

Women Leaders Playbook





Change happens in
MOMENTS.

In a moment, you **make a commitment.**

In a moment, you **make a decision.**

A decision to **speak up.**

A decision to **raise your hand.**

In a moment, you **take action.**

And change
cannot happen without **ACTION.**

ADVANCING EQUITY AND INCLUSION: WOMEN LEADERS IN HEALTHCARE

Congratulations to this year's Women Leaders in Healthcare! This significant recognition serves as an inspiration and highlights each honoree's profound influence and remarkable achievements.

With the healthcare industry experiencing rapid transformation, fostering a supportive and inclusive organizational culture is the key to building stronger teams and sustainable success. Year after year, for more than a decade, we've partnered with Modern Healthcare on this program and in the Diversity Leaders program to recognize exceptional leaders who are dedicated and determined to make a difference.

Women and other underrepresented groups bring balance, equity, unique perspectives and insights that drive innovation and enhance organizational performance. Many of this year's honorees have developed workplace cultures where all feel valued and respected, and they continue to create equitable spaces where everyone can contribute authentically. By recognizing the importance of all voices, they actively break down barriers and call out biases that hinder sustainable success.

Amid the challenges they've had to balance, these leaders have exemplified resilience and adaptability. They have navigated complex situations with grace, ensuring that their teams remain motivated and focused. Their ability to innovate and pivot strategies has been instrumental in overcoming obstacles and driving positive change.

Through their visionary leadership and inclusive approach, these exceptional leaders have implemented transformative strategies that have improved patient outcomes, increased access to quality care and advanced medical research while also advancing the development and mentorship of future healthcare professionals.

By investing their time and resources into cultivating the next generation of leaders, they ensure the legacy of excellence and inclusivity continues. Their resilience, perseverance and fortitude serve as an inspiration to all.

Let's honor the achievements of these exceptional leaders by elevating our own leadership. Their inspiration encourages us to support and empower each other as we strive to enact meaningful and sustainable change.

Join us in congratulating this year's Women Leaders in Healthcare. Their leadership and commitment to advancing equity have reshaped the healthcare industry for the better, and we look forward to witnessing their transformative impact on our industry.



Sherrie Barch
CEO



Bob Clarke
Chairman



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Sticking your neck out: Servant leadership in practice

Nancy Howell Agee on taking risks and leading with gratitude and humility



Nancy Howell Agee
President and CEO



With a style that is both flexible and nourishing without compromising her values, Nancy Howell Agee, President and CEO of Carilion Clinic, embodies the characteristics of servant leadership. Combining strength and humility, her leadership mantra takes a cue from nature, “A turtle doesn’t get anywhere without sticking her neck out.” Agee keeps a turtle figurine on her desk as a daily reminder.

Of course, becoming a great leader requires more than just sticking your neck out and taking risks. In an industry where problems are increasingly complex, no one person will ever have all the answers.

Placing similar importance on humility, Agee says, “If you’ve ever seen a turtle on a fence post, you know she didn’t get there by herself – none of us rise up in an organization or in our careers without the help of others.” As leaders, we often end up somewhere we didn’t expect, so leaning into the talent and expertise of others to work through challenges is imperative for problem solving.

Agee leads the \$2 billion not-for-profit, integrated healthcare system Carilion Clinic, which serves over 1 million people in Virginia and West Virginia. She co-led Carilion’s transformation from a collection of hospitals to a fully integrated, patient-centered, physician-led organization. The reorganization included a public/private partnership with Virginia Tech to create an allopathic medical school and a research institute.

Also the immediate past chair of the American Hospital Association, Agee was named one of the Top 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare by Modern Healthcare for the past three years and one of the Top Women in Healthcare in 2017 and 2019. Most recently, the magazine named her among its 50 Most Influential Clinical Executives.

She is also a former member of the Board of Commissioners for the Joint Commission, was named Virginia Business Person of the Year in 2017 and has been on the list of most influential persons in Virginia for eight years. Her tireless work on numerous boards, including American National Bank & Trust, a public utility (Roanoke Gas Company, NASDAQ A&B) and Healthcare Realty (NYSE), show her dedication and commitment to both the health field and her community.

[Read Past Profile](#)

Furthering Gender Diversity

Embracing and building up others is something Agee has always made a priority, especially when it comes to women leaders. Half of her leadership team is female, and she has been a dedicated mentor of women leaders both inside Carilion Clinic and beyond.

Yet Agee finds herself surprised by “[still] needing to be intentional about women leaders. It seems like something we went through in the 60s.” But continuing efforts to improve opportunities for women leaders is of extreme importance.

“

Over 60 percent of employees entering the healthcare industry are women, while across sectors in the United States, women represent an average of just under 50 percent of entry-level employees.

According to a 2019 Lean-In survey, “Over 60 percent of employees entering the healthcare industry are women, while across sectors in the United States, women represent an average of just under 50 percent of entry-level employees.” But when it comes to executive leadership positions, both women of color and women in general are underrepresented. Trends show that the higher up you look in an organization the less diversity you will see.

A recent *Modern Healthcare* article highlights that “the percentage of women leading Fortune 500 companies fell to just 4.8 percent.” Their stats show healthcare exceeds that with the percentage of female CEOs landing somewhere between 13-20 percent and women holding about 30 percent of the c-level roles. Some data suggests that there has been an overall dip in the progress over the last several years without any clear indication as to why.

Not only are we making slow progress, in some ways we are stalling—meaning fewer women executives and that’s just disappointing. Agee is surprised women don’t “say yes” or put themselves forward. “That’s why we need to be more intentional about encouraging and mentoring women along this path,” she says. “The fact of the matter is, none of us gets here alone.”

Agee thinks back to her grandmother who encouraged her and says, “It’s incumbent upon those of us who are leaders to give that back.” She advocates mentoring other women and identifying potential leaders to bring them forward. ***“Raise your hand and tell your story! Sometimes you’re going to fail and sometimes you’re not going to get where you want, but that’s okay.”***

Leading through servanthood

Agee credits a colleague for giving her a book about servant leadership, with the note, “This is how I think of you as a leader,” that inspired her continued development. Since then she’s become disciplined and tries to apply those principles to all that she does. For instance, when asked who her most important constituency was, she said, “Of course we all say our patients. I think my role is to help others take care of patients. They are giving direct care and what I do every day is make sure they can do their job. That is the magic moment between a clinician and a patient. I serve those who lead so that they can do the work they do. And that’s perhaps the most distinctive piece. It’s helping others develop and get out in front rather than putting yourself in front.”



***Raise your hand and
tell your story!***

*Sometimes you're going to fail
and sometimes you're not going
to get where you want,*

but that's okay.

“Servant leadership,” is a term coined years ago by Robert Greenleaf, an accomplished AT&T executive and founder of the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership (the first and only one of its kind in the U.S.). He defines Servant Leaders as managers that ultimately thrive by supporting others and directing them toward their passions. The word “servant” doesn’t appear to be as powerful as “boss.” But what it lacks in perceived power, it delivers in influence.

When a leader removes herself from the equation to focus on the organization and its success, the most important battle has been won—establishing trust. Being a servant leader doesn’t mean you don’t correct behavior or tell people what to do.

Servant leadership means:

- Asking more questions
- Actively listening and valuing others’ opinions
- Helping others develop and get out in front

Really, these are qualities that all leaders should strive to employ regardless of their style.

Greenleaf wrote, “The servant leader is servant first ... it begins with that natural feeling that one wants to serve. The best test, which is difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?”



Humility creates space for others in problem-solving. A Catalyst study backs this up, listing humility as one of four critical leadership factors for creating an environment where employees from different demographics feel included. This held true for women and men in six countries.

3 Cs of women leadership

Although servant leadership style is commendable, as well as viable, it’s important to balance. Women have historically been hailed for their humility, but Agee points out that in addition to that inherent humility, women must apply the 3 Cs:

Curiosity | ask the tough questions

Courage | take risks and challenge ideas

Confidence | stick your neck out and raise your hand



“It’s not just what they’re saying, but what’s behind the words—what they are feeling. That’s what makes women natural leaders.”



Curiosity

Curiosity plays a critical role in leadership, because it creates the opportunity to gather different points of view. Agee believes that diversity on teams leads to more well-rounded curiosity. She highlights a time when curiosity within her leadership team worked like peeling back the layers of an onion. “What if we did this? What if we did that? How would this play out? It’s taking advantage of a wide variety of perspectives, and the natural collaborativeness that women bring to the team. For me, curiosity is a way of really showing interest and respect for another person, while trying to inspire diversity of thought and varied opinions.”

Courage

Courage can be daunting, especially as the only female in a boardroom or group of business leaders. Many times, Agee has found that women are not taken seriously or that their role is minimized from the start. She doesn’t let that stop her. She notes, “You have to, in a very careful way, assert yourself, and I find that surprising.” This courage, or lack thereof, can mean the difference between making a place for yourself as a valued voice or being drowned out.

