

Leading and Learning, Inc. is a 45-member **organizational management consulting firm** based in Los Angeles with clients across the U.S., Canada, Europe and Asia. We support leaders during change processes with focus on organizational change management, leadership development, and personal and professional effectiveness. Our client roster includes CEOs and other leaders in corporations and organizations spanning **banking, utilities, manufacturing, hospitality/entertainment, hospitals/health systems, technology/aerospace, service industries, government and nationally-based nonprofits.**

EACH MONTH Dr. Billie Blair, President of Leading and Learning, Inc. writes an article for Lead-Zine that focuses on the variety of ways that executives and other managers can manage 21st Century processes that require adept use of both traditional management techniques as well as organizational change strategies. This month, Dr. Blair is focusing on team building as an indispensable process of the 21st Century.

◇ Additional Articles on this quarter's specific topic of assessment of leaders have been invited and are included on the pages that follow.

Authors this month include :

- Terry Williams, CEO, TWC Group
- Chris Musselwhite, EdD.
- Kevin Eikenberry, Eikenberry Group
- Allen Cohen, PhD., Babson College
- Mary Adams, Trek Consulting
- John R. Poncy, CEO, Venali
- E. Ted Prince, Rebecca Prince, Perth Leadership Institute.

Dr. Blair's latest book

ALL THE MOVING PARTS:
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE
MANAGEMENT

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OCTOBER 2007 – “Team Building – The Indispensable Process of the 21st Century”

BILLIE G. BLAIR, PhD

When teams and team building are mentioned, the typical response is: “Oh, sure, that forming, storming, norming, performing stuff” – signifying that the buzz words are remembered but not the meaning of the terms.

► **Forming** is the first stage, focusing on gathering the team designees together to begin their processes. What is *said* and *done* at the first team meetings will mold the team and will dictate how well the team will function in the long term.

► **Important Steps at the Forming Stage** ▲ Select a skilled team leader. ▲ Develop relevant materials so that the project can be comprehensible to team members.

▲ Generate a strong sense of membership and affiliation from the onset.

► **Storming** is meant to imply that the group moves into a stage of developing solutions to the designated problem. For example, in determining how to conduct a project to build a new semiconductor, a first requirement is a complete understanding of the problem and the project's challenges. The project overview, guidelines, and other specifications are reviewed and discussed during this stage.

► **Important Steps at the Storming Stage** ▲ Generate common group understanding of the project expectations.

▲ Set behavioral guidelines for group performance as well as outcomes and objectives of the discussion process.

▲ Maintain group performance standards at all times during team discussion.

► **Norming** – Group norming is used to bring the group together for application of combined efforts. To normalize a group for appropriate team functioning, establish operational guidelines and measured actions that promote good group interactions.

► **Important Steps at the Norming Stage** ▲ Establish guidelines for normatively functioning behavior of the team.

▲ Develop processes to be used for correcting and redirecting tangential and dysfunctional efforts of the group's members. ▲ Maintain oversight of the group, with continuing guidance, direction, interaction and intervention.

► **Performing** – Good group performance is a necessity for the appropriate completion of work projects.

► **Important Steps at the Performing Stage** ▲ Establish project goals and performance guidelines for the tasks that each member must complete to achieve project success.

▲ Develop measuring and tracking protocols that all understand and can use to establish major and minor milestones of the project's progress. ▲ Continue to promote good working relationship in support of project goals.

***THE LEAD-ZINE HAS
EXPANDED TO MULTIPLE
PAGES!***

IN THIS ISSUE

***ENJOY THE WRITINGS OF
AUTHORS WHO DISCUSS
TOPICS OF***

***LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT
AND DEVELOPMENT***

***THE CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS THIS
MONTH TALK ABOUT***

- ***ASSESSING LEADERSHIP IS RISKY BUSINESS – Terry Williams, CEO, TWG***
- ***CREATING A CULTURE OF DEVELOPMENT - Chris Musselwhite, EdD.***
- ***THE BEST LEADERS LEAVE SOMETHING BEHIND – Mary Adams, Trek Consulting***
- ***ASSESSING YOUR LEADERSHIP BENCH STRENGTH – Kevin Eikenberry***
- ***ASSESSING LEADERS – Allan R. Cohen, PhD***
- ***LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY – John Poncy, CEO, Venali***
- ***ASSESSING LEADERS – FINANCIALLY – E. Ted Prince and Rebecca Prince, Perth Leadership Institute***

ASSESSING LEADERSHIP IS RISKY BUSINESS

Terry Williams, CEO, TWC Group

It has been said that the quality of leadership, more than any other single factor, determines the success or failure of an organization. Selecting leaders who can shoulder burdens and meet today's business challenges is of utmost importance.

