

Great Leadership

STRATEGIES FOR LEADING HIGH-PERFORMING COMMUNITY COLLEGES

— GREAT LEADERSHIP BOOK REVIEW —

Taming the Dragons of Change: 10 tips for achieving happiness and success when everything around you is changing.

Stieglitz, Dick (2006). New York, NY: PublishAmerica.

Reviewed by Lisa Jackson, Director of Program Marketing, WCCCD

It has often been said that what we fear the most is change. As we become comfortable with our daily routines – what we wear, what we do, even what we eat, stepping outside the realm of our safe cocoons can cause a great deal of stress. As we all know, however, change is a part of life, particularly when it comes to work and relationships.

It is imperative for developing leaders to know how to recognize change, acknowledge it and, accept it gracefully. Taming the Dragons of Change by Dr. Dick Stieglitz offers ideas as to how to accomplish these three actions. In a tone that is more conversational than formal, Stieglitz discusses different types of change, when change occurs, who is likely to be affected by change and how not to be stressed by change. Readers are asked to realize that change is normal and can be a great learning tool in dealing with both sudden and gradual adjustments to careers and personal lives.

Unlike many books of this genre, Dr. Stieglitz book uses real-world examples to underscore his main points and offers practical advice and guidance. His main message is that we must all acknowledge that change is constant; it is to be expected and embraced. Whether we want to admit it or not, without change we can not grow.

For more information about Dr. Stieglitz, go to www.dragonsofchange.com

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Dr. Curtis L. Ivery Chancellor

Recommended Reading

Editor's picks for discovering and building leadership talent in self and others.

Love 'Em or Lose 'Em: Getting Good People to Stay. Kaye, Beverly and Jordan-Evans, Sharon (2005). San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler (ISBN 1576750736)

The Innovation Killer: How What We Know Limits What We Can Imagine...And What Smart Companies Are Doing About It. Rabe, Cynthia B. (2006). New York, NY: Amacom. (ISBN 0814408834)

Developing the Leader Within You. Maxwell, John (2005). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc. (ISBN 0785281126)

George Washington's Leadership Lessons: What the Father of Our Country Can Teach Us About Effective Leadership and Character. Rees, James and Spignesi, Stephen (2007). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. (ISBN 0470088877)

Email: The Manual: Everything You Should Know About Email Etiquette, Policies and Legal Liability Before You Hit Send. Steele, Jeffrey (2006). Oak Park, IL: Marion Street Press. (ISBN 1933338156)

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Great Leadership Invites Guest Authors

Do you have an article you've written, the description of a successful work process, or the details of a leadership program that you want read by a broad audience of colleagues? The Great Leadership newsletter seeks to publish well-written, informative, forward thinking articles and ideas. The topics we publish deal with leadership and

The Art of Visionary Leadership: Painting a Face on the Future

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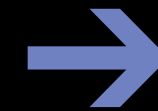
For more than three decades, we have been close observers of successful college leaders-leaders we characterize as transformational-in action. We have been intrigued, and frequently awestruck, by the quality, breadth, and depth of their visions and their dreams. Moreover, we have been fascinated by the pathways the colleges took to achieve their eventual, documented success. The actions, built upon the strength and quality of human relationships, provide a striking collection of examples of how to get important things done. We offer here a broad-brush discussion of what we have learned from these successful leaders about harnessing the power of individuals to work together toward common goals and nurturing human relationships so critical to bringing compelling visions to life.

Leaders trust their own instincts and understand fully the depth and strength of their own passions. Strong leaders are self-actualizing individuals with a long history of setting high goals and achieving them. Leaders, who can articulate the skills they bring to their role as visionary and dreamer and then document that success, go a long way toward earning the confidence of followers and colleagues.

Leaders do not mince words when articulating the goal. There is much to be said of the leader stating goals and expectations in the most explicit terms.

Leaders recognize that shared purposes, shared commitments, shared struggles, and "shared hearts" are powerful combinations for achieving the products of shared values. Ernest Boyer wrote: "If faculty and students do not see themselves as having important business to do together, prospects for effective learning are diminished" (1987, 141).

Leaders are patient and committed to achievement over the long haul. Research data confirm what leaders always have known intuitively--individuals really are hard-



Guest Authors *cont. from front page*

leadership development. We also consider book reviews, reviews of videos and any other relevant leadership content. Articles submitted should be 200-500 words.

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Mission Statement

WCCCD's mission is to empower individuals, businesses and communities to achieve their goals through excellent and accessible services, culturally diverse experiences, and globally competitive higher education and career advancement programs.