Confidence

Confidence and courage seem very similar, but confidence is more about believing in yourself and your ideas, so that you can have the courage to speak up. Balancing this confidence with courage and taking the initiative to be curious make for great leadership. Agee summed it up best when she said, “Curiosity implies the act of listening and that’s much more than waiting your turn. It involves distilling what you’re hearing and actively being inquisitive to understand others’ points of view and then bringing that together. It’s not just what they’re saying, but what’s behind the words—what they are feeling. That’s what makes women natural leaders.”

All in all, Agee’s strong female leadership, combined with her passion for leading with gratitude and humility, has had a profound impact on her organization and the industry as a whole. Like the turtle, she is at ease in her own shell, sticks her neck out when she needs to and when the time and environment are right ... she’s swift, nimble and takes action. Her courageous leadership has helped break down barriers and encourage growth that will have a lasting impact for years to come. 

Making the case for gender diversity: Women in healthcare leadership



The American people have spoken. A majority want more women leaders in business and politics, even though they also believe women typically have to work harder to prove their skills and have more obstacles on their way to the top. In fact, 54 percent say gender discrimination plays a large role in why there aren't more women in positions of executive leadership.¹

Those are some of the results from a fascinating study by the nonpartisan Pew Research Center. Their implications are implicit: Pressure is growing for better gender and ethnic diversity in every sphere of public life.¹

As longtime sponsors of the Women Leaders in Healthcare program curated by *Modern Healthcare*, we have seen the momentum and the drumbeat growing for this type of sea change. While challenges certainly remain — the number of women who are employed as CEOs of the companies in the S&P 500 is declining instead of increasing — we remain optimistic that transformation is in the offing.

The corporate world can be slow assimilating societal changes, yet society is clamoring for more women in leadership. According to Pew, Americans view women

leaders as better than male leaders in:¹

- Creating a safe and respectful workplace
- Valuing people from different backgrounds
- Considering the societal impacts of major decisions
- Mentoring young employees
- Providing fair pay and good benefits

While male leaders get the nod in people's perceptions that they are better at negotiating profitable deals and taking risks, the value placed on female leaders does not end there. Asked specifically about gender and political leadership, for example, the Pew survey results reveal that women are perceived as stronger in standing up for what they believe in, being honest and ethical, working out compromises, and being compassionate and empathetic.¹ Who wouldn't want to work for leaders like that?

The situation in healthcare

Only 8 of the top 100 hospitals in the U.S. have a woman CEO, according to a 2016 survey conducted by Rock Health², a venture fund dedicated to supporting "companies improving the lack of senior female leadership is not unique to healthcare, it is notable that nearly 73 percent of medical and health service

managers are women.⁴ The largest part of the workforce in hospitals are nurses, who are predominantly women; and women make most healthcare decisions for their families — so why are women not equally represented at the board and C-suite level.

Yet, here too, there is hope. A national campaign entitled “20% by 2024” represents another push to get women on boards, with the goal of having women occupy 20 percent of board seats by the year 2024. Fortune 50 companies such as Kohler, Coca Cola, and more are targeting 20 percent women CEOs by 2024.⁵ The 30% Club started in 2010 in the UK with a goal of achieving 30 percent women on FTSE-100 boards and is now a global movement based on the recognition that “better gender balance leads to better results.”⁶ California also enacted a new law recently mandating publicly traded companies headquartered in the state have at least one female board member by the close of 2019, and more by close of 2024.⁷ This is no small task, but healthcare leaders must also be at the front of the line in the pursuit of more diverse and inclusive leaders.

Compensations laws are also gaining traction with several states embracing laws aimed at ending wage disparity. A recent Crain’s Business article shows that pay is the number one reason women in Chicago consider switching jobs.⁸ As these trends continue, we will also see a rise in additional benefits like flexible schedules, onsite daycare, and family leave policies targeted toward encouraging working mothers and their spouses to find a better work-life balance.

Although trends are headed in the right direction, effort and attention are still needed to embrace and embed these policies into common practice. We also need to continue exploring ways to support diverse talent and enhance inclusion at all levels of organizations

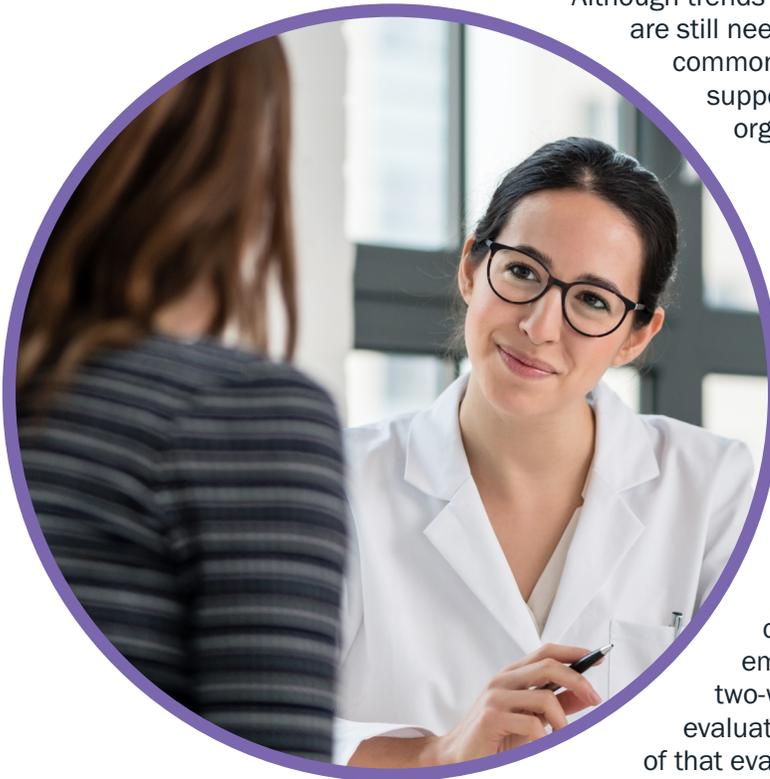
Why diversity matters: Gender balance in the C-suite

Why is it so important for your leadership and board to represent your patients/customers? In simple terms, diversity is a bottom-line issue. Even more specifically: For every 1 percent increase in gender diversity, company revenue increases by 3 percent. More proof: High levels of ethnic diversity increase revenue by a whopping 15 percent.⁹ What company can afford to turn away from increased profitability?

In my experience in the healthcare industry, I have witnessed that diversity can supply more competitive candidates, as well as more committed and engaged employees. The hiring and recruitment process is a two-way street: potential candidates are not just being evaluated, they are evaluating the company. A significant part of that evaluation includes observing and assessing company culture, diverse leadership and inclusion practices.

“

The largest part of the workforce in hospitals are nurses, who are predominantly women; and women make most healthcare decisions for their families — so why are women not equally represented at the board and C-suite level.





As more women join boards and demonstrate the value they add, the system will become self-perpetuating.



Job seekers find value in an organization that demonstrably places a high importance on diversity in the workplace. Employees in diverse workplaces also tend to feel a stronger commitment, experience greater collaboration, and, consequently, retention is higher. Statistics on business practice also highlight that improved hiring practices focused on diversity result in increased profitability, better candidate attraction, and more engaged employees.¹⁰

Diversity and talent: 3 things organizations can do

Given the evidence of the essential role that diversity and inclusion play in corporate success, the healthcare sector needs to pay particularly close attention to accelerating change in the increasingly competitive talent acquisition environment.

Keep in mind that there is no single approach to diversity and inclusion; it must be part of a larger strategic plan that includes alignment of business and talent strategies. Another key element in driving change in diversity and inclusion is recognizing and acknowledging unconscious bias. Everyone has these biases, but

companies need diversity and inclusion training and a plan to overcome those biases. To successfully impact these strategies, organizations should:

1. Set goals and develop a plan. Have a mission statement, as well as supporting objectives set around diversity and inclusion.
 - Ensure your company's diversity and inclusion policy/mission statement is highlighted and easy for all to find.
 - Remember, boards and search committees must represent similar diversity profiles.
 - Have measurable goals and timelines for what you want to accomplish.
2. Implement the plan — launch your diversity and inclusion strategic plan with all-company meetings/town halls. Senior leadership must get behind the plan and “walk the walk.”
 - Project the image reflective of diversity and inclusion that you want to represent in your organization. Use diversity-rich images for your website and other marketing materials.
 - Look at where you recruit. By actively sourcing minority candidates in the right places — for example, participating in professional associations and groups with desired gender or ethnic characteristics — you will have a better chance of attracting and retaining diverse talent.
 - Standardize aspects of the recruitment process to minimize the effect of performance bias on hiring decisions.
 - Review and test job descriptions for gender (and other) bias.
 - Standardize objectives related to hiring (i.e., the competencies and skills needed/desired) in advance of candidate search. Determine what competencies are needed and stick to them. This will allow hiring decisions to be unbiased, because candidates will be judged on their skills, experience and qualifications.
 - Make sure recruiters/search partners standardize all shortlist resumes to remove any possible bias triggers.

Given the evidence of the essential role that diversity and inclusion play in corporate success, the healthcare sector needs to pay particularly close attention to accelerating change in the increasingly competitive talent acquisition environment.