While past successes may be indicative of an executive's behavior and abilities, you are left wondering if the individual has the skills and vision to help take the company to the next level? Or collaborate well with the management team? Or, cope with change? When the fate of the company is at stake, it is often difficult to tolerate such uncertainty.

To overcome these difficulties, businesses often utilize various assessment tools that are available on the market. Assessing leaders means everything to the future of an organization. Leaders are necessary to grow and improve the business and are a key factor in retaining its talent. Without effective leadership, and just the right fit, companies flounder – definitely not a risk worth taking when there are remedies readily at hand.

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CREATING A CULTURE OF DEVELOPMENT

Chris Musselwhite, EdD.

Few argue the wisdom of succession planning. With the number of years an employee stays with one company now at an all-time low, identifying who to invest in is more important than ever. Instead of gambling on a few high-potentials each year, why not create a culture of ongoing assessment and development for all individuals throughout the organization?

Within your management ranks, you already have all the manpower you need for this task. No one knows better the performance, leadership potential, skills and development needs of an individual than the manager who oversees their work every day. When managers are responsible for the development of their reports, they begin to think beyond getting the job done today to thinking about the skills their people will need to do the job in five years. This big-picture thinking keeps companies agile and able to meet constantly changing market demands.

In order to create this culture of development, there must be a shift to supplying managers with the appropriate resources:

• **Performance reviews** – When done correctly and periodically, performance reviews can provide a good view of a person's long-term job performance and can identify development needs long before they turn into organizational issues. In this way, the management pipeline is kept healthy and viable.

• **360 Assessments** – This assessment tool is convenient and anonymous and can provide invaluable insight into a person's effectiveness as well as a very accurate roadmap to guide future development.

• **Coaching** – Once an area of development is identified, coaching provides the extra push required to help individuals make sustainable change in future behavior that make them more effective and valuable to the organization.

• **Action Learning** – A well-crafted business simulation provides a learning experience that relates directly to the workplace, allowing individuals to practice leadership and collaborative behaviors and skills in a safe, risk-free environment with quick feedback.

In a culture of development, everyone wins. Individuals feel valued, managers have better-prepared workers, and organizations gain a management and leadership pipeline that will never run dry.

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THE BEST LEADERS LEAVE SOMETHING BEHIND

Mary Adams, Trek Consulting

American business culture values strong leadership. We tend to assume that it is the vision and force of personality of strong leaders that creates truly breakthrough performance. This ethos is reinforced by current practices of astronomical CEO pay in many companies – which basically assumes that leaders are miracle workers that alone make all the difference and do work hundreds of times more valuable than that of the average worker. But the best leader, and this is the ultimate metric of leadership, is just the opposite. The best leader prepares the organization to operate without him or her. That is, the leader creates an organization that institutionalizes as much knowledge and experience as possible. This is the essence of a company today: a place where specific competencies are built, shared, nurtured and enhanced. In this kind of company, the “star” leader gets in the way. Today, the best manager will create processes, develop people, nurture relationships and provide direction for the organization. But the key to great results (and good leadership) in this kind of company is the willingness of its leaders to step away and help the company to succeed on its own. The ultimate assessment of good leadership is whether or not the leader can actually do that: step away and have the company succeed on its own.

ASSESSING YOUR LEADERSHIP BENCH STRENGTH

Kevin Eikenberry

Never before has it been so important for us to assess the strength of our leaders waiting in the wings. Your current leaders are being wooed by other organizations and are also growing older. Research shows that by 2010 there will be a shortage of 10 million workers in the U.S., and the greatest shortage will be in the leadership areas.

To be well-stocked with effective leaders both now and in the future, begin with assessment.

