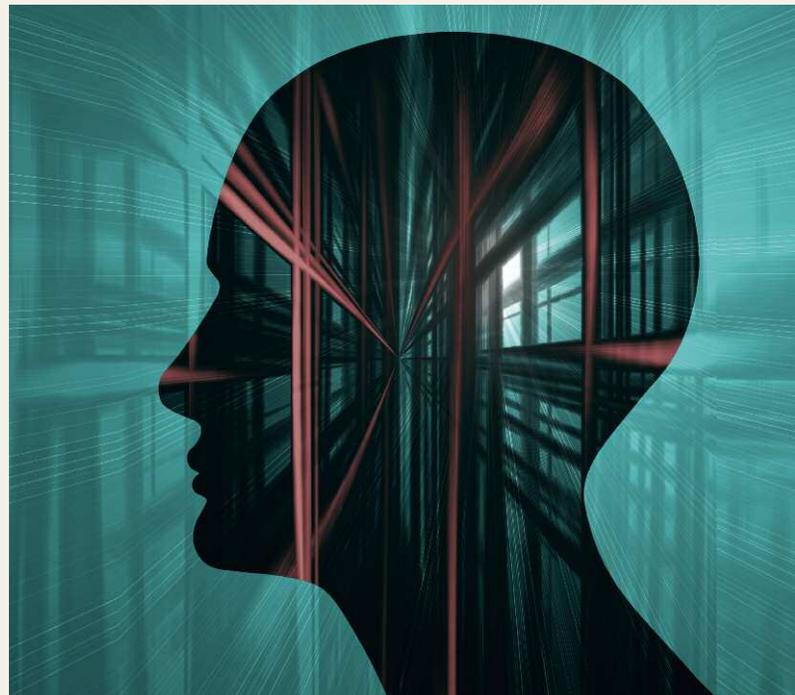
Moreover, recent Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai, 17, dramatizes the risks of taking a bold stance at another level and the strategic possibilities that come from being exceptionally courageous. Her struggle for the right of girls to get an education in her country of Pakistan, even after she was shot in the head by a Taliban gunman, is the ultimate expression of personal

to her such as "What are your thoughts on that action, Sheri?" You also need to do your own preparation to understand how she can best contribute.

5. Get to know her. Introverts are private at first, and they self-disclose in one-on-one dialogues. Start building a work relationship with an introverted woman by asking about her work and her outside interests. Once you start to self-disclose and ask her good, open-ended questions ("So what has been keeping you busy lately?"), she will open up. Chances are, you'll find things in common.

By honoring and adapting to the preferences of the introverted women in your organization, you will gain their respect, help them to build on their natural strengths, and develop your own repertoire of effective behaviors, ultimately benefiting the organization.

Jennifer B. Kahnweiler, PhD (www.jenniferkahnweiler.com), is a highly regarded faculty member of AMA, author, and global speaker. She is hailed as a "champion for introverts." Her books, The Introverted Leader: Building on Your Quiet Strength and Quiet Influence: The Introvert's Guide to Making a Difference (Berrett-Koehler Publishers Inc., 2013), are bestsellers and have been translated into 12 languages. Follow her on Twitter @jennkahnweiler and on Facebook at The Introverted Leader.



“Despite progress toward equality in corporate America, workplace gender biases are still very present. Aspiring women leaders must stay resilient to overcome these obstacles.”

risk. Leaders can learn a lot from Yousafzai, who exercises remarkable strategic insight as well as passion and guts. After receiving the award—unprecedented for someone of her age—she has set out to build bridges between Pakistan and India despite the longstanding tension between these countries. Although Yousafzai’s example is not within reach for most of us, there is no question that boldly pursuing one’s vision, despite the risks, separates truly strategic leaders from the rest.

STAY RESILIENT IN THE FACE OF BIASES

Despite progress toward equality in corporate America, workplace gender biases are still very present. Aspiring women leaders must stay resilient to overcome these obstacles. Pantene’s viral video “Labels Against Women,” part of its #ShineStrong campaign, provides a great demonstration of how women often are perceived differently from men for similar behaviors and traits. The video shows assertive men being viewed as “persuasive” versus women being viewed as “pushy.” Furthermore, a study detailed in an August 26, 2014, article by *Fortune* — “The Abrasiveness Trap: High-Achieving Men and Women Are Described Differently in Reviews”—found that managers at large gave more negative feedback to female employees than to male employees. Seventy-six percent of the negative feedback given to women included some kind of personality criticism, such as comments that a woman was “abrasive,” “judgmental,” or “strident.” Only 2% of men’s critical reviews included similar negative personality comments.

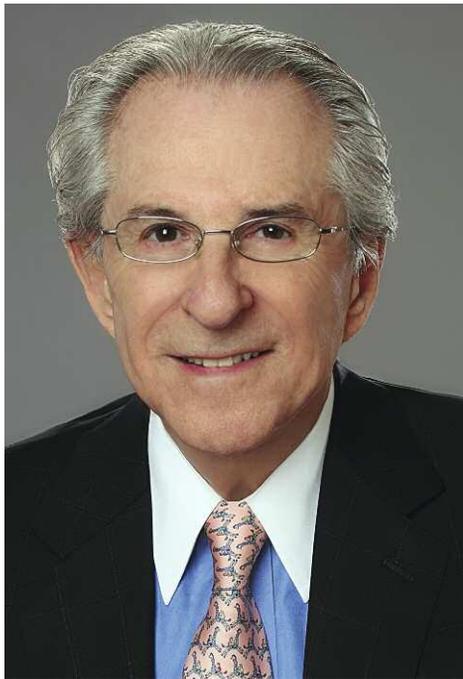
Even if unintentional, these deeply embedded mental models are the product of cultural conditioning and add complexity for women leaders as they confront other strategic hurdles. It’s easy for these types of messages and feedback to negatively affect attitude or performance, but strategic leaders focus on making the criticism constructive. With women being criticized more and supported less, it’s critical that they have the resilience to continue working and leading in the face of these challenges.

THE FUTURE

We live and work in a VUCA world, which includes having a more diverse and global workforce. This environment calls for a new type of leader—one with a more outside-in lens and a long-term, strategic outlook. The behaviors described here are not easy to master, but practicing them is a great way for leaders to start to increase their strategic aptitude. As more women demonstrate their strategic savvy and gain positions at the top, the closer organizations will be to fostering businesses that can navigate today’s uncertain world and achieve sustainable, long-term success. *MW*

Yulia Barnakova and Franklin Shen are senior consultants and Steven Krupp is CEO at Decision Strategies International (DSI), a future-focused consulting firm based in Conshohocken, PA. Krupp has co-authored Winning the Long Game: How Strategic Leaders Shape the Future (PublicAffairs, 2014) with Paul J.H. Schoemaker. Visit DSI on the Web at www.decisionstrat.com. The authors can be reached at Barnakova@decisionstrat.com, Shen@decisionstrat.com and Krupp@decisionstrat.com

If You're Not **MENTORING**, You're Not **LEADING**



Sander A. Flaum

BY SANDER A. FLAUM

Mentors need a good PR agency. All too often we think of them as grizzled veterans like Obi-Wan Kenobi or even Yoda.

Mentoring has become something you do at the end of a career, not during it. It seems somehow...old. People also think of mentoring as altruism—a way to “pay forward” for the sage advice they received years before. There’s a lot more to mentoring. I believe that you don’t have to be a geezer to be a mentor and that both parties can achieve tangible and immediate benefits from a mentoring relationship. I also believe that leaders who fail to mentor do so at their peril.

A few years ago, I wrote a book titled *The Big Shoes: How Successful Leaders Grow into New Roles*, which was intended as a practical road map for people who had just been promoted to a management position. One of the first steps you need to take in these newly acquired “Big Shoes” is realizing that although you’ll still be judged on your individual performance, you’re equally accountable for the performance of your direct reports. You need to learn that even though C- and D-level performers may be great water-cooler pals, they’ll eventually drag you and your team down.

To succeed in your new role, you’ll need to identify and groom the A and B players who can lift you higher. And that’s where active, and even aggressive, mentoring comes in. By helping your staff upgrade their skills, you’re not “paying forward” anything. You’re not doing a “good deed.” You are doing the job for which you were hired. You’re leading and developing leaders.