- Hire a Chief Diversity Officer — having a leader at the executive level and participating in strategic discussions signifies a deep commitment to diversity.
3. Measure results — engage employees to report on activities and periodically measure progress and share results.
- Celebrate and highlight your organization’s success — this may include sharing anecdotal stories, awards/incentives or other recognition.
 - Access benchmark information. The AHA’s Institute for Diversity and Health Equity is paving the way with data, tools and resources (including an ongoing publication of their benchmarking study of U.S. hospitals) that help you learn more about ongoing efforts addressing healthcare disparities and improving diversity management practices.¹¹

3 things women should do

We’ve talked about corporate best practices. What about individual best practices? To elevate their leadership status, we offer these suggestions to women leaders:

1. Find a mentor and be a mentor. Having a strong female leader, role model, or mentor is often cited as the primary reason women got into leadership.
2. Network with women healthcare leaders. Connecting with other industry leaders strengthens connections and an understanding of what it takes to become a leader.
3. Ask for leadership roles. Potential leaders may be overlooked because the current leaders did not know about the person’s interest. Speak up and voice interest in leadership roles.

Conclusion

Have a plan. Set goals. Measure your progress.

Ultimately, developing a comprehensive diversity and inclusion program is an ongoing journey, not a destination. Nonetheless, it is time for action in the healthcare industry. If organizations can set clear goals and act on inclusive strategies, then progress can, at last, be made. Rather than revisiting this topic in future publications, we hope to read about the hugely profitable companies that have propelled their organizations into the modern era with resoundingly successful diversity policies and practices that are reflected in the C-suite.

With greater focus, we should strive to get to a point where diversity and inclusion are so much a part of an organization's culture, that you no longer need to have strategic goals on diversity and inclusion. As Helena Morrissey, CEO of Newton Investment Management and 30% Club6 Founder said, "As more women join boards and demonstrate the value they add, the system will become self-perpetuating." Organizations and leaders must make diversity and inclusion an expectation and an assumption. Only then can they reap the rewards together. 

1 <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2018/09/20/women-and-leadership-2018/>

2 <https://rockhealth.com/the-state-of-healthcare-gender-diversity-2016/>

3 <https://rockhealth.com/about/>

4 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/davechase/2012/07/26/women-in-healthcare-report-4-of-ceos-73-of-managers/#2cbd26aa7f38>

5 <https://www.2024wob.com/>

6 <https://30percentclub.org/>

7 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/allbusiness/2018/10/01/california-mandates-female-representation-public-company-boards/#229477b81775>

8 <https://www.chicagobusiness.com/static/section/best-places-women.html>

9 <http://www.equityofcare.org/>

10 <https://www.eremedia.com/sourcecon/5-techniques-to-improve-diversity-hiring-practices-in-your-company-right-now-by-sioffy/>

11 <http://www.diversityconnection.org/diversityconnection/leadership-conferences/Benchmarking-Survey.jsp?fl=S1>



Authentic leadership:

4 ways to make your passion purposeful

Leadership is derived from trust. Career goals are terrific, but the surest way to truly serve your company and your colleagues – and to find fulfillment yourself – is to become the most authentic person and leader you know.

As healthcare continues to experience volatility, your team needs a leader who stands his or her ground, with calmness in crisis and empathy for others. There will always be changing dynamics that impact the way we do business and the skills needed to be effective as a leader. But remaining focused on your core values helps to prime the soil in which leadership can flourish.

The term “authentic leadership” has been experiencing a resurgence recently after initially being popularized by author Bill George and others over the last two decades. But, like any catchphrase, nuance is important, and it helps to understand what is packed into the term. We’d like to suggest some components of what makes leadership truly authentic today in healthcare.

Leadership will not necessarily look the same in all individuals in all organizations in all markets. It was Steve Jobs who said, “Have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become.”

If you’re reading this, we believe that you want to make a difference in people’s lives – that is why most of us choose to work in healthcare. It’s not as much about the biggest paycheck or the corner office. So, who is it that you want to become and how do you want to impact others?

“ Have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. ”

**“ Empathy is not a weakness.
It is a strength and
skill that allows authentic
leadership through trust,
encouragement, and
communication.”**

Answering that question may take some time and reflection. But once you have sorted that out, here are four ways to become, and remain, the truest version of yourself:

1 Remain Emotionally Available

Strive to lead with your heart, not just your mind. The employees who report to you are human beings. In an age where we are electronically connected more than ever before, psychologists and sociologists tell us that we are, paradoxically, more isolated. A leader who truly cares for the people under his or her wing will find employee engagement and productivity rising, by taking the time to know those around you.

Bill George has this to say on the topic: “Empathy is not a weakness. It is a strength and skill that allows authentic leadership through trust, encouragement, and communication.”

Next Steps:

- Build a strong reputation as a leader with the competence and compassion to develop other leaders.
- Ensure your open-door policy is not just lip service, and genuinely ask for feedback.
- Plan time with your team to get to know them – take them to lunch, find time for team-building exercises, and pull them aside for impromptu check-ins to show them you are available and interested in them.



2 Practice Self-Awareness

Get real – with yourself. You don't have to know all the answers. Self-awareness is a critical component in growing as a leader. What are your strengths? What areas do you need to develop? Where are your blind spots? What makes you uncomfortable?

Is there a mentor you trust to tell you the truth? This could be a leader higher up in your organization or someone outside of the healthcare field. Even better is having a sponsor within your organization, someone who will champion your leadership and give you opportunities, not merely advice, as you explore your goals.

The best leaders network strategically, as well. Many people look up the organizational ladder too often and not across the aisle or down the hall as they think through career development. The executives at the top do not have all of the answers; utilize your peers.

Next Steps: Executive recruiters can offer a valuable perspective, given that they are exposed to many leaders in many organizations and have a unique point of comparison. Talk to one. Most leaders find a season of executive coaching to be helpful as well. This is also a good time to remind ourselves that leadership is becoming increasingly collaborative. As younger generations enter and advance in the workforce, this trend looks like it has staying power. Are there colleagues you can team up with?

3 Be Flexible

Not everything will fall in line just as you planned it. It was Bill George who said, "Plans change. Authentic leadership is knowing that the plan changing does not change you."

This is particularly true in an industry as heavily dependent on evolving technology as healthcare. Many aspects of your career may change in the next 5 to 10 years – the pace of innovation and disruption accelerates every year.

With all that change, depth and breadth of experience will allow for more opportunities and easier pivots in your career. As you take on additional responsibilities, consider their impact on your long-term goals. Be thoughtful about balancing commitments, and remain intentional about how you spend your time and talents.

Beware of what some call "invisible promotions" – many extra responsibilities without a title change or additional income.

Next Steps: One way to prepare yourself for the twists and turns of the healthcare industry is to maintain the posture of a continuous learner throughout your career and surround yourself with like-minded people. The best leaders are lifelong learners who can adapt and grow – professor and author Margarita Mayo calls this "behavioral authenticity." So, find leadership books and articles that resonate with you. Join professional associations and serve on committees as time permits.



4 Tell Your Story

A growing number of healthcare organizations start their key meetings with stories of colleagues doing a great job or patients expressing appreciation to their team of caregivers. The power of storytelling is a vital skill in marketing these days as well. Have you ever thought of how technology can help you tell your own story? Social media levels the playing field and allows everyone to publish content that's meaningful to them, whether it's on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, or blogs.

Leverage these platforms – especially LinkedIn for professional goals – while being mindful of how your interactions will build your “brand” for better or worse (who you are as a leader, colleague, and person). What you share and “like,” and how you comment on others’ posts, lives forever online, so use discretion and err on the side of encouraging others.

Next Steps: Early careerists often find these online outlets are great for soliciting feedback and sharing their volunteer epiphanies. Mid-careerists can establish themselves as subject-matter experts, something every organization needs. Senior leaders can utilize this technology to embrace their roles as thought leaders and lend their support to legacy endeavors (e.g., leadership organizations, boards, and conferences).



What you share and “like,” and how you comment on others’ posts, lives forever online, so use discretion and err on the side of encouraging others.



“ There is little disagreement in what the constitutional principles of a company should be when enough people get together ... I find a universal belief in: fairness, kindness, dignity, charity, integrity, honesty, quality, service, and patience.