Conducting Powerful Performance Reviews

Performance reviews are an important opportunity for managers to motivate, support and direct their employees. Far too often, employees have a fairly good idea of what to expect but are also concerned that their manager will raise issues that are both unexpected and negative.

Could it be different? Could employees actually look forward to their performance discussion? Consider calling it a performance review and career discussion – that should immediately set a different tone.

The following are five tips for conducting constructive, positive performance reviews.

Tip #1: No surprises

There should be absolutely no surprises in the performance review meeting, especially in terms of the employee's performance. A manager must never wait until the performance review to discuss unsatisfactory performance but instead handle it when it happens.

Tip #2: Address the Positive

Regardless of performance, the employee has done something right or they wouldn't still be your employee. Point out what they've done well and include feedback received from others, including peers and other managers.

Tip #3: Seek Employee Involvement

If you see areas that need improvement, try asking for the employee's feedback and thoughts about how to improve their performance. Develop a plan together and coach them on meeting the mutually-agreed upon goals.

Tip #4: Talk about their Future

Performance reviews often address only the past review period. You did good, keep doing it. You did bad, stop doing it. Employees, however, don't think that way. They have dreams and goals, which may or may not be served by the responsibilities of their position. Do you know what they want to do in the future? Do they have ambitions to move up or to a different position? If you don't know, ask!

Tip #5: Get Out of Your Comfort Zone

Home field territory (your office) can be an intimidating place for your employees. It is filled with your mementos, photos and trophies. They are in your space. Consider moving your performance reviews to a neutral location. It can be a conference room, their office or any place that offers privacy. Employees who are comfortable in their surroundings are likely to be more open and forthcoming about their work and their performance.

Beyond the Mission Statement: Strategic Planning at WCCCD

Johnesa Dimicks, *District Dean for Institutional Effectiveness, WCCCD*

Walk into the lobby of most organizations today and you will likely see its mission statement displayed prominently. In conference rooms and executive offices you will see this document, nicely framed, often occupying a place of honor on the credenza along with treasured photos or prized trophies.

In too many companies that's where the strategic plan stops. The plan is nicely bound in attractive folders and placed on the shelf; to be visited again only at performance review time or at next year's strategic planning retreat. It doesn't have to be that way.

WCCCD implements its strategic plan in a three-step process.

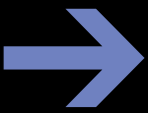
1. Communication. Leaders clearly communicate the strategy to their team so that team members understand the role each of them plays in its successful implementation. When all employees understand and are committed to the organization's long-term direction, day-to-day decisions are guided by the mission and execution of strategy is improved. A well known story illustrates the point: A group of US Senators were visiting NASA at the time when funding was under threat. One Senator asked a man cleaning the floor "So what are you doing here?" The man answered, "I'm here putting a man on the Moon!"

2. Action Planning. Departments and individuals develop a set of achievement goals that support the overall goals of the college. This approach links strategic goals to departmental and individual activity and assures that each team member knows what success looks like and how it will be measured. This step results in everyone understanding specifically how their actions and job performance will contribute to the successful delivery of the plan goals.

3. Performance Management. Through the implementation of an Individual Performance Planning and Appraisal (IPPA) process employees' efforts are focused on achieving the priority goals of the district. Progress is monitored through regular communication, mid-year coaching and progress review and year-end performance appraisal.

The goal of this process is for every person to understand what they are doing, why they are doing it and to be fully committed to delivering their best effort. Achieving that level of engagement and execution is at the heart of a successful implementation of a strategic plan.





Effective Meeting Management

Dr. Warren T. Dodson, *Special Projects, WCCCD*

If questioned on how to make the work day more productive, most people will answer, “have fewer meetings.” Is that realistic? In a recent issue of Fast Company magazine, organizational psychologist Jon Ryburg says he advises corporate clients to provide twice as much meeting space as they did 20 years ago. Why? Because, workplaces are increasingly built on teams. And teams do their work in meetings. So maybe the answer is not to have fewer meetings, but to have better meetings.

In a recent seminar the executive team at WCCCD was able to reach a consensus on the elements that contribute to effective meeting management.

The following items represent the guidelines we developed:

- Schedule meetings at least one week in advance. Last minute meetings should be called for emergencies only.
- Make sure all stakeholders and decision makers are involved.
- Circulate the agenda and meeting purpose along with the notice. Ask for feedback or additions to the agenda.

- Follow the agenda and stay on track.
- Display ground rules for participation – applied exclusive of rank.
- Meeting chair will assign someone to take notes and records.
- Start and end on time whenever possible.
- Get agreement if the meeting needs to run overtime and reschedule if most people cannot stay.
- Circulate the meeting notes within a reasonable amount of time following adjournment.