MENTORING IN THE CORPORATE WORLD

In my early corporate life, large companies tried to institutionalize the process of identifying and training potential top performers. Back then, promising new hires were recruited into an

“The number-one job we have as leaders is to ensure that we’ve got capable people working with us, people who are emotionally committed, people who want to get on board, people who can buy into a vision, and people who are willing and ready to give it their all.” —Myrtle Potter, former chief operating officer, Genentech

internal management-training program. We spent our nights pursuing MBAs and our days mastering practical management and leadership skills, often under the supervision of an assigned mentor.

Those were great programs, and many of them still exist in some form. But can’t we get even better at identifying and mentoring leaders? One approach might be to foster a system in which unconventional, off-the-grid minds are given access to leadership training reaching beyond corporate borders. Why not create a widespread series of programs in which the country’s top talent can be identified as apprentice leaders and then encouraged to develop the skills they will need to succeed?

One such program is the John Glenn School of Public Affairs at Ohio State University. In this school, undergraduates and graduates learn what it takes to lead with integrity and serve in public life. Among the many offerings is the Management Advancement for the Public Service (MAPS) program, which offers training seminars that build management and leadership skills for top executives, midlevel managers, firstline supervisors, and even support staff.

HOW CAN WE MENTOR TODAY?

In the absence of established programs, let’s see how hands-on, “Big Shoes” mentoring works. On day one, you start by identifying your key players, both the established and the rising stars. Spend at least one day a month working with them.

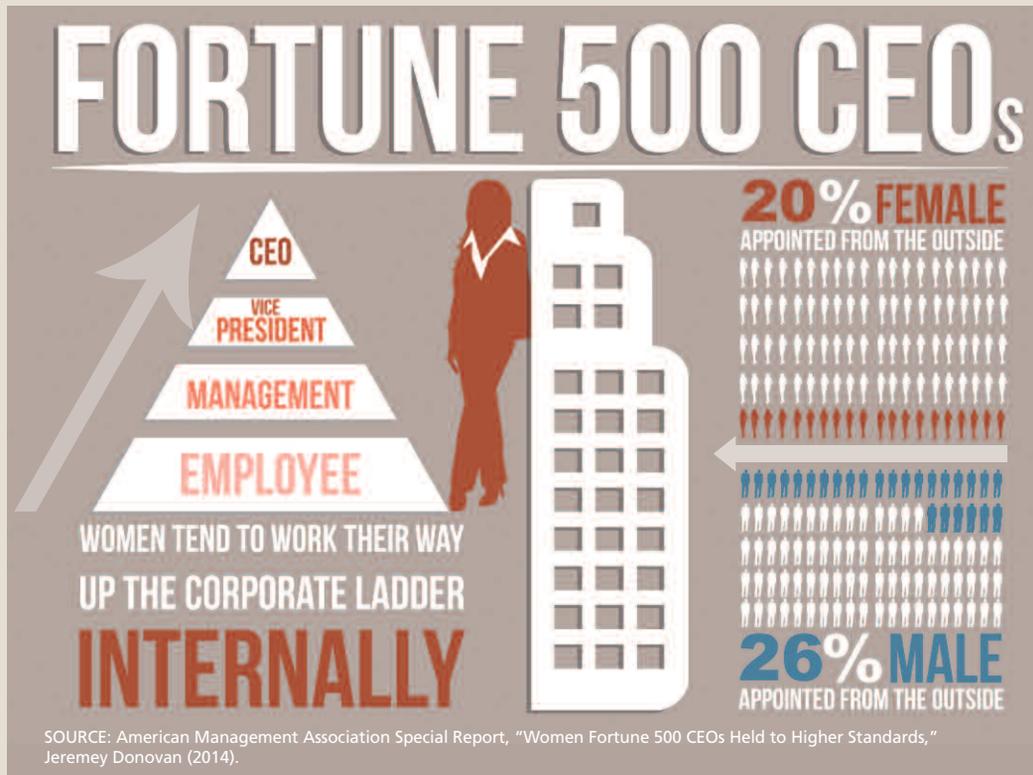
Encourage your junior managers, in turn, to mentor and teach their staff. It will help them grow as leaders and improve the team’s performance. A word of caution: Sooner or later, you’ll run into managers who say, “I can’t be bothered with training these people. I have too much of my own work to do.” That’s a big heads-up. Not only will these managers blame the new hire when they embarrass themselves at a big client meeting, but it’s also a sign that they put their needs ahead of the well-being of the organization.

SPOTTING CANDIDATES FOR MENTORING

Myrtle Potter, who was a brilliant chief operating officer at Genentech, said the following at the Fordham University Leadership Forum: “The number-one job we have as leaders is to ensure that we’ve got capable people working with us, people who are emotionally committed, people who want to get on board, people who can buy into a vision, and people who are willing and ready to give it their all.” She continued: “And once you are certain you have that, your number-one responsibility is to help these people grow, develop, allow them to exceed all of their personal goals, and take their careers to the next level.”

When I became a CEO at Euro RSCG Becker (now Havas Life), I began holding leadership classes and identifying those who seemed most open to learning and passionate about

Mentoring Critical for Women



improving their performance. I thought of them as candidates for promotion and followed their progress closely, making it a point to chat with them periodically. I made sure they received recognition when they deserved it and a reprimand when they were sloppy.

MENTORING TECHNIQUE

When you prepare to mentor, try to recall your own mentors. Chances are, you'll remember only a few words—but they were obviously ideas that made a big impression on you. Maybe they'll also be effective for you in your mentoring sessions.

Here's an example: As a young group product manager, I attended a talk by Bob Luciano, then president of Lederle Laboratories (now a part of Pfizer). Bob posed the following question to the audience: "What will be your legacy? When you hang it up, how do you want to be remembered?"

To many, this may have sounded like a platitude. Yet I've never forgotten those words and the inspiration they provided. In the years since, I've asked that question dozens of times in the course of mentorships. It doesn't always strike a chord, but when the person "gets" the idea, you'll see his or her face light up, as yours may have done years before. And you'll have made a difference. *MW*

Sander A. Flaum is principal of Flaum Navigators, where he encourages and coaches his clients to embrace disruptive innovation in marketing, sales, and leadership.

SUCCESSION

How to Get This Process Right

BY NOEL TICHY



Noel Tichy

First, the bad news: The decision of who will lead an organization—large or small, for profit or nonprofit—after its current leader departs is the most momentous one that any CEO, director, or senior leader is likely to make over the course of her or his career.

But by admittedly rough estimates, as many as 80% of incumbent leaders get this high-stakes judgment call wrong.

Why? The short answer is that the succession planning process and drama—and, believe me, it's too often a drama or even a tragedy when it doesn't need to be—is by far the most technically, politically, and culturally challenging assignment imaginable. Succession planning is all too easily capable of stumping and frustrating even otherwise estimable and capable leaders. In the recently published *Succession: Mastering the Make-or-Break Process of Leadership Transition* (Penguin/Portfolio, 2014), I lay out four “Failure Factors” that help to explain the widespread and enduring nature of this singular leadership screwup:

- ▶ Failing the “beer truck test”: There is no replacement in case of catastrophe
- ▶ SPOTS—succession plans on top shelves: The company has an inoperable or poorly conceived plan of succession that it falls back on
- ▶ The domineering CEO who won't let go
- ▶ Outsider selection bias: The novelty of outside candidates outshines their lack of qualifications

Although there are numerous other factors that trip up those managing the succession process, the good news is about the other 20%—the leaders and organizations that not only know how to play the game to win but have done so in ways that those of us eager to emulate their example can fairly easily replicate.



GETTING SUCCESSION RIGHT

As I see it, all leaders need to successfully tackle two essential tasks to be declared winners in today's competition for the management equivalent of an Olympic gold medal: taking the assets they are given at the advent of their tenure and measurably raising their value by the time they retire, and selecting a successor who does the same. I'm the first to admit that this is a true acid test, in the sense that while succeeding at the first task is incredibly difficult, succeeding at the second is even harder.