— Stephen R. Covey

Conclusion

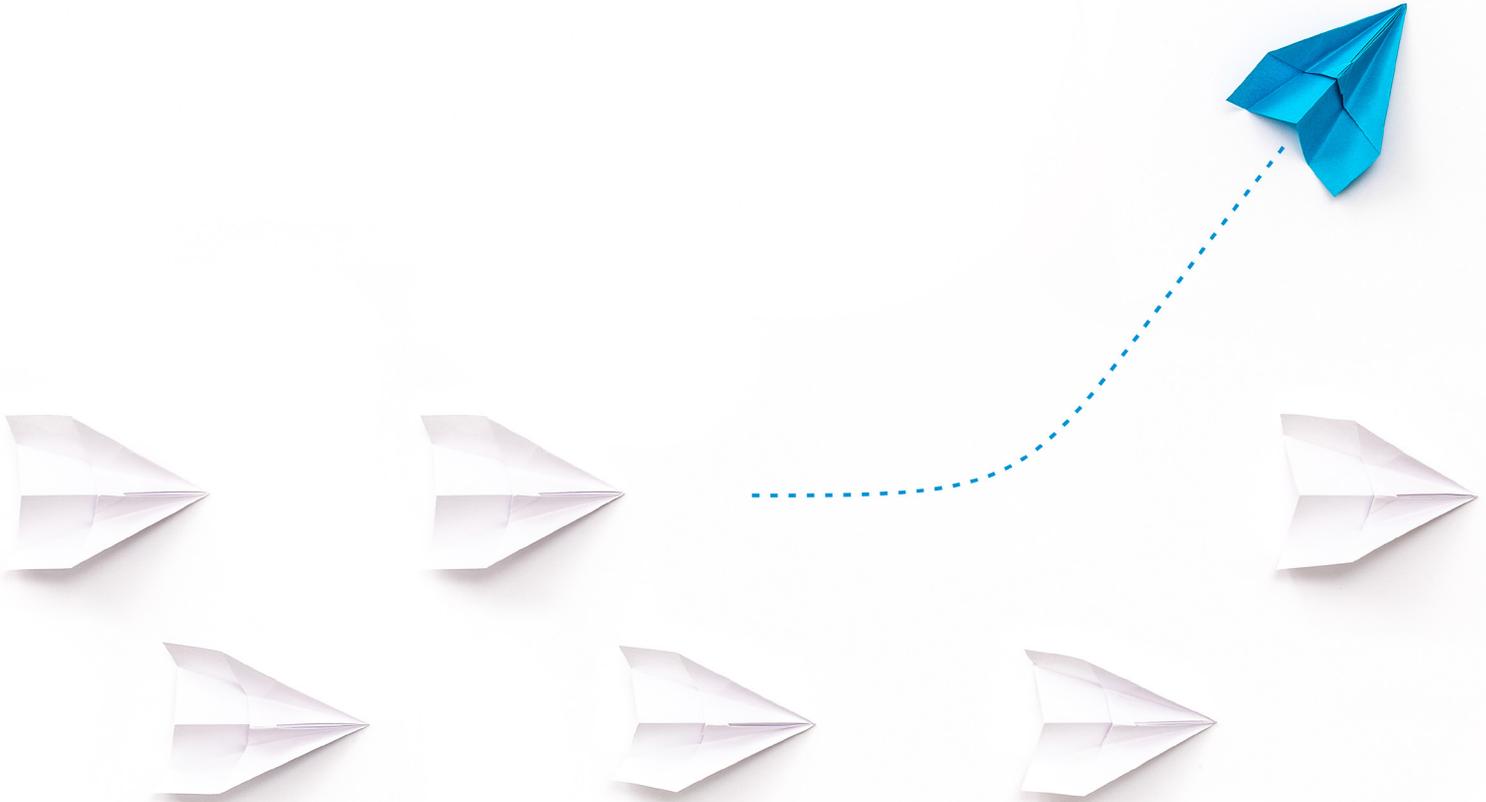
Ask yourself these questions:

- What part of your career makes you come alive?
- What aspects of your job make it a joy to get ready in the morning?

Let your team see the real you, and encourage them to define their own authenticity. 

Will you step out of line?

By Sally Stetson



Actress Alex Borstein who recently received an Emmy for Best Supporting Actress in a comedy series, *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*, told a powerful story while accepting her award. Her grandmother, who is an immigrant and a Holocaust survivor, was in line to be shot into a pit during the Holocaust. When she asked a guard, “What happens if I step out of line?” he said, “I don’t have the heart to shoot you, but somebody will.” She stepped out of line. Borstein said, “And for that I am here and for that my children are here. So step out of line, ladies. Step out of line.”

This speech inspired me to think about my own behavior, as well as that of women in general. Do we have the courage to speak up and step out of line when needed? Are women less likely to defy the rules? It is difficult to make generalizations, but my impression is that women, more than men, tend to follow the rules, and although they may question, they are not as likely to challenge the rules and push the boundaries.

As women, we need to value our diversity of thought and our unique voice. We need to remember to:

Speak Up

If you want to make an impact you must speak up. It will always be easier to stay the course but having the courage to use your voice when you feel the organization is going in the wrong direction adds value and pushes the organization in the right direction. Believe in your value and speak up!

Stop Apologizing

I have observed that women are more likely than men to apologize for a new idea as a way to avoid being embarrassed if the idea is not accepted. We second guess ourselves, and it allows for others to more easily dismiss our opinions. Apologize and be accountable when there's something to be accountable for, but never apologize for sharing your insights and ideas.

The women leaders I work with and admire are strong role models. They step out of line, speak up, and encourage the next generation of women leaders. Now, it's up to us to do the same.

Don't Underestimate Your Experience

Recognize that your knowledge and expertise matter. Share confidently what you've learned, your varied perspective, and stand up for your ideas.

Bring Others Along

Many women are natural leaders. We need to serve as role models to others by developing positive relationships, building strong teams, and bringing others along with us. Serving as a sponsor and/or mentor for other leaders will only strengthen the organization.

About the author



Sally Stetson
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Sally Stetson, co-founder of our sister company Salveson Stetson Group (SSG), brings more than two decades of experience as an executive search consultant. She has worked across diverse industries including life sciences and pharmaceutical, healthcare systems, manufacturing, telecommunications, non-profit, and professional services. Sally also serves as Practice Leader for the firm's Human Resources Specialty Practice.

Prior to co-founding Salveson Stetson Group, Sally served as Vice President of Client Services for Right Management Consultants and as Vice President of W.K. Gray and Associates, a retained executive search firm. She also held senior human resources management positions at Thomas Jefferson University.

In 2003, she was named one of Pennsylvania's "50 Best Women in Business" by the Governor of Pennsylvania. The *Philadelphia Business Journal* named Sally as one of its "2006 Women of Distinction" for her outstanding contributions both professionally and in the community. In addition, Sally has been selected as one of *SmartCEO Magazine's* 2010 BRAVA! Women Business Achievement award winners.

Inspiration from the inside out:

Inspired leadership and the role of your personal story in affecting team performance.

By Sherrie Barch and Marsha King

Where has your journey taken you? What inspires you? The answers to these questions will help you craft and tell your own story, so you can share it with others. When you start sharing your story, you will begin to understand your impact on others and be able to identify who you need to inspire, as well as create a plan for doing it.

Take the story of Catherine Meloy, CEO, Goodwill Greater Washington, DC. Involved in several ministries with her father, Catherine was inspired at a very early age to help people. Growing up with a disciplinarian Marine father, and an unconditionally loving mother, shaped her identity.

Catherine considers discipline to be the number one attribute in business and the daily habit that helps her maintain focus. She believes that declaring your values and priorities as a leader creates greater accountability, and often asks herself, “What was really important a year ago?” or “What did I lose sleep over a month ago?” to help her stay focused on the big picture. She also believes that as a leader, “If you’re the smartest person in the room, you’re in the wrong room.”

A successful broadcasting executive of 20 years, she received a phone call one day requesting she serve as the leader of Goodwill. That call, along with her intelligence, commitment, and passion, has helped transform countless lives in the greater Washington community and beyond. In the debate of whether the heart or the head should prevail, Catherine uncompromisingly chooses to lead with both. She credits her spiritual faith with impacting her leadership style and even the culture of Goodwill. She says, “Helping people to no longer need me is my goal.” Empowering people through education and training is what she does best – helping people learn to fish after being given the fish.

Catherine Meloy’s story is unique and inspirational. So is yours. As a leader, your story is important for

“If you’re the smartest person in the room, you’re in the wrong room.”

many reasons. First, people relate to personal stories and see pieces of themselves in them. Second, they help people make connections—to you, to the organization, and to the mission. Your story helps you stay grounded in who you are and what you believe in. And lastly, others find inspiration in your story!

Take a few minutes to think about who has inspired you and how, both personally and professionally. Was it someone close to you or someone you’ve never met? Next, think about how those who have inspired you have influenced you as a leader.

Constructing your story

In developing your story, it’s important to understand who you are as a leader. To gain a better understanding of leadership style, think about:

- What inspires you?
- How did you receive this inspiration?
- What do you believe in/stand for?
- How did your life’s journey get you to this point?

Everyone has a story. Since you are the author of your story, you get to decide what's important and the role you played in the story. Many stories have heroes, victims and villains, but you can rewrite your story by reframing how you feel about the events of your life, the role you've chosen to take and what motivated you forward.

It's important to remember that others will learn from your story, and your story can have whatever ending you choose. Also, when you give people permission to write their own story, that is inspiring in itself.

What you value as a leader is important and also affects your story. What values have you developed? Here are some values and traits to think about:

Authenticity	Leadership
Autonomy	Justice/fairness
Connecting with people	Productivity
Customer service	Recognition
Diversity	Self-awareness
Efficiency	Trust
Employee engagement	Teamwork/collaboration
Equality	

At the end of this article, we've provided a worksheet that takes you through an exercise to construct your story. It will walk you through the following questions:

- What are your most important values?
- How do they merge with your mission?
- What inspires you?
- Where did you get this inspiration?
- How has your life's journey led you to this place?
- What do you stand for?

