



West Sound Technology Professionals Association

"Driving a technology future for the West Sound"

Spring 2005

WSTPA News

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Great Leadership Depends



President's Note: As I observe the intriguing phenomenon of growing a 10th arm, it occurs to me that I have reached a critical crossroads in my life regarding priorities, responsibilities, and commitments. A strong sense of dedication forces me to choose between sending this newsletter late -- or not at all. Since I currently don't have time to record my many thoughts for the President's Corner this quarter, I will instead borrow a piece which came across my desk at a particularly busy time. I share it forward so that others may find value in the message.

by Don Blohowiak

You might be doing everything a good

• WSTPA to Sponsor and Exhibit at Washington Technology Center Summit on April 8

WSTPA will be participating in the first statewide conference of this kind sponsored by Washington Technology Center. This sold out event will be held at Bell Harbor Conference Center in Seattle from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and will review the trends, challenges and opportunities surrounding some of the state's most prominent and promising industries including - Energy, Life Sciences, Defense & Security, and Nanotechnology.

The morning will begin with sessions that set the stage for evaluating our state's economic potential and what is needed to shape our future. Experts will discuss ways for Washington companies to:

- Identify emerging business opportunities in Washington State;
- Secure funding to advance R&D and commercialization goals;
- Build profitable partnerships with public, private, and government institutions.

Later, targeted tracks are tailored to a company's growth needs. The afternoon will cover specifics around the previously mentioned four industries key to Washington's future, with highlights to include:

- Biotech in Washington: Building a Strong Life Sciences Market
- Energy Innovation: Positioning the Northwest to Lead the Energy Economy
- Washington's Defense Industries: Where They Are & Where They Are Going
- Nanotechnology - The Enabler: A Supporting Technology for Industries

For more information visit www.watechcenter.org/re/techsummit.

• Upcoming WSTPA Events

Please note new meeting time as of March is 6pm-8pm.

- **April 21:** Applied Technical Systems (ATS) presents "The Search for the

leader is supposed to do and still find yourself both frustrated and ineffective.

The reason is not obvious. In fact, most leadership advice-givers make a critical error in the way they address leadership. The underlying assumption is that good leadership results from the individual's attitudes and actions.

That's only half right.

The other half is the role of the leader's organization to either support or thwart the leader's individual efforts at leading well.

When a leader is working very hard at exhibiting good leadership skills, but his or her organization does little to nothing to support those efforts, that leader is going it alone. And will end up in the upper left quadrant. Frustrated. And likely to leave the organization.

We strongly urge our clients to think past the outdated concept that good leadership is solely up to the individual. It's just not true. And that's why so many Leadership Development efforts fall flat. They are predicated on (essentially) "fixing" leaders but do nothing to address the critical role that the organizational environment plays in determining the true effectiveness of a leader.

Good organizational support systems (for hiring, firing, compensating, declaring clear priorities, and the like) can help a good leader more easily become a great leader.

And force a lousy leader to act, at least occasionally, a little more like a good one.

Great leadership results from both individual efforts and the collective support systems in the leader's environment.

Implications & Takeaways

In developing the leaders around you, evaluate the processes and the institutionalized habits that help or hinder your supervisors and managers. What policies and programs need strengthening? Which are long over due for an overhaul (or an execution)?

If you are convinced that your own leaderful actions are being defeated by corporate policy or culture, ask yourself:

- How can I modify what I'm doing to more effectively counter the opposing forces?
- What can I do to eliminate the very existence of such forces?
- Given current trends, what's the likelihood of this situation improving in the near future?
- How long can I remain committed, motivated, and effective in this environment?
- What are my alternatives?

Remember, all leadership is contextual. Your effectiveness is, without question, as much tied to time, place, and other managers, as your own resolve and actions.

Leadership is not a solo sport, and it cannot take place in a vacuum. While you need not wait for ideal conditions to practice good leadership, you might find over time that suboptimum conditions could well detract from your potential contribution.

Do what you can. And consciously decide what that is.

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