These general guidelines work well for our team. Each institution, however, has different needs, policies and practices. It is a good idea to set aside some time to establish your own set of guidelines for effective meeting management in your organization.

Love them or hate them, meetings are a vital business function. Through diligent focus on the four “P’s” of meeting management: the purpose, the people, the product and the process, one can have meetings that matter, meetings that work and meetings that people look forward to attending.

The Art of Visionary Leadership continued from front page

wired to resist change. However, leaders are resolute and patient--they "have learned that the system will respond if they work at it long enough and hard enough; and if this fails to work, they have ideas about rejuvenating the system" (Burns and Sorenson, 1999, 330).

Leadership is most effective when those in the organization take responsibility for goal attainment and assist in devising successful implementation actions. Leaders provide the links that improve communication and allow exchange between individuals to occur (Burns, 1978, 20). Effective leaders understand that just as there are multiple perspectives of reality, there are multiple ways for achieving any goal.

Leaders are truly effective when they are willing to give others credit for mission accomplishment. Strong leaders have a profound aversion, at least publicly, to the words I, me and mine. They understand the profound effects of recognizing others' efforts and that little can be accomplished without the support and hard work of the larger community.

Leaders do not have the public luxury of having a bad day or a weak moment when the objective is to keep all eyes focused on the goal. In their highly visible roles, strong leaders demonstrate a positive outlook and exhibit unbridled, indefatigable levels of energy and positive attitude

Leaders are biased toward action around shared values, toward problem solving and problem seeking. Many of the

Off The Cuff Leadership Lessons

Dr. Wright Lassiter, *Chancellor, Dallas County Community College District*

In many organizations, morale and motivation among the staff can plummet when employees lose faith in their managers or when they sense that the upper levels of the organization do not care about them. Good managers must correct, or certainly consistently work at changing this perception. The critical factor is that caring must be genuine; it cannot be faked. Nor should anyone practice having “caring episodes” like the so-called flavor-of-the-month, or highlight-of-the-month. Such “campaigns” do not work.

Says one CEO “The real essence of leadership is to care about your people, to help them get as much as they can out of their work environment, and to have fun. Anybody who can do that and really mean it is a leader.”

Effective managers can deliver a sincere message by never failing to practice the following:

- Stand behind decisions that affect employees' welfare.
- Pay attention to employees' needs and give them personal attention.
- Let employees know what is expected of them.
- Compliment employees on jobs well done.

transformational leaders we studied offered a bias toward seeking advice. These leaders tapped into this human inclination to problem solve, and strongly encouraged problem seeking. Problem seeking identifies not only new problems, but problems that might go unnoticed by the less-trained eye.

Painting a Face on the Future

The power of vision is critical to organizational achievement; however, execution is the paramount quality that separates great leaders from daydreamers. Our studies of leadership have documented that when the college addresses its most challenging teaching and learning issues, the quality of the decisions can be judged by how closely they match up to its collective goals, hopes, and dreams.

- Challenge employees with meaningful work assignments.

And when discipline is needed, good managers treat employees with respect – while reinforcing the fact that they have confidence in the employee and can suggest ways to overcome obstacles.

When problems arise, good managers go the extra step with each employee – whether star or stinker. They also practice the following:

- Listen and understand well.
- Good managers don't look for scapegoats, they look for what's causing problems.
- Exercise fairness. Their decisions are based on fairness, not favoritism.
- Reach constructive decisions. What's best for the employee? The organization? Employee morale?

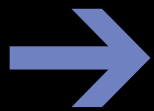
What's the payoff? Steadily improving performance throughout the workforce. Make the investment. You'll find it's worth it for you and your team.

This article is an excerpt from “The Art of Visionary Leadership: Painting a face on the Future” featured in *Celebrations*, a publication of the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD).

For more information: NISOD, Community College Leadership Program, College of Education, The University of Texas at Austin, 1 University Station, D5600, Austin, TX 78712-0378.

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Burns, J.M. (1978). *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, Publishers.

Burns, J.M., and G.J. Sorenson (1999). *Dead Center: Clinton-Gore Leadership and the Perils of Moderation*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, Inc.



Nice Guys CAN Finish First

The higher up you go – the more important your people skills become!

Dr. Marshall Goldsmith; Faculty, Alliant International University, Tuck Executive Education at Dartmouth College.
Best-selling author of 23 books and more than 200 articles

Imagine a world where technical skills, educational pedigrees, professional achievements and track records no longer matter. Everyone is blessed with equal brains and talent. Everyone is highly skilled, well educated at the same school and locked in a dead heat of accomplishment, posting exactly the same "lifetime batting average."