Once you've completed the worksheet, identify the key points of your story and how this story led to inspiration. Also, consider what important values have emerged from your story.

Why is it important to identify your values and create a story? Among other reasons, a 2015 Bain & Company research study (EIU Research, 2015) surveyed 300 senior executives worldwide and assessed their impressions of employee output based on relative productivity. They divided the impressions into these categories: Dissatisfied, Satisfied, Engaged and Inspired.

Before we look at their findings, let's review the definitions of the categories (from About.com):

Satisfaction — Contentment with one's own work

Engagement — The willingness to offer discretionary work and energy to accomplish work goals

Inspiration — Behaviors are driven by the meaning and purpose from the company's mission

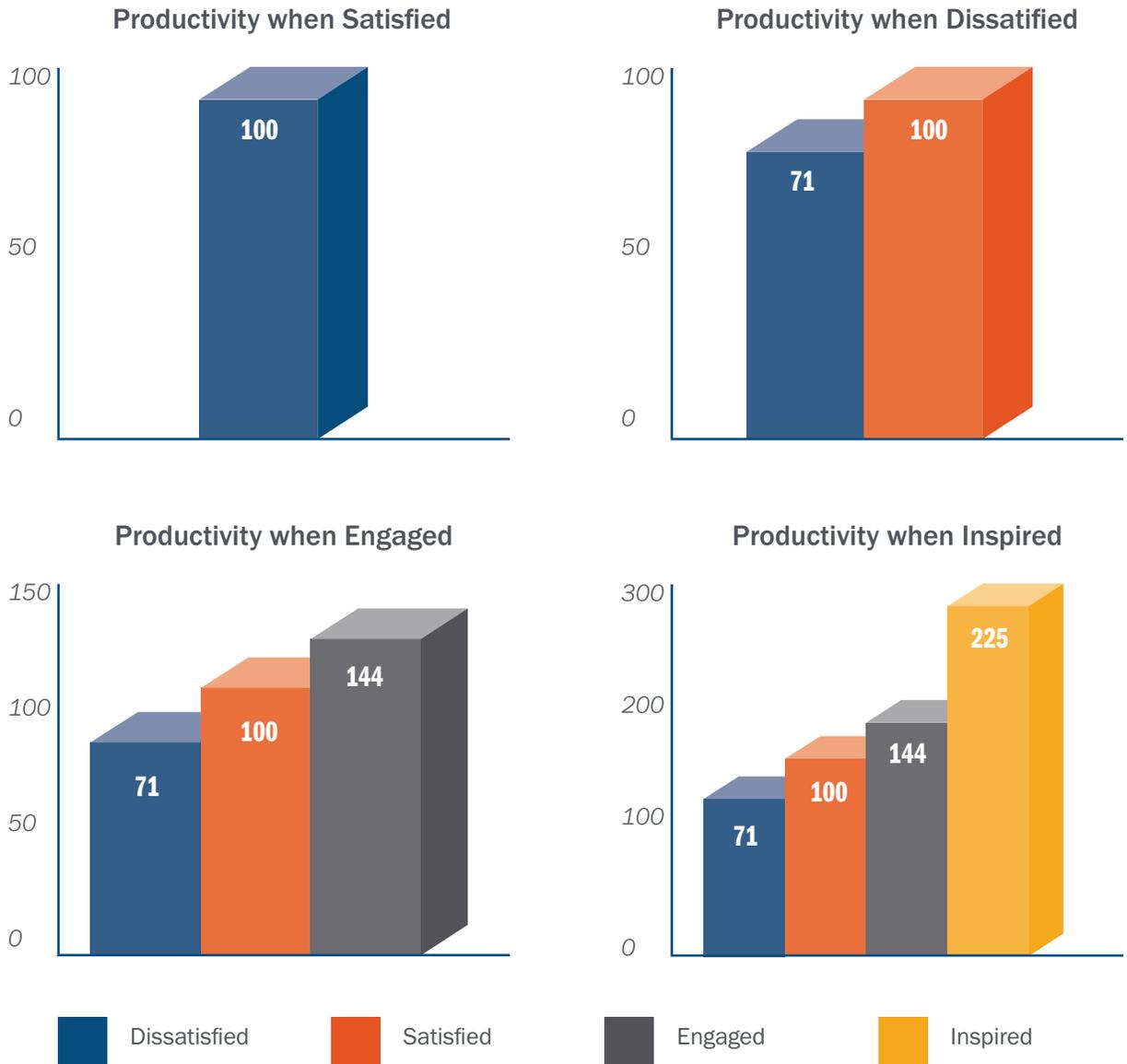
Productivity — Achievement toward one's goals

“

**You either walk inside
your story and own it or
You stand outside your
story and hustle for your
worthiness.**

— Brené Brown

Below are graphical representations of their findings. Let's take a look:



Data Source: Bain & Company and EIU Research, 2015

As you can see, productivity was lowest when workers were dissatisfied, unengaged, and uninspired. It was highest when employees were satisfied, engaged, and inspired. This is great information, but how can we use it to create a productive environment? To gain a better understanding, let's take a look at Bain & Company's Pyramid of Employee Needs.

The Pyramid of Employee Needs

INSPIRED EMPLOYEES...

Get meaning and inspiration from their company's mission

Are inspired by the leaders in their company

ENGAGED EMPLOYEES...

Are part of an extraordinary team

Have autonomy to do their jobs

Learn and grow every day

Make a difference and have an impact

SATISFIED EMPLOYEES...

Have a safe work environment

Have the tools, training, and resources to do their jobs well

Can get their jobs done efficiently, without excess bureaucracy

Are valued and rewarded fairly

SOURCE BAIN & COMPANY

Whom can you inspire?

The next step on the worksheet outlines how to take your story of inspiration to help you explore the following questions:

- Whom can you inspire? (Be specific)
- How can this person feel more connected to you?
- How can you help them feel more connected to the vision, mission, and values of the organization? Their job?
- How can you help them to understand how important their role is?

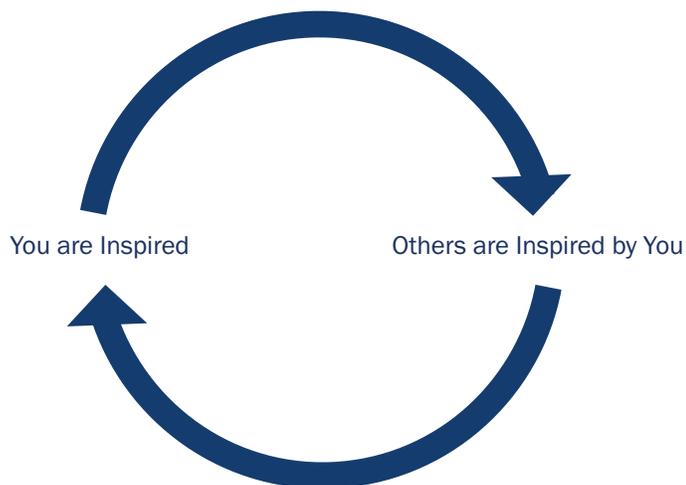
Ways to inspire

You've got your story, you know who you want to inspire, but how do you begin to apply your inspiration both internally and with others?

Here are some tactics for doing just that:

- Share your leadership story.
- Encourage others to "author" their own story.
- Help people to align their values to the mission
- Do the right thing ... especially by people. Be a strong leader!
- Connect with people personally.
- Understand and "teach" your organization's big picture and how each person is supporting it. (why are we all doing this?)
- Help people see the "IMPORTANCE" of their role.

Circle of Inspiration



Take a some time over the next few days, weeks or months to think about and answer, “How is your story going to evolve?” and “How can I do more to inspire and be an inspiration to others?” Own your values, develop and share your story, and start inspiring yourself and others. 



[Download the worksheet](#)

“ **Waiting for inspiration is another way of saying that you’re stalling. You don’t wait for inspiration, you command it to appear.** ”

About the authors



Sherrie Barch

CEO, Furst Group & NuBrick Partners

When it comes to identifying great leaders, Sherrie Barch believes that leaders are all around us and by recognizing patterns we can spot those who transform and inspire while avoiding the toxic, performance-draining ones. After sitting across from, both virtually and in person, more than 50,000 leaders in her career, she is energized by working with Boards and CEOs to find the right talent to move their organizations forward toward continued, long-lasting success. Legacy is built not by what we achieve, but through those we inspire to achieve.