But once again, there are some silver linings to these dark clouds. After all, winning an Olympic gold medal is hard, but that doesn't make it either impossible or not worth shooting for. Look at the following positive cases: Chad Holliday seamlessly passed the baton to Ellen Kullman at DuPont; Ivan Seidenberg did the same with Lowell McAdam at Verizon; Roger Enrico expertly managed his succession to Steve Reinemund, and Reinemund turned the reins over to Indra Nooyi at PepsiCo; David Novak recently announced succession to incoming CEO Greg Creed at Yum! Brands; and Ratan Tata meticulously managed the transfer of power to Cyrus Mistry at Tata Industries. In each of these cases and countless others, the incumbent leaders running the process were able to pull off the hat trick of managing successions honestly, authentically,

RESULTS OF SUCCESSION PLANNING: 1970s TO PRESENT

	Organization	Personal Experience: CEO and Leadership Succession	Results
1970s	Ciba Geigy	Advised CEO Don McKinnon on succession planning and selection of successor CEO North America	😊
	Chase Manhattan	Adviser to Fred Hammer, EVP of retail, direct report and potential successor to CEO David Rockefeller	😞
	Appalachian Hospital	Helped save Hazard Family Health Services during a fiscal crisis when hospital system went bankrupt	😞
	Columbia University	Started doctoral program in social psychology in 1968, just prior to the ouster of president Grayson Kirk	😞
	Columbia University	On team of graduate students studying impact of first black school superintendent of East Orange, NJ	😞
	MLK Health Center	Advised former welfare mother/CEO Dolores Smith who earned master's in public health from U. Michigan	😊
1980s	U. Michigan	Taught during a succession of successions from Shapiro to Duderstadt to Coleman to Schlissel	😊
	Honeywell	Advised on 1984 succession of CEO Jim Renier, who went on to have a successful run at Honeywell	😊
	Meritor Bank	Worked with former Chase heir apparent Fred Hammer after he became CEO	😞
	Whirlpool	Partnered with Alan Lafley, father of A. G. Lafley, on transition of Dave Whitwam to succeed Jack Spark	😊
	GE	Ran GE leadership institute at Crotonville under Jack Welch and helped reinvent leadership pipeline	😊
	GM	Advised reorganization led by Bob Stempel, who succeeded Roger Smith as CEO	😞
1990s	Ameritech	Orchestrated simultaneous companywide transformation and leadership succession under CEO Weiss	😊
	Mercedes-Benz	Worked with car group head Helmut Werner and since worked with current CEO, Dieter Zetsche	😊
	Chrysler	Analyzed Iacocca turnaround in <i>Transformational Leader</i> , workshops for CEOs Bob Easton and Nardelli	😞
	Ford	Advised CEO Alex Trotman on succession to Jacques Nasser; all of us fired during Firestone tire crisis	😞
	Royal/Dutch Shell	Worked with chairman Cor Herkstroter and CMD on succession system and leadership development	😞
	Honeywell	Worked with CEO/former GE vice chairman Larry Bossidy on establishing GE-style succession process	😊
2000s	Intel	Worked with CEO Paul Otellini on action-learning program, identified current CEO Brian Krzanich	😊
	Intuit	Advised founder Scott Cook, CEO Steve Bennett, and current CEO Brad Smith on succession planning	😊
	Covad	Worked with CEO Bob Knowling before board coup d'etat cost him his job	😞
	Telewares	Continued to work with CEO Bob Knowling on next assignment, resulting in more favorable outcome	😊
	Nomura Securities	Ran leadership development workshop with CEO Yoshihisa Tabuchi, fired for knowledge of bribery	😞
	RBS	Worked on senior leadership development and succession planning when Fred Goodwin was fired	😞
2010s	GE	Culmination of Welch succession process with the appointment of CEO Immelt four days before 9/11	😊
	Grupo Salinas	Worked with Chairman Ricardo Salinas on family and professional leadership successions for six years	😊
	Boys and Girls Clubs	Developed and conducted leadership program for 200 clubs; helped design succession process	😊
	Uplift	Ran leadership development and succession planning program for principals and senior administrators	😊
	Best Buy	Developed leadership institute; advised CEO Anderson on succession; resulted in successor Dunn being fired	😞
	Brunei	Partnered with government in developing leadership program for nationwide school network	😊
	Accenture	Developed internal team to lead leadership institute	😊
	CP Group, Thailand	Partnered with chairman to establish leadership institute; designed and implemented succession planning	😊
	Babson College	Worked with president Len Schlesinger, former Limited exec, since he was my MBA student at Columbia	😊
IDEA Public Schools	Worked with CEO Tom Torkelson on succession planning and leadership development program	😊	

CHART: FROM SUCCESSION: MASTERING THE MAKE-OR-BREAK PROCESS OF LEADERSHIP TRANSITION, BY NOEL TICHY (PORTFOLIO/PENGUIN, 2014)

and rigorously by implementing a few critical success factors. The success factors include:

- ▶ Achieving a genuine balance of powers between the three primary players in the succession drama—the board of directors, the CEO, and the chief human resources officer (CHRO)
- ▶ Elevating the role of human resources and the chief human resources officer into a genuine leadership position, which not only gives the CHRO a real seat at the table but empowers the human resources department to create and manage systems that eliminate bias, chaos, favoritism, and the not infrequently paralyzing ambiguity

Winning organizations and leaders succeed at succession by accomplishing the ultimate task of building a robust leadership pipeline based on good judgment and measurable track records of success. At such best-practice organizations, frequently scheduled performance assessments and evaluations are scrupulously conducted according to rational and impartial criteria. Smart organizations create the technical, political, and cultural conditions required to cultivate the development of transformational leaders on the inside. This process eliminates the need to go outside the organizations' own ranks to recruit superstar outsiders, who (contrary to popular mythology and the snake oil being sold by too many hungry executive search firms) more often than not end up crashing and burning—cutting short not only their own formerly highflying careers but burning and churning through untold billions in shareholder value in the process.

Since running GE's legendary leadership institute at Crotonville under Jack Welch in the late 1980s, and over the course of dozens, if not scores, of assignments since then that were dedicated to providing top leaders and their teams with the right tools to build lasting leadership pipelines, I've learned a few leadership lessons myself that I endeavor to pass on. The accompanying chart shows my succession history.

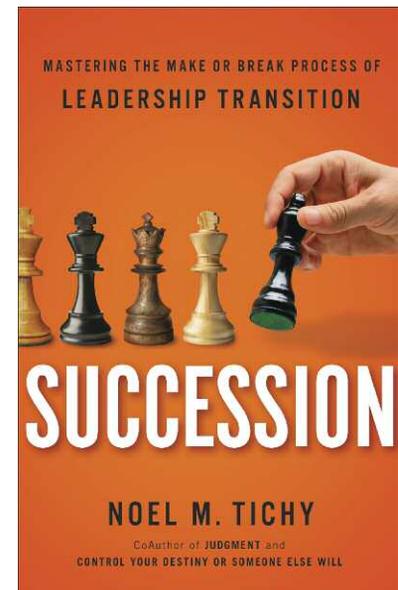
VIEW FROM CROTONVILLE

Whether we're talking about businesses, military institutions, universities and colleges, or nonprofit organizations, we live in a world where failed CEO and leadership succession is the single greatest destroyer of value, whether that value ends up being measured by fluctuations in stock price or the long-term success and prestige of a great institution. If I had only one lesson to impart, it would be this: If and when they are conducted properly, succession planning and leadership development are really one and the same thing. Such critical tasks need to be at the top of every leader's priority list; they should not be accorded cursory attention at the occasional meeting but attended to every day of the year.

In the end, good or bad leadership is the ultimate determination of organizational success or failure. The only way to ensure continuity of good leadership is for all participants, even the candidates, to commit to best practices. And then, of course, participants should keep their fingers crossed and hope that the forces be with them.

SOME GREAT LEADERS ENJOY SECOND AND THIRD ACTS

Bringing this extraordinary level of commitment to cultivating and creating leaders at all levels is precisely what former Procter & Gamble CEO Bob McDonald has recently agreed to do in



Keys to a World-Class Succession Pipeline

1. Talent at every level, from off-campus hires to vice chairmen, must be assessed and promoted according to a system and a process that are genuinely impartial, objective, transparent, and credible.
2. Leadership development systems must be equipped with a series of checks and balances that effectively stack the deck toward picking the best and brightest to reach the pinnacle at the top and to discount, to whatever degree possible, the almost inevitable impact of personal, political, and organizational distortions and biases.
3. CEO succession and leadership succession must be understood to be much more than a plan or a process. In the end, it should be and can be an inspiring journey in which all the participants (even the nominal “losers”) remain dedicated not only to making the organization overall smarter, better, and more adaptive to turbulence and change, but also to being part of an organization where every employee, at every level, fulfills his or her own innate or latent leadership capacity.