These seven questions can be asked to assess the leadership skill potential of those in your organization:

- 1 – Are they being monitored and supported in their leadership roles? Some people exhibit leadership tendencies, regardless of their job title. Others seem uncomfortable after having the title for years.
- 2 – Do they exhibit leadership in other capacities? Are your future leaders involved outside of work, using and developing their leadership skills in other areas and venues?
- 3 – Do they seek development? Are leaders and future leaders active in their own self development, learning in both formal and informal ways, even on their own time and expense?
- 4 – Are they willing to learn other parts of the business or organization? Leaders see things with a larger perspective. Do they look beyond their current role, assignment and department?
- 5 – Do they ask questions? Are they curious about others, the business and the future?
- 6 – Do they build relationships? Are they actively building more and deeper relationships with others inside and outside of the organization?
- 7 – Are they a good fit in your organization? Even though they might meet other criteria, the leadership fit should also be right for your organization’s culture and needs.

ASSESSING LEADERS - Allan R. Cohen, PhD

◆ Assessing leaders is difficult because the nature of leadership requires sometimes going against the grain, ignoring advice and forging ahead. The problem is that it won’t be clear whether or not the leader was brilliantly foresighted or just pig-headed until after the results are in, which might not be for some years. Because of this difficulty, leaders often get judged on short term results, which may not truly reflect the value of what they have done. Great leadership requires balancing the need for near term results with investments in the future, yet the judgment of a leader’s performance may have to be done sooner. It is easier to assess in hindsight than in real time or as predictions of future performance.

◆ Another option that is frequently used is to judge the leader on the basis of style or process. This has two difficulties: it is possible for leaders to be highly effective even though their style is not particularly impressive and vice versa, because styles go in and out of fashion. Tough guys were seen as heroes 10 years ago, but are now seen as embodiments of Chainsaw Al. Those who are good at involving others and sharing responsibility are sometimes seen as just what is needed in complex times, but, at times, get written off as too needy of approval to make tough decisions. Thus style is better utilized to judge fit with the organization than to judge leadership accomplishment.

◆ Almost all effective leaders have had crucible experiences where their confidence and skills were forged in extremely difficult situations and where they were in over their heads and still succeeded. In assessing for leadership, probing candidates for these learning experiences can be useful.

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LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY

John Poncy, CEO, Venali

Leadership is often defined as the ability to influence your charges to perform in such a manner as to achieve the desired result. This is well-accepted, but unfortunately benefits only the select few who are in leadership positions.

To dismiss others in the organization, I would submit, is a tremendous abdication of responsibility – not just of the individual, but of the leaders of the organization and the organization as a whole. This can be seen by pondering the following questions: Do leaders hold the monopoly on good ideas? Are they the only ones who can see what is best for the organization? Can they always get accurate information? Should we assume that others are incapable of influencing positive change? Do we really want to relegate everyone other than the senior leadership rank to minion status?

I would say that the answers to all of these is “no.” Any good CEO will tell you that the culture of an organization cannot be changed by any one individual. It can be influenced by the leader, but change must come from within.

What should be done, then, to influence change from within? Most good companies have leadership development programs in place to educate key leaders on how the business of the company is conducted. But taking those efforts a step further, how can we begin to teach those in cubicles to influence their peers and guide those around them to establish a climate of change? I would submit that we should embrace a different definition for leadership -- and that it should be defined, instead, as the ability to influence everyone in the company to act in a *leadership* capacity in order to achieve the desired results established by the company’s strategy system and its annual goals. Companies of yesterday were made up of *us*, often identified as the leaders, and separated from *them*, the workers. Companies of the 21st Century will only be made up of *us*, functioning together as the leaders.

ASSESSING LEADERS FINANCIALLY

Dr. E. Ted Prince and Rebecca Prince, Perth Leadership Institute

There are some great assessment tools that allow executives and other leaders to gain personal and professional insights. These approaches can be helpful at levels where building self-awareness and organizational skills is important. But it is often the case that the more senior executives and other leaders who are good at their jobs are ultimately focused on one thing: the bottom line.

Where assessment is concerned, senior executives need to be treated differently. Many have one critical objective that they are measured against – and that is whether or not they make money. As such, it’s of decreasing relevance to know more about their personality type. Instead, leaders want to know if they are “naturally profitable.” And, if they’re not, they want to know what to change in order to get there.

We believe that organizational development must become increasingly focused on the bottom-line in order to gain relevance in modern corporations. A key part of the job of developing business acumen will be to focus not only on individuals within the organization but on the organization’s culture so that the elusive profit-making behavior can be developed in all employees. Concepts such as key financial traits - which can be identified, measured and developed - help to give business leaders a common language that directly links the behavior of all those in the organization with the bottom line outcomes of that behavior.