Marsha King, PhD

Senior Consultant, NuBrick Partners

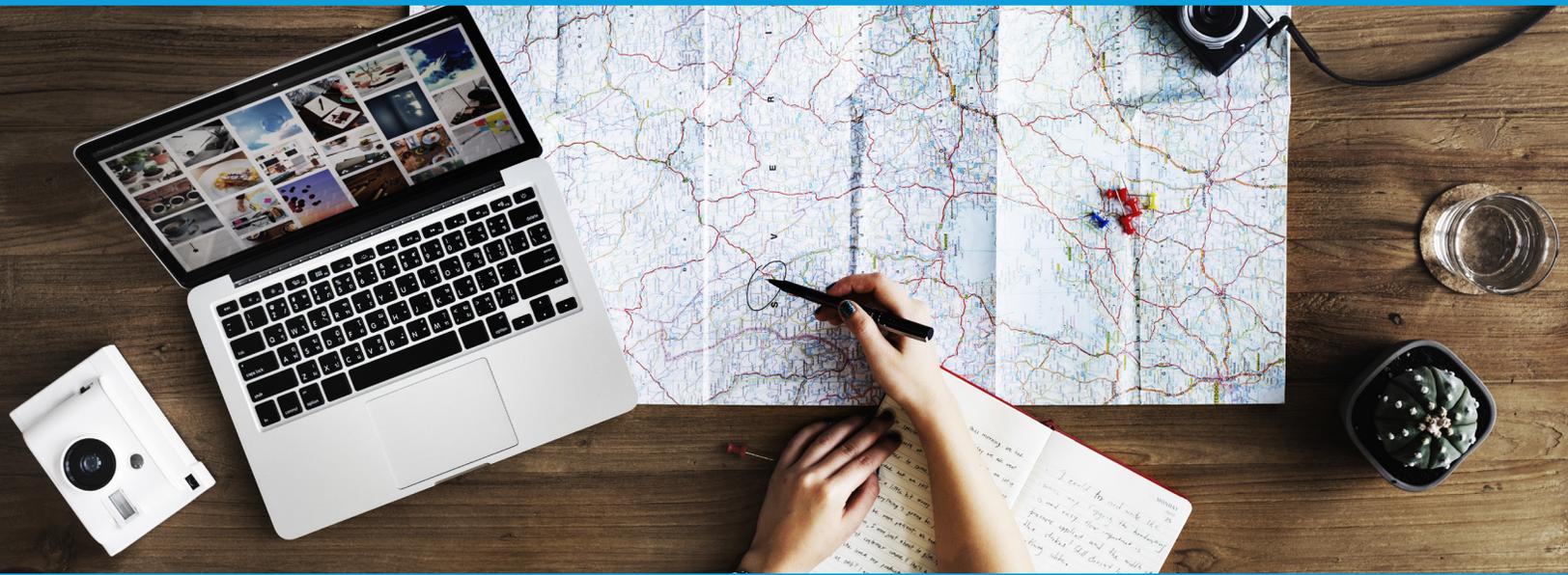
Marsha King is a leadership expert and executive coach who works with senior leaders to assess their skills and personality, and to improve their overall performance and results. Most recently, she has coached executives within AMITA Healthcare, Astellas, Baxter, Takeda Pharmaceuticals, Rockwell Aerospace, iFLY, Kelton Research, KPMG, Shire Pharmaceuticals, PWC, Chick-fil-A and the Kellogg School of Management. Marsha is also a well-respected adjunct professor at Northwestern University and George Washington University where she teaches in the Human Resource Development programs, specializing in research.

CREATING A ROADMAP

to accelerated team performance

Team alignment and performance can make or break your success as a leader. Linked to everything you aim to achieve, team performance proves to be one of the most elusive challenges to decode.

Since team effectiveness isn't episodic or based on a particular event it can be overwhelming to approach. It's similar to getting in shape. You don't go to the gym and expect to be in shape within a day or even a week – this would just leave you overworked and sore. The same is true of becoming a high performing team – it's a process that takes courageous effort.



Map out the journey to accelerated team performance by asking three simple questions ...



Understanding the current state of your team and its culture can be challenging. If you have been on the team for some time, you probably have existing views and knowledge of your specific team dynamic and skill sets, as well as a good idea of the broader company talent and its culture. If you're new to the team or the organization, you may have a high-level understanding of these things, but, in either situation, you probably don't have the full picture.

Step back and take the time to listen, observe, and understand the big picture before making long-term, strategic plans. Your plans must consider:

- Organizational objectives and goals
- Culture from both macro (organization as a whole) and micro (your team's unique culture and how it fits into the broader one)
- Team effectiveness, strengths, weaknesses, etc.
- Individual team member gaps and expertise



Cutting through bias and organizational baggage can make it difficult to get to the truth. It's best to start with performance data first. Then, schedule time to talk with key stakeholders from various departments that interact with your team often. Listen for the stories that can help you get to the heart of your team's challenges and help make clear the reality of expectations others throughout the company have for your team's performance.

Once you feel you have a good grasp on this, schedule a time to meet with each of your team members individually to know them a bit better. What motivates them? How do they define their strengths? What do they identify as their areas for development?

Then, bring them together as a team. Provide opportunities for them to bond and deepen their understanding of one another.

Research has shown that teams with a sense of identity and purpose have a stronger sense of psychological safety, which allows them to outperform teams that lack empathy and safety. Consider adding a layer of science to your process by introducing assessments like the Hogan Assessment, Myer's Briggs, or DiSC to provide additional insights on how individuals behave under stress, how they prefer to communicate, and how you can empower the team to work more effectively together.

2 Where do you need to be?

Armed with your new knowledge, you can develop a roadmap for executing on the goals you have put in place. It's imperative to link your vision for supporting organizational goals with your strategy for execution so that your team members can easily connect it to their daily objectives. This allows them the latitude and knowledge to make sound decisions and take calculated risks.

But before they can take action, you'll need to outline the challenges, gaps, and strengths your team will encounter during execution of the plan. Consider the following possible approaches to aligning your team around your vision:

- Clarify or reconfigure roles to leverage strengths
- Add a new role to fill gaps and/or free up time for existing team members to shift their focus
- Design stretch assignments for those that need more exposure
- Outline and set completion goals for any development that's needed

Setting expectations and clarifying roles will enhance your team's sense of purpose and ultimately affect their ability to increase their performance. Now, you can set your sights on the future.

3

How will we get there?

With goals and execution strategy set, as well as role clarity and development plans in place, the final step is to create a roadmap for how the team will work together. Start by having a team discussion about how you will work differently together a year from now. Ask questions like:

- What will team meetings look like?
- How will we leverage differently our strengths?
- What will success look like?
- What challenges to achieving our goals do we foresee?
- How will we overcome them?

Then, work together to define your rules of engagement and your core purpose. Also, decide how you will measure success. It's best to create goals that have objective metrics attached, otherwise you may find it tough to determine what worked and what didn't. Be sure to set a cadence for checking in on your goals. Creating milestones as part of your roadmap will give you ample time to adjust course and amp up in any areas that are lagging behind.

Your team's performance will benefit from consistent updates to the roadmap and keep everyone on track. Many things create speed bumps, which will slow your process, but if you have the psychological safety to be vulnerable and work as a team you will easily maneuver through to success.



Emotional intelligence: The leadership differentiator

By Joe Mazzenga



Intelligence is measured in many ways. Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is probably the first measurement that comes to mind. IQ and all of its measurements we encountered over the course of our lives can be primary markers of our success (or failure).

The concept of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) has been around since 1995 when researcher Daniel Goleman introduced it to the world. The idea that “an ability to identify and manage emotions greatly increases our chances of success” quickly took off and has influenced the way people think about emotions and human behavior ever since.

Being more emotionally intelligent is not the same as being more emotional. The core idea behind EQ is the ability to identify and manage your emotions and to identify, understand, and manage yourself, while building more effective relationships. As leaders and professionals, we are conditioned to focus on technical skills and knowledge and to shy away from the squishiness of feelings.

According to Goleman emotional intelligence in practical terms, “means being aware that emotions can drive our behavior and impact people (positively and negatively) and learning how to manage those emotions—both our own and others—especially when we are under pressure.”

You may recognize that someone with a low EQ, but high IQ as very bright, but extremely difficult with to work with.

Why Should You Care about **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?**

90%
of top performers
have high Emotional
Intelligence.

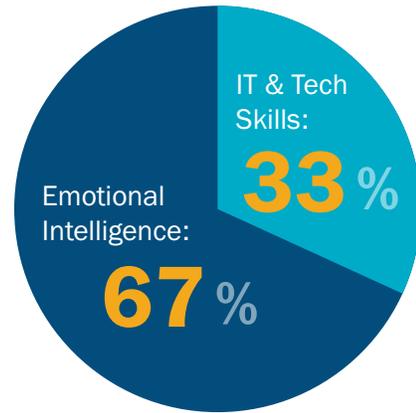
Emotional Intelligence
is responsible for
58%
of all job performance.

Additional income made by high EQ
individuals over their counterparts:
\$29,000/year

Data Source: Emotional Intelligence 2.0

Your Most Important Discretionary Asset

Researchers have found that IQ alone does not explain out performance. “People with high levels of intelligence (IQ) outperform those with average IQ 20% of the time ... people with average IQ outperform those with high IQs 70% of the time,” Drs. Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves said in their book *EI 2.0*.



Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Relationship Management
Emotional self-awareness	Emotional self-control	Empathy	Influence
	Adaptability		Coach and mentor
	Achievement orientation	Organizational awareness	Conflict management
	Positive outlook		Inspirational leadership

Source: More than Sount, LLC 2017

© HBR.org

Self-Awareness

Emotional awareness: Recognizing one’s emotions and their effects. People with this competence know which emotions they are feeling and why and understand the links between their feelings, and what they think, do and say.

Accurate self-assessment: Knowing one’s strengths and limits. People with this ability are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and are reflective—learning from experience. They are also open to candid feedback, new perspectives, continuous learning and self-development.

Self-confidence: Sureness about one’s self-worth and capabilities. People with this competence present themselves with self-assurance, have “presence” and can voice views that are unpopular. They can go out on a limb for what they believe is right.

Social Awareness

This attribute is the ability to recognize and understand the emotions of others, even when they differ from your own. It is facilitated by listening and noticing.

Self-Management

Self-control: Managing disruptive emotions and impulses. People with this competence manage their impulsive feelings and distressing emotions well. They stay composed, positive, and collected even in challenging moments.

Trustworthiness: Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity. People with this competence act ethically and are above reproach. They build trust through their reliability and authenticity, admit their own mistakes and confront unethical actions in others.

Conscientiousness: Taking responsibility for personal performance. People with this competence meet commitments and keep promises. They hold themselves accountable for meeting their objectives.

Adaptability: Flexibility in handling change. People with this competence smoothly handle multiple demands, shifting priorities and rapid change. They adapt their responses and tactics to fit fluid circumstances.

Innovativeness: Being comfortable with and open to novel ideas and new information. People with this competence seek out fresh ideas from a wide variety of sources. They entertain original solutions to problems, generate new ideas, and take fresh perspectives and risks in their thinking.

Relationship Management

Actions that can aid us in influencing others and avoiding conflicts include:

- Creating quality interactions to sustain strong relationships.
- Using clear communication and constructive conflict.
- Respecting and valuing others.
- Understanding relationship management is most challenging when stressed or triggered.

Self-Management Strategies

Concentrating on managing your own emotions is the key. Some techniques that can help:

- Breathe.
- Create an emotion versus thinking.
- Set aside time for problem solving.
- Speak to someone who is not emotionally involved in the situation.

Sometimes, It's Not Easy

The book, *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*, by Marshall Goldsmith provides a list of behavioral tics that may to derail our best efforts. Take a look at the list and make a note of those you may exhibit.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winning too much | <input type="checkbox"/> Starting with no, but, or however |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adding too much value | <input type="checkbox"/> Making excuses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Passing judgment | <input type="checkbox"/> Clinging to the past |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making destructive comments | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing favorites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telling the world how smart we are | <input type="checkbox"/> Refusing to express regret |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speaking when angry | <input type="checkbox"/> Failing to express gratitude |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Negativity | <input type="checkbox"/> Punishing the messenger |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Withholding information | <input type="checkbox"/> Passing the buck |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Failing to give proper recognition | <input type="checkbox"/> An excessive need to be me |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Claiming credit we don't deserve | <input type="checkbox"/> Not listening |

Reflection Questions

- ? How aware are you of engaging in these behaviors?
- ? Do you promote and encourage candid feedback to point out your behavior?
- ? How could you improve your effectiveness in Results or Relationships by practicing self-management to handle some of the behavior above?

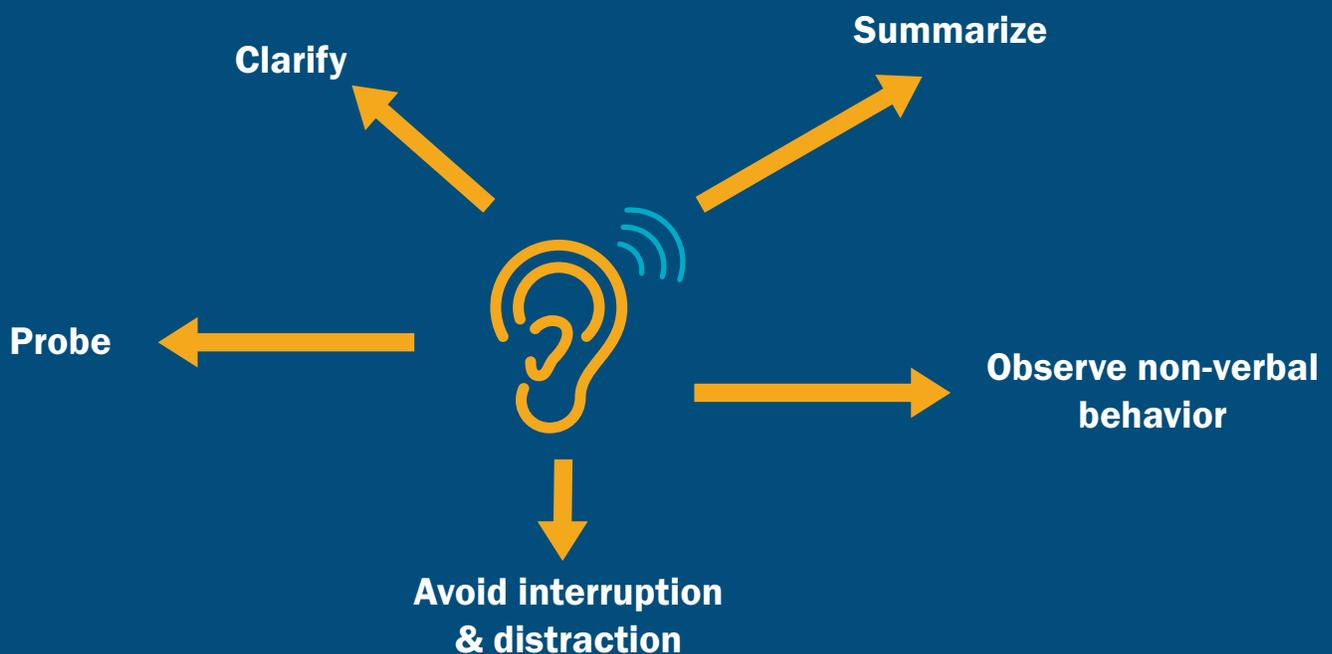
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I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious.

— Albert Einstein

Active Listening

Empathy is a key ingredient within EQ. Listening is the key to empathy. Curiosity and active listening are pivotal to successful leadership. Here are some active listening techniques you can put into practice to improve your EQ today.



At the end of the day, Emotional Intelligence is important.

It benefits us as individuals and as leaders in many ways—from building trust with our families and teams to earning a fatter paycheck, it obviously pays to improve your EQ. It’s also an excellent safeguard against self-absorption and drives us toward achieving our goals by building powerful relationships that help us gain allies, and those allies can come back to help us in ways we can’t begin to imagine. 



Equip Your Team to Persevere:

Learn more about a simple tool that you can use right now to increase your emotional intelligence.

[View Now](#) 



Joe Mazzenga

Managing Partner, NuBrick Partners

About the author

Joe Mazzenga has a strong history as a consultant in building effective executive teams through leadership development and assessment, executive team performance, talent management, succession planning, and talent alignment amid organizational and cultural change. He has more than 30 years of experience in leadership development and strategy implementation, helping Fortune 500 clients optimize their talent. Joe serves as an executive consultant and coach to board members, CEOs, physician chairs, and C-suite executives on matters pertaining to board relations, leadership development, talent management, and enterprise-wide change.

Making the leap from doer to leader

By John Touey

In the countless interviews I've conducted for senior management roles during my time in retained search, the one subject that consistently comes up as the greatest career challenge for candidates centers on their initial transition from doer to leader.



As their goals become more strategic and complex, these high performers need to stop doing and start leading in order to be effective.

As is typical with early career professionals, they gained their first promotions mostly by the superiority of their technical or functional expertise. They were great engineers, sales people, scientists, or compensation and benefits experts. By and large, their success was predicated on their own competence and labor. This early achievement usually leads to positions with more responsibility and broader spans of control, where these professionals can no longer obtain objectives solely by their own competence.

As their goals become more strategic and complex, these high performers need to stop doing and start leading in order to be effective. For some, it is difficult to relinquish control of a project to a group of subordinates; for others, it is impossible. They tend to micromanage, frustrate their direct reports and end up doing a great job on some – but not all – of their responsibilities. Those who can't lead most often derail at this point in their careers, either topping out in their organizations or moving to a specialized track where their companies can take advantage of their functional/technical excellence while minimizing the impact of their lack of leadership competency.

Is there a way to improve the percentage of executives who can successfully make the leap from doer to leader? Based on the anecdotal data

I've gathered from my own experience interviewing senior executives, there certainly is. While many of these professionals credit their companies' internal or external management development programs to their growth as leaders, the most effective resource in career development they identify is a strong and interested mentor or role model. Among a majority of successful senior business leaders, you will find that at some point in the early stages of their career, they engaged a more senior executive as a mentor.

In general, I'm a big supporter of having a mentor; having a credible, experienced professional in your corner who has invested a personal stake in your development is never a bad thing. As it pertains to making the transition from doer to leader, there are two benefits in particular to be gained from getting a mentor's input.