Source: Succession: Mastering the Make-or-Break Process of Leadership Transition by Noel Tichy. Copyright 2014, Noel Tichy.

his new role as secretary of Veterans Affairs. In the wake of a series of scandals and challenges that effectively took down his predecessors, this highly respected executive, West Point graduate, Vietnam veteran, and son of an Army Air Corps World War II veteran has shouldered the challenge of fundamentally transforming a deeply troubled institution.

Fortunately, what I know McDonald knows—and what his establishment of a leadership institute at his alma mater West Point reflects—is that to succeed at this monumental task, he will need to simultaneously transform his organization and build a vital and robust pipeline of future leaders. A critical first step will be to create a sense of urgency, a burning platform for change, which will require him to move both quickly and stealthily to wake up and shake up a calcified institution. An equally critical second step will be to overcome pockets of deeply embedded institutional and organizational resistance. Finally, he will need to follow and implement the best practices pioneered at great companies like GE and his own P&G to ensure that the reforms and innovations he

institutes now and in the future are carried on by the next generation of leadership for decades if not generations to come.

THE FINAL TAKEAWAY

The case has been made that nothing is more important than having the right leader at the top of any institution, whether business, military, university, or nonprofit. Unfortunately, we live in a world where this is done wrong about 80% of the time. Failed CEO succession is the single biggest destroyer of shareholder value or, in the case of nonprofits, the future success of the institution. *MW*

Noel Tichy is a professor at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan and advises CEOs around the world.

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RECRUITING

Your Company's Newest Sales Process



Max Lytvyn

BY MAX LYTVYN

Recruiting is a sales process. In today's transient job market, selling happens on both sides of the table.

Not only are candidates trying to convince companies that they are the best fit for an open position, but companies are working to convince the best candidates to join their team. Embracing a sales mentality throughout the recruiting process allows a company to capitalize on its existing marketing efforts to secure top talent.

Selling your company to potential candidates requires a shift in paradigm to a sales mentality. As with any sales process, you will need to source, qualify, sell, and close candidates. These four sales stages—and their connection to the recruiting process—are explained in detail here. When you learn how to sell your company with these stage-by-stage tips, you can close candidates today who will contribute to your firm tomorrow.

SOURCING

Often, the “sourcing” phase is overemphasized in the recruiting process as recruiters seek to generate leads consisting of the best candidates from the best universities, companies, and so forth. However, even the greatest lead cannot advance to a closed sale unless a perceptive and persistent recruiter follows through and develops a personal connection.

It's been said that consumers are more willing to buy from someone to whom they can relate. This holds true in the hiring process as well. The establishment of a personal relationship with a company allows candidates to determine whether the company is a good fit—and enables recruiters to assess at an early stage if a given candidate would be a positive addition to the company's culture. At this stage in the sale, connection is crucial. It's important to note which candidates actively pursue this relationship. Enthusiasm can be a sign of dedication, which is a positive asset to your company.

QUALIFYING

The sales process of qualifying leads involves asking a series of questions to identify if a contact is truly a prospective consumer of a given product or service. In short, is the contact actually willing and able to purchase the product? If you simply substitute “consumer” with “candidate,” this idea translates to a more sustainable hiring process. Similar to qualifying sales leads, recruiters should ask questions such as “What skills/abilities does the candidate possess?” and “How can this candidate be a positive asset to my company culture?”

The efficiency of this stage requires the development of a clear target profile. In the case of recruiting, a target profile generally addresses the aforementioned questions and includes both skill and culture fit. Skill covers a candidate’s experience and aptitude, while culture fit includes the interpersonal skills for effective teamwork. An incredibly skilled candidate who cannot work effectively with others will be an independent contributor in the best case and will reduce team morale in the worst case.

Culture fit is critical, and while it’s often hard to define, that’s exactly what is needed to ensure a consistent hiring bar. Culture fit centers around an employee’s ability to adapt to a company’s organizational culture. Companies can optimize their organizational culture and best ensure the cultural fit of new hires by creating a codified cultural profile.

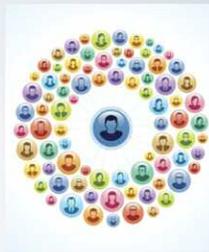
At Grammarly, we codified our cultural profile with one word: EAGER. The goal is to have a memorable, understandable, and actionable cultural profile. And while EAGER describes the attitude of Grammarly's team members, it’s also an acronym:

- ▶ **Ethical:** Be honorable to earn trust. Do the right thing, even when no one is watching, without exception.
- ▶ **Adaptable:** Embrace change and learn in order to evolve and succeed. Apply a positive, problem-solving attitude.
- ▶ **Gritty:** Demonstrate passion and perseverance for long-term goals, since persistence drives achievement. Do whatever it takes to get the job done, whenever it is necessary.
- ▶ **Empathetic:** Treat others as you want to be treated, so that we can work well together. Actively listen and put yourself in others’ shoes, and then respond accordingly.

The Grammarly Way

#1 Customer Focus

We obsess about our customers as they are the reason Grammarly exists. We need to provide our customers with the best product in the market, otherwise we’re doing them a disservice. That requires putting them at the center of our decisions. Ask what is best for our overall customer base when making decisions.



#2 Effective Creativity

We believe that creativity can solve ANY problem. We also believe that creativity needs to be effective - not just new ideas, ideas that work.

Unique ideas that work at scale enable us to provide customers with the best product, and make our business sustainable.

Ask how many ways something can be done, not if it can be done. Among your ideas, look for practical solutions.



“The establishment of a codified cultural profile not only sets a standard for all employee actions but also acts as a qualitative measure for hiring teams throughout the recruiting process.”

► **Remarkable:** Be recognized as exceptional yet humble, because talent drives impact. Seek out those who are exceptional and learn from them.

Clearly articulating your company’s values will equip your employees with a list of life skills and priorities central to achieving personal and professional success. The implementation of these life skills shapes the corporate culture and allows the company to realize its full potential as an organization.

A company should consider the satisfaction of its employees to be a huge success, pivotal to the success of the company as a whole. Without the creation of a clear and concise cultural profile, a company’s corporate culture would not exist—eliminating one of the keys to driving growth in innovation and sales. Any organization’s hiring process must be designed to recruit talented individuals to join the team and continue to contribute to that culture.

Consistency is key. The establishment of a codified cultural profile not only sets a standard for all employee actions but also acts as a qualitative measure for hiring teams throughout the recruiting process. A company’s cultural profile should articulate the values that it wants to attract. For example, we strive to clearly communicate “The Grammarly Way” and our company’s brand overall across all channels and at all points of contact with potential recruiting candidates. The brand articulated in the interview process must be consistent with the branding and marketing efforts in all other outlets. Prospective hires will notice inconsistencies—in fact, perhaps the candidate was once the consumer. Compromising on consistency today sets the stage for future failure. A company must consciously strive for consistency, particularly throughout the recruiting process.

For all of us at Grammarly, the hiring process has improved greatly with the addition of our EAGER cultural profile. Now, even new Grammarly team members can talk specifically about

Grammarly has defined its company values with a "cultural profile."

#3 Data-driven

We are laser-focused on metrics, starting with each team member. We use metrics to set clear goals, facilitate informed decisions and make our progress visible to ourselves, each other, and the world. Look for metrics to measure performance against your goals, then adjust based on what you learn to move more quickly.



#4 Results

We do whatever it takes to deliver results. We know that putting a dent in the Universe is hard. It requires repeatedly setting and achieving big goals, as quickly as humanly possible. Set big goals and strive for results. Accelerate and repeat.



“A recruiter should go beyond telling candidates how they can work for a company and convince them why they should.”

the cultural strengths or weaknesses of each candidate and make solid, consistent, and efficient hiring decisions.

SELLING

Brands drive sales, and there is power in a company’s decision to expand its branding efforts to include the recruiting process. Whether partner, client, consumer, or recruiting candidate, each entity derives a piece of its identity from its association with a given company. Recruiters should promote a company’s brand as a significant selling point for potential candidates. All of a company’s success comes back to its people, and candidates care more than ever about an organization’s brand identity.

Current branding efforts can be used to simultaneously attract customers and candidates. Organizations can capitalize on preexisting corporate activities, such as philanthropies and ecofriendly initiatives, to cater to a candidate’s desire to work for an employer that provides for the welfare of its employees both in and out of the workplace, as well as the wider community.

A recruiter should go beyond telling candidates *how* they can work for a company and convince them *why* they should. The brand makes the sale, and an organization’s employees are the greatest advocates for its brand. The employees we hire today will be advocates for our brand tomorrow.

