

Best Business Strategies for Today's Economy

September 2011

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The Impact of True Leadership

One of our favorite quotes on leadership comes from Dr. Stephen Covey, who said, "**Leadership is communicating the worth of others so effectively they see it in themselves.**" While that one statement could form the foundation for much of the leadership development in the business world today, think how profound the statement is when applied to other areas of our lives as well. "**Real parenting is communicating the worth of your children so effectively they see it in themselves.**" "**Real teaching is communicating the worth of your students so effectively they see it in themselves.**" "**Real coaching is communicating the worth of your team so effectively they see it in themselves.**" In how many other walks of life could this same statement be altered to provide deep value and meaning?



We enjoy sharing some of the peculiarities of human nature and one principle stands out that should be abundantly clear to all. Human beings are strongly motivated by their own self-interest, and that isn't likely to change anytime soon. What separates extraordinary leaders from the mediocre is one thing. Great leaders fulfill their self-interest by helping others fulfill their own. Now, how powerful is that! Let's look at just a few of the traits that characterize exceptional leaders.

True leaders:

- Are excellent communicators, possessing outstanding listening skills
- Are passionate about their organization's success and inspire their colleagues
- Attract great talent, hire the best people and readily delegate responsibility to them.
- Are committed to their colleagues and care about them.
- Pursue development and lifelong learning for themselves and associates
- Instill trust by being fair, honest and open
- Possess high ethical standards and integrity and

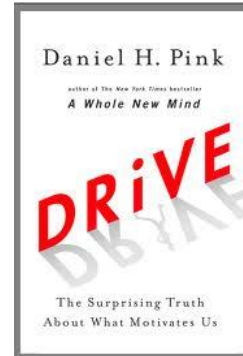
expect the same from colleagues.

- Build a work environment that is safe, ethical, meaningful and enjoyable

When we present **Developing Dynamic Leaders** we ask our audience to give us the names of great leaders that come to mind. Audience members routinely give us responses such as Nelson Mandela, Gandhi, Churchill, Lincoln, Washington and Martin Luther King, Jr. We hear the names of Colin Powell, Pope John Paul II, Gorbachev, Jefferson and Franklin. Generally, most of us would agree that this is a good listing of outstanding leaders.

But what we don't hear disturbs us. We don't hear, "My boss at work is a great leader." We believe we actually do know several pretty outstanding leaders personally, and some of them live and work locally. But when you start down the list of leaders from our largest corporations, our governmental officials, our military commanders or our educators, it seems that when we examine their actual performance, the vast majority of them don't pass muster.

In his award-winning book, **Drive**, Daniel Pink made the following startling comment, "*Staggering levels of employee disengagement and a decade of performance under-achievement on the part of American Business are problems we are only beginning to recognize.*" The first decade of the twenty first century was, indeed, one of the three worst decades in terms of economic growth in the history of the United States. The encouraging news is that some exceptional organizations are taking the leadership challenge to heart and are performing magnificently.



Here is a challenge to all would-be leaders reading this (we would include ourselves in this challenge). When we consider whether an individual has the capacity, the commitment and character to lead, we most often arrive at a question of much larger scope. **Have you made the choice to lead?** While there are certainly abilities to develop, knowledge to learn, experience to gain, and resources to acquire, true leadership is more than anything else, a choice.

Do we **choose** to see and communicate the worth of our colleagues, our constituents, our children, our students or our team so effectively they see it in themselves? When any organization, large or small, is led by one who genuinely displays those fine leadership characteristics, their colleagues thrive and perform exceptionally. Their organizations are universally successful and admired. Look around you. They are in full bloom.

Leaders, we need to step up and selflessly lead.
Diane Winn & Tom Searcy
Executive Coaches
Through Eagles Eyes, Inc.

Thank you!

***We would like to thank the Michiana
chapter of the Society of Human
Resource Management for honoring
Through Eagles Eyes with the
2010 Business of the Year award!***