Now, imagine that you lead an organization in this world. How would you hire people? How would you decide whom to promote and whom to cast aside?

Chances are you would start paying very close attention to how people behave -- how they treat colleagues and clients, how they speak and listen in meetings, how well they extend the minor courtesies that either lubricate daily work life or create friction. Welcome to the real world at the higher levels of organizational life.



We apply these behavioral criteria to almost any successful person, whether it's our CEO or our plumbing contractor. But sometimes we forget to apply them to ourselves. And in turn, we forget that our behavior may be holding us back.

All other things being equal, your people skills (or lack thereof) become more pronounced the higher up you go. In fact, even when all other things are not equal, your people skills often make the difference in how high you go.

What if you had to prepare a resume where you couldn't highlight the elite college you graduated from, or even your title at your current job? You can't boast about the sagging division you turned around. The only data you can put on your resume are your interpersonal skills (which, for the purposes of this exercise, must be documented and authentic). What would they be?

- To be able to listen?
- To give proper recognition?
- To share -- whether it's information or credit for a success?
- To stay calm when others panic?
- To make midcourse corrections?
- To accept responsibility – and admit mistakes?
- To defer to others, even (especially) those of lesser rank?
- To let someone else be right some of the time?
- To resist playing favorites?

You see where I'm going? This quick list of attributes, while attractive in a junior employee, is not the sort of thing that junior employees get lauded for. But when it's time to step up into a leadership position, you're going to need these qualities in spades. Stripped of your technical mastery, what are the interpersonal skills that will make you rise above the leadership pack? Pick one, any skill that you feel you're lacking. And start developing it...now.

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Leading College and Career Transitions Through Career Pathways

Gerardo E. de los Santos, President and CEO, League for Innovation in the Community College

We are living in "exponential times," experiencing more changes, more quickly, than ever before. This is mainly due to advances in technology, communication, a knowledge-based global economy, shifting demographics and major changes in how we deliver learning. The effect of these changes is a greater emphasis on the inextricable links between education, workforce skills training and employability.

Secondary schools face a growing number of students dropping out, while colleges are faced with an increasing number of students arriving less prepared for college-level work. In addition, reports indicate an alarming incongruence between what secondary school teachers deem academically important compared to college faculty. To complicate matters further, many secondary school graduates are held to a different standard at the post-secondary level, resulting in academic discontinuity and student frustration. The incongruence between sectors of education is negatively affecting student preparedness, persistence and success.

The business community is too often omitted in decision-making about academic and occupational program development. Although "occupational education" was once intended for a select group of students, we are now experiencing an educational philosophy that blends high academic standards with career pathways for all students. More effective connections are needed between secondary schools, community colleges, four-year colleges and universities and the business community in order to address these critical issues. Furthermore, enhancing connections between educational sectors and employers will help inform programs of study that lead to academic degrees or industry-recognized certification or licensure.

In cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education, the League for Innovation in the Community College has successfully implemented a large-scale project to strengthen connections across education and employment sectors, by developing the College and Career Transitions Initiative (CCTI). The purpose of CCTI is to contribute to strengthening the role of community and technical colleges in (1) easing student transitions between secondary and post-secondary education

as well as transitions to employment and; (2) improving academic performance at both the secondary and post-secondary levels.

Community colleges were targeted to lead this work through CCTI for several reasons, including (1) their history of collaboration with business and industry in providing workforce training, (2) their strategic position in the schooling pipeline between secondary education and higher education and; (3) their accessibility through multiple locations throughout the country and open door policy. A new publication, Career Pathways as a Systemic Framework: Rethinking Education for Student Success in College and Careers was launched at the League's Innovations 2007 Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana.

A critical component of career pathways is that they are developed, implemented and maintained in partnership with post-secondary education, business and employers. As such, career pathways designed to lead to employment are available to all students, including adult learners and are intended to complement and build upon other traditional student transition programs such as tech-prep, school-to-work and occupational education.

As our increasingly diverse students and communities reflect dynamic changes, community college leaders must place greater attention on the relationships between education, workforce skills training and employability. Workers of the future will change jobs and careers more frequently than prior generations. Subsequently, lifelong learning and training are imperative to maintain the global, knowledge-based workforce of the future. Career pathways build upon educational transitions and employability programs enhance academic achievement and lead toward the ultimate goal of rewarding careers for students.

Reference: *Career Pathways as a Systemic Framework: Rethinking Education for Student Success in College and Careers* (2007). Phoenix, AZ: League for Innovation in the Community College.

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