CLOSING

Congratulate your new recruits on their decision, and welcome them to the team! Affirmation is key at this stage. Employees want to know that they are in a place where they can belong and contribute. Help guide them to realize their potential as an employee while embracing your company culture.

The Grammarly Way *(continued)*

#5 Transparency

We say what’s on our mind and give each other candid feedback. We need to be open to be a great team. No one knows your perspective better than you, so always speak up and share your ideas. Give and value constructive feedback.



#6 Mastery

Each of us aspires to be the leader in what we do, by striving for individual mastery. We need mastery for efficient actions. A team cannot be a leader unless it’s made up of masters. Continually work to be a master in your field. When you master a skill, start work on a new one!



ASSESSING THE PROCESS

Any company's goal is to hire successful employees quickly and efficiently. The success of the recruiting process revolves around the universal business considerations of input versus output and cost versus benefit. Consider the recruiting process as just that—a process. It's a process that must be implemented, evaluated, and subsequently adjusted to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

This cost-benefit analysis should be applied in the same way to potential hires as it would be to any sales lead. The process should be examined on both a short- and long-term basis. In the short term, the costs (input) expended to cater to a candidate should be proportionate to the projected future benefit the hire could bring to the company.

The long-term evaluation is really an analysis of the recruiting process itself. It's important to assess whether the initial inputs during the hiring process have yielded the projected future benefits. Just as a company adjusts a sales strategy, it must use this analysis to edit its "pitch" to recruit future hires better suited to the corporate culture.

Like a good sales process, Grammarly's hiring process is well defined. Each new opening is advocated by a hiring manager and approved by the executive team subject to our priorities. Before recruiting starts, we assemble a hiring team—led by the hiring manager—for each new opening. The hiring team includes members who check for skill, culture fit, or both. The goal is to make a solid and consistent hiring decision as quickly as possible.

Now it's up to you to determine how you will sell your company to potential candidates. Discover how viewing recruiting as a sales process can work for you. This strategic sales approach could be your company's catalyst to future success. *MW*

As co-founder and head of product strategy for Grammarly, Max Lytvyn drives the future direction and technical integration of Grammarly's product portfolio. Connect with him, the Grammarly team, and more than 1 million Grammarly Facebook fans at www.facebook.com/grammarly

#7 Trust

*Unus pro omnibus,
omnes pro uno*



We trust each other to be exceptional in every way.
High-performing teams are fast. Fast needs absolute cohesion. Cohesion is built on trust.
Earn and return everyone's trust. Use good judgement, and ask for help when necessary.

#8 E-A-G-E-R

Value: We want to work with exceptional peers, and expect each other to be

EAGER.

- Ethical: do the right thing even when no one is watching, without exception
- Adaptable: constantly changing, life-long learner
- Gritty: do whatever it takes to get the job done, whenever necessary
- Empathetic: self-aware; seek to understand and serve others
- Remarkable: have a super-power that makes us stand out, yet humble



How High-Performance Organizations Stay Focused on Customers

BY CAROL MORRISON

In today's volatile business environment—where technologies make it possible to build (or break) corporate reputations in real time and customers are more informed, educated, and demanding than in any past generation—an uncompromising and steadfast focus on customers and their needs is crucial to organizational success.

Yet only two-thirds of the more than 1,300 business leaders recently surveyed by American Management Association (AMA) and the Institute for Corporate Productivity (i4cp) affirmed that their companies keep promises made to customers. Although that's a healthy percentage, it leaves a third of organizations presumably failing to live up to consumers' expectations. In the business world, that spells risk.

Pacific Wine & Spirits of Washington Uses Learning to Drive Customer Focus

At Pacific Wine & Spirits of Washington, a division of the nation's largest wine and spirits distributor Southern Wine & Spirits, learning programs help to maintain a steady focus on internal and external customers.

Seattle-based training manager Brit Olson oversees the development of more than 100 employees in his division, ensuring that ongoing programs and communication help workers acquire the knowledge and skills they need. Those same learning programs also help Pacific Wine & Spirits provide top-quality service to the suppliers whose products the company sells.

"We represent very high-end suppliers, and one of their top priorities is building professional capabilities," Olson says. "They want all of our employees to have knowledge about their products and practices."

In some cases, training can be quite intensive, according to Olson. A six-week wine course imparts content on a level suggestive of sommelier training, and a course titled the "Beverage Alcohol Responsibility Program," developed by Southern Wine & Spirits' corporate university, emphasizes personal-responsibility aspects of alcohol sales and consumption.

Involving suppliers in learning programs (some directly participate in live training presentations) strengthens the company's relationships with those "internal" customers. At the same time, professional development is a very visible investment in employees (who are also internal customers) and their success and growth in their job roles. In turn, those well-informed and confident employees are better able to provide outstanding service to Pacific Wine & Spirits' external customers.

FOCUS APPLIES TO INTERNAL, EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS

Just as alarming was the finding—reported by AMA and i4cp in their report "The Customer-Focused Organization: How Alignment, Advocacy, Data, and Technology Drive High-Performance"—that only 43% of the professionals surveyed said their organizations kept promises to employees. Response patterns were disturbingly similar for organizations worldwide.

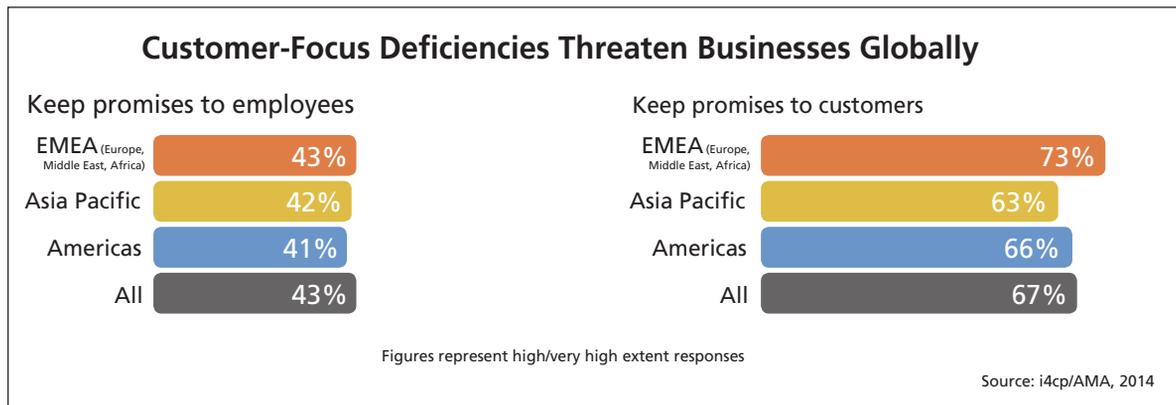
How can business leaders expect workforces to deliver excellent service to customers outside the organization when companies are failing their internal customers? Although the collaborative study concentrated on external customers, the unexpected insight into broken promises should put leaders on notice that it's time to make both external and internal customer focus a higher priority.

Pacific Wine & Spirits of Washington, a division of Southern Wine & Spirits, actively uses organizational learning programs to support both internal and external customer relations (see box).

PERFORMANCE, CUSTOMER FOCUS CONNECTED

High-performance organizations (defined by i4cp on the basis of revenue growth, productivity, market share, and customer satisfaction over time) tend to be consistently customer-focused. Their leaders know that competitive advantage lies in developing a deep understanding of consumers and then using those insights to delight and engage, ultimately turning customers into loyal and involved brand advocates.

"We regularly ask ourselves, 'What more might our clients need? How can we help get them there?'" says Mindy Geisser, chief people officer for the global real estate firm Colliers International. Her comments illustrate the philosophical—and operational—essence of a high-performing, customer-centric company. Several of the practices that distinguish Colliers and contribute to its "culture of customer collaboration," along with key findings that differentiate customer-focused approaches of high-performance firms, are explored in "The Customer-Focused



Organization.” Some of those insights center on strategy, alignment, and talent practices.

CUSTOMER FOCUS REQUIRES STRATEGY AND ALIGNMENT

Keeping customers top-of-mind, as Colliers and other leading companies do, requires specific actions.

High-performance organizations are nearly three times more likely than their lower-performing counterparts to create an overarching strategy that guides them in instilling that constant customer commitment organization-wide. They then set clear goals to translate their customer strategies into a workday reality.

