

Leadership & Strategy Review

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A biweekly collection of articles, comments and opinion pieces from popular media and the blogosphere, thematically reflecting the spirit of George C. Marshall's enduring legacy of leadership and strategic vision.

Leadership success always starts with vision

By John Ryan in *Forbes*

I've been privileged to work with many great leaders throughout my career and tried hard to learn exactly what it is that makes them so effective. It usually comes down to a few fundamentals. Vision is always one of them. Great leaders give real thought to the values, ideas and activities they're most passionate about—and those are the things they pursue, rather than money or prestige or options forced on them by someone else. The visions these leaders have can be—and, in fact, should be—challenging to put into action. They realize them only by setting realistic, demanding goals and then going after them relentlessly, with the help of other talented men and women who are equally committed and engaged. Indeed, when it comes to living out a vision, persistence matters just as much as inspiration.

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Who needs strategy?

By Stephen Balzac from *Organizational Psychology for Managers*

"Our goal is to succeed!"

"Our goal is simple: we will build a winning product."

"Joe's goal is to get his work done on schedule 75% of the time."

"Billy's goal? He should cross the street safely 75% of the time."

I've heard each of these so-called goals presented with a straight face. They sound good; well, at least the first three sound good. The fourth? Well, isn't it just like the third? Goals are an interesting beast. We talk about them all the time, put them down on paper, hang banners with goals written on them, and exhort people to stay focused on the goal. Despite all that effort, a many of these goals never come to pass. Most of them are little more than wishful thinking or downright fantasy.

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The goal problem is two-fold.

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Four archetypes of the chief strategy officer

By Tahman H. Powell & Duncan Angwin, *MIT Sloan Management Review*

The Chief Strategy officer is focused on two dimensions. The first dimension is the stage of the strategy process in which the CSO was involved. The second dimension of variation is how the CSO engaged in the strategy process. Some CSOs were facilitators, advising business units during the strategy formulation or assisting in the execution. Other CSOs were enactors, far more likely to execute the strategy process by themselves or with their team.

MIT developed a typology of four CSO archetypes based on variations in the roles carried out by the CSOs. They are:

1. Internal Consultant
2. Specialist
3. Coach
4. Change Agent

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Four lessons in adaptive leadership

By Michael Useem, *Harvard Business Review*

The armed services have been in the business of leadership development much longer than the corporate world has. Today's military leaders need tools and techniques to face a fast-changing and unpredictable type of enemy, so the armed services train their officers in ways that build a culture of readiness and commitment. Business leaders need to foster an adaptive culture to survive and succeed, given that they, too, face unprecedented uncertainty and new types of competitors. Essential leadership lessons include:

1. Meet the troops. Creating a personal link is crucial to leading people in challenging times.
2. Make decisions. Making good and timely calls is the crux of leadership.
3. Mission first. Focus on common purpose and eschew personal gain.
4. Convey strategic intent. Make the objectives clear, but give people the freedom to execute on them in their own way.

Differences between management and leadership

By Alan Murray, *The Wall Street Journal*

The leader's job is to inspire and motivate. In his 1989 book *On Becoming a Leader*, Warren Bennis composed a list of the differences. Here are a few interesting ones:

1. The manager administers; the leader innovates.
2. The manager maintains; the leader develops.
3. The manager relies on control; the leader inspires trust.
4. The manager has a short-range view; the leader has a long-range perspective.
5. The manager does things right; the leader does the right thing.

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