First, a mentor is a truth-teller. To use my own experience as an example, while complaining to an "early career" mentor about the fact that a project team I was leading wasn't performing to my expectations, he made the astute observation that I was a pretty lousy communicator. He correctly identified that I was an intuitive thinker and, while that had served me well as an individual contributor,

Moving from a doer to a leader mentality is essential to a professional making the leap into the senior executive ranks.



it had the potential to derail my career as a people manager. As an intuitive thinker, I often left out steps in a process and expected my team members to magically understand what was going on inside my head. This mentor added that I often exacerbated the situation with a communication style that could make people feel stupid when they asked me questions. These insights were quite blunt and that second piece of feedback in particular was not easy to hear. However, on self-reflection, it was abundantly clear that he was right.

Second, a mentor serves as a role model. When handed pieces of feedback like those described above, it's often difficult to find corrective behaviors on your own. By observing a mentor who models desired behaviors, professionals with less experience can at least have an idea of what to shoot for. If the relationship is strong and trusting, the mentor can give insight as to what is working and what is not as the mentee makes adjustments to his or her leadership style.

Whether it's working with a mentor, executive coach, or just through a painful and painstaking series of trial-and-error experiences, moving from a doer to a leader mentality is essential to a professional making the leap into the senior executive ranks. If you ask most senior executives to what they attribute their success, invariably, they will mention the name of an interested, more senior professional who helped shape their careers. If it worked for so many of them, chances are it will work for you, too. 

See more articles and resources from SSG

About the author

John Touey is a Principal of our sister company Salveson Stetson Group (SSG), and member of the management committee of the firm. He has over 20 years of experience providing executive search, human resources, and management consulting services to a broad range of organizations and industries. At SSG, John manages the firm's financial officer practice and has successfully placed senior level financial executives with several Fortune 500 companies, both in the Philadelphia region and beyond. Additionally, his functional search expertise extends into senior sales and marketing, operations, human resources, technology, and general management roles.

John is the co-author of *A Powerful Team – How CEOs and their HR Leaders are Transforming Organizations*, a book that illustrates how CEOs and their HR leaders work together to make a transformational impact on company results. He is a frequent contributor to several business publications and currently serves as a Guest Columnist regarding career issues for CFO.com. John has also authored articles for TLNT.com and Brazen Careerist. In addition, his work has been cited in The Wall Street Journal, Barron's, Fortune Magazine, Bloomberg News, and MSNBC.

John holds a bachelor's degree in English from Temple University. He currently serves on the Board of the Economy League of Greater Philadelphia. He is a Past-President for the Society for Human Resource Management's Philadelphia Chapter and most recently served as the Chair of the Chapter's Senior Human Resources Forum. He is also a past Board Member of the Philadelphia Human Resources Planning Society, the Entrepreneurs Forum of Greater Philadelphia, the Human Capital Working Group of Select Greater Philadelphia, and DPT Business School.



John V. Touey

Principal, SSG, an MPI Company

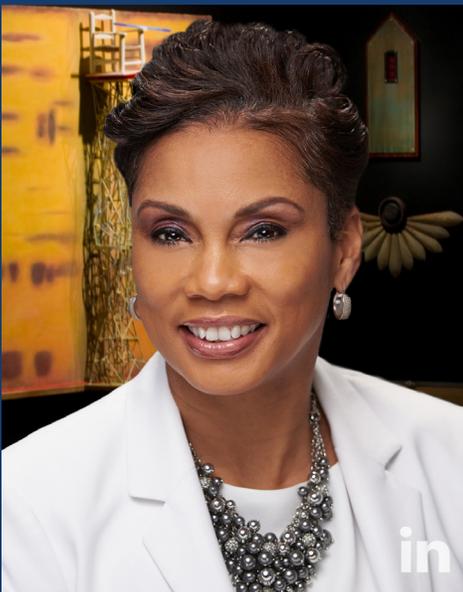
Organizational Best Practices

- Adopting a more diverse definition of diversity
- Using technology like AI to avoid unconscious bias
- Sourcing candidates with non-traditional credentials
- Testing diversity initiatives with data
- Standardizing the interview process to reduce bias
- Talent Pipelining e.g. NAHSE, ALHE, AHLF, HBCUs (Texas Southern, Prairie View A&M University), Bluford Leadership Institute, fellowship programs, etc.
- Employee referral incentive programs
- Develop Career Pathways for managers and above

Individual Responsibilities

- Develop skills to assess culture and work to integrate more diverse practices
- Learn about the ways of others and be willing to see past stereotypes
- Suspend judgment
- Remember that individuals are unique even within groups
- Explore, understand, and honor cultural definitions and values
- Compare and evaluate culture(s) within the context of professional obligations
- Deal with dissonance that occurs by “honoring and setting aside”
- Accept responsibility to lead the conversation: be comfortable being vulnerable

[View the full guide](#)



Deanna Banks

Principal, Furst Group

About the author

Deanna Banks is a trusted talent advisor with more than 25 years of experience as a human capital consultant and thought leader on diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Her practice is comprised of many of the industry's leading hospital systems, academic medical centers, trade associations, and health insurance and managed government programs (Medicare and Medicaid). Deanna is skilled at partnering and consulting with boards of directors and Chief Executive Officers on executive recruitment and retention, succession planning, and organizational and leadership development.



BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR DIVERSITY

Losing momentum on diversity is not an option. Representing and reflecting our increasingly diverse population throughout all levels of our organizations must be a strategic priority.

Building a strong foundation for diversity, inclusion, and belonging means more than having a threshold or requirements for hiring diverse talent. It means creating a strategy for systemic change, developing pathways for access and exposure, and establishing processes, tools, and metrics that encourage authentic, transformational leadership.

Many organizations have the desire and drive to integrate diversity, inclusion, and belonging but are unsure of where to begin or where to go next. Transparent, open conversations are the ideal way to assess where you are and where you need to be. Ask the tough questions. Have vulnerable conversations. Explore the hard truths and know that being outside of your comfort zone is the only way to effect change.

Reviewing your current diversity, inclusion, and belonging practices provides the basis for creating a plan that is tied into your talent and business strategies. You can then measure the effectiveness of your efforts and hold leaders accountable for progress. This framework ensures leaders are setting the right example and creating solid expectations, which allows your organization to achieve positive strides and embrace the needs of your workforce and your community.

Diversity isn't something that needs to be solved. It's a mindset that needs to be deeply intertwined and embedded in your organizational culture. True transformation in diversity, inclusion, and belonging means a refocus on human basics. Challenge everyone in your organization to have tough conversations and lead with courage.

Look to diverse leaders for inspiration. Many of these leaders didn't have clear pathways and fought to achieve despite the odds. They feel the weight of their decisions and are motivated to deliver extraordinary care for the communities in which they lead. They unselfishly create space for the diverse voices that must be heard.

Driven by their passion and our mission to empower leaders and their impact on the world, we have sponsored the Women Leaders in Healthcare conference, as well as the Top Diversity and Women Leaders in Healthcare recognition programs for over a decade. Because recognizing diverse leaders serves a crucial role in underscoring the need for more purposeful, and intentional diversity, inclusion, and belonging efforts that create forward momentum and strengthen the heart of healthcare—people caring for people.



Sherrie Barch,
CEO

Bob Clarke,
Chairman

ABOUT MPI

Three interconnected companies comprise Management Partners, Inc (MPI). Together, our organizations provide solutions and support for all aspects of executive talent management including executive search, senior leadership development, and executive team performance. With a combined team of nearly 70 employees, we have conducted more than 4,000 engagements.

THE COMPANIES



Furst Group is a premier executive search firm that focuses in healthcare and life sciences. With more than 40 years of experience, we partner with leaders and organizations from all facets of healthcare—payor, provider, medical device and other life science companies, academic medical centers, medical groups, associations, and more. Our experience in evaluating talent, leadership, and culture helps companies align their organizations to execute their strategic initiatives. Furst Group continues to be ranked among the Top 10 Healthcare Executive Search Firms by *Modern Healthcare* and ranked on *Forbes* list of Best Executive Recruiting Firms. [FurstGroup.com](https://www.furstgroup.com)



NuBrick Partners is a leadership development firm with a team comprised of highly trained psychologists and organizational development experts who provide an integrated, systemic approach to talent management. Their support encompasses the board, C-Suite, and senior leadership team development, succession planning, executive selection assessment, and new leader installation across all industries, as well as executive physician leadership within the healthcare industry. [NuBrickPartners.com](https://www.nubrickpartners.com)



Salveson Stetson Group (SSG) brings more than 25 years of retained executive search experience in a multitude of industries. SSG has an outstanding track record of recruiting strong leaders with a special focus on human resources, finance, non-profit, pharmaceutical, and biotechnology. Ranked by *Forbes* as a Best Executive Recruiting Firm, SSG has conducted searches for organizations that range from privately held and not-for-profit to publicly traded and venture-backed startups in all industries. [SSGsearch.com](https://www.ssgsearch.com)

BY THE NUMBERS

70%

Client Retention Rate

65+

Team Members



4k

Engagements



40+

Years Experience



11

Support Locations