A vital step in that translation is alignment. Organizational processes must be set up (or adjusted) to enable companies to meet their customers’ needs. High-performance organizations are five times more likely than lower performers to ensure rigorous alignment across the operations of all business functions and systems.

TALENT PRACTICES SUPPORT CUSTOMER ORIENTATION

Leaders in high-performance firms pay close attention to talent practices. They take customer orientation

into consideration in hiring decisions at a rate three times that of lower-performing companies. That approach is described by Carmine Gallo in his book *The Apple Experience*. Gallo details Apple’s hiring process for retail talent, observing that a willingness to help customers is among the most important attributes job candidates can display.

Another talent-related practice that supports customer focus entails leveraging workforce diversity to better understand and meet customer needs. Recognizing that employees contribute vital insights to

customer-satisfaction efforts, organizations such as the toy manufacturer Mattel involve employee resource groups in decisions about the design and marketing of new products for specific consumer segments.

Also under talent programming is factoring customer focus into criteria for employee advancement. Companies accomplish this by including customer-oriented activities in employees’ formal performance expectations. Formalizing customer-related behaviors emphasizes accountability while also providing data on which leaders can base performance discussions and advancement decisions.

FOCUS ON THE CUSTOMER AN ONGOING COMMITMENT

In addition to alignment, strategy, and talent processes, the

AMA/i4cp study identified a number of other practices that high-performing organizations use to achieve outstanding effectiveness in serving their customers. These practices include supportive behaviors of executives and middle managers, the use of customer data to shape products and strategies, and a carefully orchestrated social media outreach. Company leaders recognize that it requires a special blend of elements to reach and win customers. Competitive advantage and lasting business success demand that organizations master that blend and make customer focus a priority for every employee every day. *MW*

Carol Morrison is a senior research analyst with i4cp and author of “The Customer-Focused Organization: How Alignment, Advocacy, Data, and Technology Drive High-Performance.” The report is available from AMA at www.amanet.org and from i4cp at www.i4cp.com. She can be reached at carol.morrison@i4cp.com

Secrets to *Romancing* THE BRAND

BY TIM HALLORAN

I had already been in the dark room for three and a half hours, a bowl of peanut M&Ms in front of me, watching through a two-way mirror as various people explained their beverage-consumption habits.

Observing focus groups was a common practice for Coca-Cola brand managers. We were always striving to understand our consumers better so that we might find a way to connect with them.

It started like a normal focus group, much like the hundreds I had sat in on before. A few colleagues and I were waiting, observing, and listening for anything we could use in developing the next year's marketing campaign.

All of a sudden, one of those "aha" moments occurred. It crystallized, at least for me, exactly how marketers should engage with consumers. A petite woman in her late 20s picked up one of

the cans and said to the focus group moderator, “I drink eight of these a day. It is always with me, no matter what happens. It was there when my boss gave me my promotion last week. It was at my side two months ago when my cat died. It got me through it. I start and end my day with it. It has never let me down. I can always count on it. To sum it up, it’s my boyfriend...Diet Coke.”

A wave of laughter hit the back room that I’m sure could be heard by the people on the other side of the two-way mirror. Did she really say that Diet Coke acted so strongly as a support function that she viewed it as a boyfriend? How can one think of a soft drink in boyfriend terms?

But that is exactly what we do. Academic study after academic study has proven it. We don’t just consume or interact with brands on a monthly, daily, or even hourly basis. We actually engage in relationships with them.

As marketers, we act as surrogates who enable a relationship to manifest between our brands and our customers. And what is the most powerful relationship? Clearly, it is that of romance. In essence, our goal should be to make the consumer fall in love with our brand. The most successful brands not only have strong, intimate relationships with their consumers but also work diligently to cultivate, manage, and grow those relationships in significant ways.

Which brings us to a larger question: Why do we want to engage in a romance with consumers? Consumers who are in love with brands will:

- ▶ Find more value in them—and ultimately pay more for them
- ▶ Be less likely to “cheat”
- ▶ Be evangelists and spread the word to others about our brand

CULTIVATING THE RELATIONSHIP

There are eight principles that successful brands use to establish and grow the brand and consumer relationship. Let’s examine each one:

- ▶ **Understand your consumers and their specialness.** Let’s face it. In our own relationships, we have a certain type that is most appealing to us. There are just some people we “click” with better than others. The same thing goes for brands and consumers. Not all consumers are created equal. Some are more valuable than others.

A brand must work diligently to understand the consumers who will be the most likely to engage in a relationship and ultimately share the brand with others. This process involves really getting to know the consumer, and not just on a surface (that is, demographic) level. It requires truly understanding them—their hopes, goals, fears, beliefs, attitudes and, more important, how the brand fits into their lives.

- ▶ **Determine how you’ll be different.** To stick out from competitors, a brand has to be different. Too often, marketers believe that the brand must differentiate itself on what we refer to as an “intrinsic” or “functional” benefit, a way that the brand physically differs from other



Tim Halloran

“Stories are timeless, and they enable brands to create an ongoing dialogue with consumers. No one is better than Coca-Cola in creating memorable stories that integrate the brand and result in significant word of mouth.”

options. But the fact of the matter is, a category can provide only so many functional benefits for consumers. As a result, brands soon resort to a game of one-upmanship.

The strongest brands, such as Apple and Nike, marry the functional benefits they provide to strong emotional benefits. They connect emotionally and provide their consumer base with a feeling that transcends the physical experience. Examples may include giving the consumer confidence, making her feel like she’s doing something good for herself, or even serving as a badge that tells other people about her own beliefs and attitudes.

► **Leverage your evangelists to spread the word.** A brand’s most important consumer is one I call the “influencer.” Different people may be influencers for different categories, but every group has an individual whose opinions are noted, advice taken, and recommendations sought. It may be the foodie, the athlete, or the intellect, but every brand has them. They are the ones you want to pass on your brand’s message. This phenomenon is known as “word-of-mouth marketing.” It also represents the way a true relationship works—the consumer gives back to the brand by telling others about it. Think about a time when you and a significant other got serious. You wanted to shout it from the mountaintops and tell the world, right? It is no different with brands and consumers. Brands need their most valuable consumers to help spread the message.

► **Tell your story and create an experience.** Our personal relationships are built on stories and experiences. The same is true for brands. No one is better than Coca-Cola in creating memorable stories that integrate the brand and result in significant word of mouth. Memorable brand experiences can become a powerful tool in driving a brand’s talk value, and a positive brand experience is much more likely to result in sharing with others. When Coke Zero was launched, a word-of-mouth measurement system was put in place that compared an interactive sampling event with a corresponding social media campaign. Those who experienced the brand firsthand in the sampling program were 15 times more likely to tell others about the experience than those who received a social media message.

► **Have a compelling personality that shines through all your interactions.** In a groundbreaking 1997 study, Jennifer Aaker concluded that consumers’ perception of brand personalities closely mirrored their perception of human personalities. This means consumers see brands as exhibiting similar qualities as other people. Therefore, it is critical to develop a brand personality through packaging, communications, and even spokespeople that is not only appealing to the consumer but also represents a personification of the brand. A great example of this concept is smartwater’s use of Jennifer Aniston to create a brand personality that is attractive and humorous, yet approachable.

► **Make your partner feel special.** In our closest relationships—our romances—the crux of the relationship is about making the other person feel special. If a consumer believes he or she is truly valued by the brand, the relationship becomes that much stronger.

So how do you make consumers feel special? Offer them opportunities that other people don't get. Create options that they feel are specifically designed for them. When Chick-fil-A began to sample its new Spicy Chicken Sandwich prior to its launch, the brand created a system in which only those consumers who had made a reservation online to try the sandwich could experience it. Only Chick-fil-A's most passionate consumers, the members of its eClub, were initially invited to the sampling event. But they were also given the power to invite their friends and family to make an online reservation to sample the sandwich too. The result was that the new sandwich had a feel of exclusivity associated with it for its most loyal consumers.

