

## Leadership & Strategy Review

### Upcoming Leadership Education Programs

June 19, Treasury Executive Institute, Washington, DC

July 27, Federal Executive Institute, Lexington

August 19, Council of State Governments, Toll Fellows Program, Frankfort, KY

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*A 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.*

### Adaptable leaders may have best brains for the job

From *American Psychological Association*

Effective leaders' brains may be physically "wired" to lead, offering the promise of more precise identification and training, according to studies of U.S. Army officers published by the American Psychological Association.

Researchers have linked adaptive leadership skills with brain functioning and psychological complexity measures among active leaders. Those leaders who were found to be more adaptable and complex in psychological studies appeared to have brains that function differently from those of less adaptable leaders, according to an article published online in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*. This fusion of neuroscience and leadership research could one day revolutionize how organizations assess and develop effective and adaptive leaders.

Officers were defined as being more psychologically complex if they had a more diverse sense of their own abilities and accomplishments as leaders. For example, complex leaders described themselves as filling more leadership roles, such as mentor, team leader and spokesperson, and possessing a diverse set of skills and attributes within these roles.

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### Most successful leaders do 15 things automatically

By Glenn Llopis, *Forbes*

The most successful leaders are instinctual decision makers. Having done it so many times throughout their careers, they become immune to the pressure associated with decision making and extremely intuitive about the process of

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making the most strategic and best decisions. This is why most senior executives will tell you they depend strongly upon their "gut-feel" when making difficult decisions at a moment's notice.

There are 15 things you must do automatically to be a successful:

1. **Make Others Feel Safe to Speak-Up.** Many times leaders intimidate their colleagues with their title and power when they walk into a room. Successful leaders deflect attention away from themselves and encourage others to voice their opinions. They are experts at making others feel safe to speak-up and confidently share their perspectives and points of view. They use their executive presence to create an approachable environment.
2. **Make Decisions.**
3. **Communicate Expectations.**
4. **Challenge People to Think.**
5. **Be Accountable to Others.**

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## Six ways to tell if your strategy is a winner

By A.G. Lafley and Roger L. Martin, in *The Globe and Mail* from *Playing to Win: How Strategy Really Works*

Because the world is so complex, it is hard to tell definitely which results are due to strategy, which to macro factors, and which to luck. But, there are some common signs that a winning strategy is in place. Look for these:

1. An activity system that looks different from any competitor's system. It means you are attempting to deliver value in a distinctive way.
2. Customers who absolutely adore you, and non-customers who can't see why anybody would buy from you. This means you have been choiceful.
3. Competitors who make a good profit doing what they are doing. It means your strategy has left where-to-play and how-to-win choices for competitors, who don't need to attack the heart of your market to survive.
4. More resources to spend on an ongoing basis than competitors have. This means you are winning the value equation and have the biggest margin between price and costs and the best capacity to add spending to take advantage of an opportunity or defend your turf.
5. Competitors who attack one another, not you. It means that you look like the hardest target in the (broadly defined) industry to attack.
6. Customers who look first to you for innovations, new products, and service enhancement to make their lives better.

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## 7 unusual things great bosses do

By Jeff Haden, *Inc.*

Great bosses do these things. The rest don't because these simple gestures

Great bosses do these things. The rest don't because these simple gestures would never occur to them. Where employees are concerned, great leaders don't take. Great leaders *give*, especially these seven things:

1. They give a glimpse of vulnerability.
2. They give a nudge.
3. They give unexpected attention.
4. They give employees a break.
5. They give a peek inside.
6. They give an undeserved compliment.
7. They give a hat rack. Employees who need something often come to you with hat in hand. They're vulnerable because they *need*. Take their hat and hang it up for them. You may not be able to provide what they want, but you can work through the issue with compassion, generosity and grace.

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## Key ingredients for a successful business leader

By Daniel Hunter, *Inc.*

Conservatism not charisma is the vital ingredient for a successful business leader, claims a new study. Research into the leaders at 100-year-old European companies has found that "intelligent conservatism" trumps charismatic leaders. Every company is looking for their own Steve Jobs, a charismatic leader that can power their firm to new heights, but after looking at some of Europe's biggest and most enduring firms like Royal Dutch Shell, Glaxo and LaFarge, Dr. Christian Stadler found that bosses at the other end of the spectrum were a better bet.

Dr. Stadler says the problem with charismatic leaders is just that, charisma. Their exceptional powers of persuasion means there is little resistance if they are taking the company in the wrong direction. "If your company is heading in the right direction, a charismatic leader will get you there faster," said Dr. Stadler. "Unfortunately, if you're heading in the wrong direction, charisma will also get you there faster." In contrast "intelligent conservatism" has bred steady growth for leaders and their businesses over a long time.

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The non-profit, nonpartisan, independent George C. Marshall Foundation, located in Lexington, Virginia, prepares emerging leaders in military service, foreign service, public administration and business in the essentials of vision, strategy and leadership. If you'd like to learn more about *The Courage to Lead* series, call Rick Drake at 540-463-7103 or go online to [www.marshallfoundation.org](http://www.marshallfoundation.org).



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