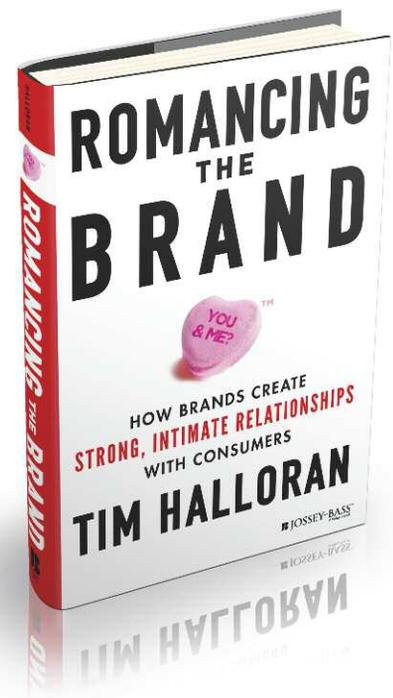
► **Be honest.** Honesty is the crux of any strong relationship. When brands try to “cover up” an issue or be less than sincere with their consumer base, they damage any potential for a relationship. A great example of honesty in action was when Domino's Pizza, in introducing its new and improved pizza, admitted to consumers that its previous pizzas were less than ideal. After the pizza was launched, Domino's shared every consumer comment—good, bad, and indifferent. The result was a phenomenal turnaround in brand health and ultimately in sales for Domino's. Honesty builds romance.

► **Leverage mistakes and missteps to get stronger.** Our own relationships can experience ruts and even crises. It is no different with a brand's relationship with consumers. With more mature brands, it's difficult to keep things fresh. However, it is critical to do just that and bring news to the relationship. Just recently, original Cheerios, as a result of feedback received from activist groups, became GMO-free. Although this change appeased fringe/activist groups, it served the more important purpose of providing a burst of news to mainstream Cheerios consumers. It reengaged the brand with the consumer.

Too often, marketers tend to be dismissive when we hear about consumers having an issue with a product or service. However, vocal minorities can be extremely powerful and influential. By listening and truly understanding the issues of our dissatisfied consumers, we might find a solution that not only brings them back into the fold, but makes our product or service brand that much stronger with everyone else.

If we can think of consumers in a relationship context, it will make us better marketers. Remember, at the end of the day a relationship is defined as follows: It is beneficial to both parties (otherwise, why are you there?); it involves looking out for the other and doing things in his or her best interests; and it is about making each other feel special. If we can operate based on these three principles, we will bring integrity to our profession, doing right by our brands and our customers. MW

Tim Halloran is the author of Romancing the Brand: How Brands Create Strong, Intimate Relationships with Consumers (Jossey-Bass, 2014). He is president of Atlanta-based Romance the Brand Group and has built and directed some of the world's largest brands.



TALENT WARS

Rethinking Talent Management for Future Success

BY ELAINE VARELAS

In an economy where job seekers are just starting to move by choice, many human resources professionals believe the war for talent is an old book that has no bearing on their challenge to “fill requirements in 30 days.”

This tactic, while shortsighted, may actually be valuable if it is part of a longer-term view providing effective guidelines for the kind of talent needed at every stage in a strategic business and human resources plan. Without the strategic guidelines, however, human resources will fill the job with no context for the future and only a need to get yesterday's work done.

Talent management requires taking a broader view of hiring and a closer look at nontraditional pockets of talent. The next key hire may not embody the traditional 30-something, 9-to-5 onsite package. Looking outside your organization's comfort zone can open up your company to a plethora of skilled and experienced workers. It also can position you to truly compete in the talent wars of the future.

When organizations look at their business and hiring goals and define what they need in an employee, they should be flexible about what that definition might look like. This expanded view is the real difference between recruiting and talent acquisition.

THE OLDER WORKER

One area that is too often overlooked by HR professionals is the older worker. Unfortunately for them, workers over age 50 have higher rates of availability (in large part because they tend to be out of work longer). But their loss is a hiring manager's gain—not just in availability but in desirability too. If you were to ask a hiring manager what he or she is looking for in an employee, the answer would most likely be the following: someone with skills, cultural savvy, experience, adaptability, and flexibility. Older workers have all of that, plus they've most likely “been there, done that” with office politics and backstabbing and have given up that annoying, productivity-busting habit.

Ironically, while most people are working well beyond the traditional retirement age of 65 and staying active and healthy through those years, the commonly accepted definition of the “older worker” is getting progressively younger. But companies that overlook candidates in their 50s and 60s are being myopic. Most job stints today are expected to run between three and five



years, so even if you hire a 60-year-old person, he or she will most likely work beyond the length of the average post.

It's impossible to predict talent needs 10 years out, and even five years can be a stretch. Your talent needs will change, and it is shortsighted to believe that older workers cannot fit into your three- to five-year hiring plan. Take a cue from politics, where the average age of someone holding public office is much higher than that of an executive in private business. Older employees embody experience, depth, and stability.

THE PART-TIME OR CONTRACT WORKER

Another pocket of underused talent is the permanent part-time or contract worker. Most employers go the traditional route, hiring only full-time, permanent people because a traditional worker is easier for the traditional manager to manage. Many organizations are reluctant to take an alternative approach to talent management because it requires more flexible and innovative management techniques, and many managers don't believe they have the skills. It's easier for managers to get their heads around the use of full-time, in-office workers, and it's harder to work with a virtual, global, or part-time workforce.

HR professionals can help managers in their companies develop the skills they need to manage a more diverse workforce, and managers can develop management techniques that are based on employees reaching measurable milestones instead of on face time. It's possible to manage different people in different ways by focusing on goals, objectives, and deliverables.

The advantage of hiring permanent part-time and contract workers is that organizations can address their current needs without locking themselves into a long-term contract. Contract workers can be hired to tackle specific short-term projects, and HR managers do not need to

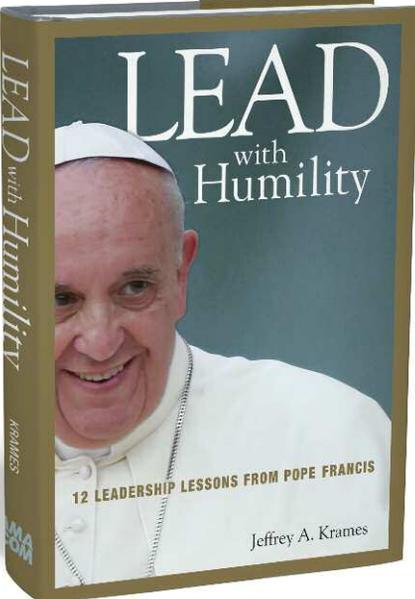
reassign them when the project is finished. There are different ways to hire contract and part-time workers. If an organization is wary of adding to its headcount, it can go through contract companies that take on the risk of hiring, insuring, and providing benefits to these workers.

MANAGING THE EMPLOYEE PORTFOLIO

The key to talent management is looking at what needs to be done in different ways. Most of us understand our investment portfolios; we assess, cull, and rearrange our finances to best meet the changing needs of the market and our lives. HR professionals can look at employee portfolios in the same manner, helping their organizations better adapt to dynamic, changing work environments. Having a mix of full-time, part-time, contract, virtual, global, and flextime employees can best meet a company's talent needs.

How many times do you or your staff members say no to recruiting methods you haven't yet explored or talk about how hard it would be to manage a certain type of nontraditional employee? Look at the value proposition rather than the lack of experience in managing these employees, and build that management strength internally so that your leaders and managers can always hire and retain top talent. The war for talent is never-ending, present in a great economy and in challenging times. *MW*

Elaine Varelas is managing partner at Keystone Partners (www.keystonepartners.com). She has more than 20 years of experience in career consulting and coaching development and has worked with numerous executive management teams to improve organizational effectiveness. Her experience spans a broad range of industries and businesses, including Fortune 500 companies, startup ventures, and nonprofit organizations.



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Leadership and Women in PHILANTHROPY



Jamie Jaffee

Jamie Jaffee is managing partner of the Philanthropic Initiative, an advisory firm that works with corporate and private philanthropists, providing high-impact philanthropic solutions at the local, national, and global level to foster better giving worldwide.

Jaffee sat down for a Q&A with *MWorld* to address the importance of corporate giving, how leaders should handle philanthropy in a strategic way, and the importance of women in the philanthropic landscape.

Q Why is it important for a company to be involved in philanthropic initiatives?

JJ: From our experiences at TPI, the Philanthropic Initiative, we've worked with lots of companies, of all sizes, and have really come to learn that it's best if you can figure out a way to make your philanthropy be a strategic part to align with your corporate goals. In other words, if you can get your business goals and your philanthropic goals together, then that makes for some really successful programming that then will engage your employees in ways you never dreamed might be possible. Those entering the workforce today, and consumers, are really expecting that companies have true authentic social responsibility. The expectations out there are greater than ever before that companies are going to be able to demonstrate that their philanthropy is making a difference. The ability to measure the impact of philanthropy really helps to create a wonderful message for a company's board, its consumers, its stakeholders, and, we're finding more and more, its employees—because it enhances morale.

Q What form should these initiatives take? How does it go beyond just writing a check?

JJ: In some ways, it's about a company really affirming the importance of employee volunteerism, employee engagement, because many companies are just proud to say that their employees have been involved in certain nonprofits, doing *x* number of hours out in the community, which led to a wonderful impact in the communities in which they serve and they work. We've also found that employee volunteerism enhances morale, and it actually helps enhance work performance because people feel so delighted to actually be part of a company that wants to give back in those types of ways.

Another thing that any sort of corporate philanthropy initiative might do is establish goodwill within a community and with local partners and obviously add value to the company's brand. We see all sorts of initiatives, from putting together program initiatives that involve employees around a certain cause, to having committees that review grant requests, to just getting some really nice information out to the community about the impact that their philanthropy is having. It goes way beyond just writing a check. It really involves the people, the consumers. Good philanthropy makes for good business.

Q What is the right way and wrong way for a manager to approach a company's philanthropic efforts, when it comes to managing employees involved in these efforts?

JJ: The worst model would be the CEO who has a pet charity and says, "This is what we are going to fund, and I want you all to come behind this effort and make it work." What we're finding much more is that if a company takes the time to think about its values and its mission and what it wants its focus to be in the community philanthropically, there are ways to engage groups of people within the firm. The more there can be the empowerment of employees in making philanthropical decisions, that's a very wonderful management tool to enhance people's participation and help them believe in the mission of the business.

Q Have you seen a difference in the way women approach philanthropy as opposed to men? And how does this play out when they're the managers and the leaders?

JJ: There are many women who have moved into leadership roles around philanthropy, and as I think about that, it seems to make so much sense when you look at what are some of the traits and the ways that women lead. As I'm sure you would agree, women are oftentimes far more relational, far more collaborative, and want to do more consultatively and with others across the business to make the right decisions on behalf of the company. Those kinds of skills can really help in bringing together lots of people across an organization; they can make a difference. I like to say sometimes that women tend to be more transformational leaders while men are more likely to be transactional leaders. What I mean by that is, and I know this is a generalization, but women oftentimes can be defined as those who serve as role models, mentors—empowering workers, encouraging innovation. That really works to make an organization they're leading become successful. And while there are men who are certainly in that camp—don't get me wrong—I feel that women oftentimes tend to have more of the characteristics or traits that make it a natural for them to be authentic about what they're bringing to the firm and bringing people together in a philanthropic way.

Q As a leader, how important is it for a manager to listen to employees as to what kinds of charities they should put their attention to?

JJ: I think it's truly a give-and-take and it's complementary. It needs to be a dialogue that goes both ways. Employees are looking to the folks at the helm, their leaders, to be setting some direction and some vision that may impact the philanthropic culture. But they're also looking to the leaders to want their input, to listen to what they have to say.

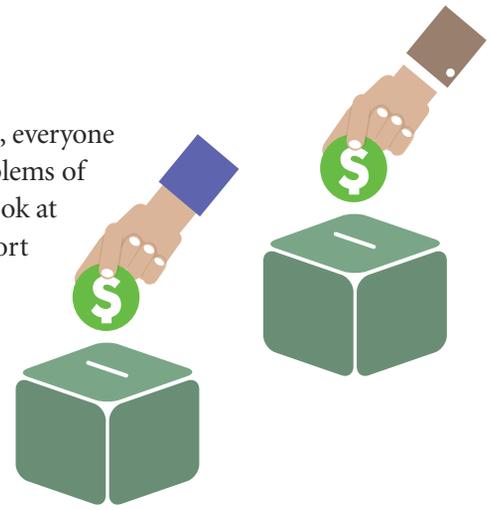
Q Are there differences in the types of charities women gravitate to as opposed to men? Or do the causes seem to be similar?

JJ: What we're seeing now is that women are becoming such a big part of philanthropic giving. I have a couple of statistics I like to throw out there: Women control 83% of household spending and 50% of personal wealth now. And because women are coming up the age curve and they are

also becoming corporate leaders and owning more businesses, everyone wants to figure out ways to solve some of the intractable problems of the world. So when you look at giving across the board, and look at the different sectors, the areas that get the most support traditionally are religious and educational institutions, but a lot of the other sectors are increasing in importance.

For companies that have any sort of multinational capability, there has been a surge of interest in how to make a difference globally. So I would say that in the past, traditionally women have been more associated with things like the arts or softer things. But now I am seeing women who are in their own right getting involved in very big issues that impact societies.

What's also happening is that people and companies are looking for much more of a strategic focus with their philanthropy. In years past, a lot of corporate giving programs were just giving money to hundreds of nonprofits, with little amounts. Now, many more firms are saying, "We've been so philanthropic over the years, we've given away so much money, but what difference did it really make? How can we evaluate that?" More of them are looking to discipline themselves with some overriding focus that might help them be a lot more strategic and focused in selecting the kinds of charities that they will support.



Q What kinds of global issues are companies starting to address now?

JJ: Issues around public health and hospital health, issues around combating poverty and educating the poor—the big issues that we're all thinking of and grappling with all the time. For companies that are doing much more here in the United States, they are looking at those same issues but from a domestic front.

Q Is "feminism" a dirty word in the philanthropic area, considering so many global poverty issues are connected with the state of women's and girls' rights?

JJ: I'm so glad you brought that up. The state of women and girls is such an important, hot topic right now, it's transcending all the different sectors—health, education, etc. I feel that there is increasing interest in that. It's a realization of how women's impact could make such a difference in these societal issues. So yes, I would say women and girls are becoming an increasingly important subject matter.

Q Do you see women leaders at companies bringing forth these issues? Do you see any sort of cause and effect—as women come up the ranks, they turn their attention to the issues that impact women globally?

JJ: No, I don't think so. Really, I don't know the answer to that. But what I would say is that I think there is far more of an ever-changing mindset by women, by men, to look at some of these issues that women are facing and some of the gaps in information, education, and resources. I've seen lots of male CEOs who are getting behind some of those very same issues and really making that an important part of the philanthropic culture of an institution. There are more and more women in the workplace, and it's so important to be recognizing that. The power of everyone coming together to make a difference is key. *MW*



AMA Creates Programs and Resources for Women

According to a survey titled “Advancing Women at IBM: Executive Research Study” and Jennifer Howland, an executive at IBM, women who want to move ahead need to be visible, plan their careers, and integrate their work and personal life. Successful leadership development programs must address all three aspects. They need to offer women chances to demonstrate their skills by giving them high-visibility projects. At the same time, these programs must support women’s growth by helping them plan the skills and relationships they need to cultivate to rise up within an organization.

Although the primary goal of leadership development programs is to map out the skills high-potential women need to acquire, also consider that the participants should be able to practice what they learn in a comfortable, safe environment where they can receive feedback. This process includes helping women find mentors and affinity groups as well as safe havens where they can develop their skills and external contacts.

To meet these needs, AMA is unrolling a Women’s Leadership Center that offers training and free resources. A number of women have found our courses—including *Leadership Development for Women* and *Assertiveness Training for Women in Business*—to be very useful. Based on their feedback, we are adding new courses such as *Executive Presence for Women*.

Women coming to our courses have indicated they want to understand how gender differences play out in the workplace and how to handle these incidences with specific tactics. In particular, they want to understand how to handle gender-based bias when it comes to career advancement.

AMA’s Women’s Leadership Center is designed to meet these requests. We have scheduled six free webcasts so far that will debut in 2015:

- ▶ “How to Find Your Passion” on January 14 with Alexandra Levit
- ▶ “Your Journey to Executive: Insights from Women Executives” on February 4 with Jennifer Howland
- ▶ “The Power of Introverted Women” on March 11 with Jennifer Kahnweiler
- ▶ “The Well-Spoken Woman Can Be You” on April 29 with Christine K. Jahnke
- ▶ “What It Takes to Be a Courageous Woman Leader” on May 6 with Bonnie St. John
- ▶ “Striving for Excellence, Not Perfection” on June 24 with Rikki Klieman

Levit and Kahnweiler also have contributed articles to this issue.

AMA will continue to expand its offerings for women who wish to develop their executive and management careers. Keep an eye on our website, www.amanet.org, for future initiatives.

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