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Upcoming Leadership Education Programs

March 9, Federal Executive Institute, Lexington

March 23, Federal Executive Institute, Lexington

April 14-16, Marshall Army ROTC Award and Leadership Seminar, Lexington

April 17, Treasury Executive Institute, Washington

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.

Vision and mission: What's the difference?

By Jennell Evans in *Psychology Today*

For the same reasons it is fundamental and valuable for any organization to have a strategic plan as a road map for success, it is important to develop a plan around a clearly defined and well written Vision and Mission. Both serve important, yet different roles as core elements of a strategic plan.

A Vision Statement:

- * Defines the optimal desired future state of what an organization wants to achieve over time.

A Mission Statement:

- * Defines the present state or purpose of an organization.
- * Answers three questions about why an organization exists: what it does; who it does it for; and how it does what it does.

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How great leaders communicate

By George Anders

Scholars such as Harvard Business School's Boris Groysberg argue that effective leadership no longer revolves around brilliant speeches and heroic exhortations. Instead, Groysberg and co-author Michael Slind argue in their 2012 book *Talk Inc.* that the higher you go in an organization, the more you must engage other people in conversations, rather than trying to shout them into submission. Here are seven ways that the best bosses increase their effectiveness by the ways they communicate.

1. Bring the vision to life.
2. Ask smart questions.
3. Take time to read the room.

4. Create a climate where things get done.
5. Use stories to get your points across.
6. Be mindful of what you don't know.
7. Make people feel they work for a winner.

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Three ways to become a strategic risk taker

By Tara-Nicholle Nelson, *Forbes*

Some people are fundamentally risk averse, by nature. Others seek risk out to the point of recklessness. Here are three mindset resets.

1. Understand that there are only two outcomes possible. And no, they are not success and failure
2. Appreciate that critical point where the risk of inaction > risk of action. Acting to make a change might seem risky, but this is owing to a quirk of human neuropsychology that causes us to underestimate the risks of failing to act.
3. Right-size the risks of your worst-case scenarios. Some of us get fixated and avoid even smart risks because we've envisioned our worst-case scenarios, and they have paralyzed us into staying still rather than do anything to endanger the success we've already achieved.

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Leadership as the starting point of strategy

By Tsun-yan Hsieh and Sara Yik, McKinsey

Even the best strategy can fail if a corporation doesn't have a cadre of leaders with the right capabilities at the right levels of the organization.

When it comes time to implement a strategy, many companies find themselves stymied at the point of execution. Having identified the opportunities within their reach, they watch as the results fall short of their aspirations. Too few companies recognize the reason.

Mismatched capabilities, poor asset configurations, and inadequate execution can all play their part in undermining a company's strategic objectives. Although well-regarded corporations tend to keep these pitfalls squarely in their sights, in our experience far fewer companies recognize the leadership capacity that new strategies will require, let alone treat leadership as the starting point of strategy. This oversight condemns many such endeavors to disappointment.

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World's simplest management secret

By Geoffrey James, *Inc.*

There's really only one way to ensure that everyone on your team excels. Management books have it all wrong. They all try to tell you how to manage "people." It's impossible to manage "people"; it's only possible to manage individuals. And because individuals differ from one another, what works with one individual may not work with somebody else.

Some individuals thrive on public praise; others feel uncomfortable when singled out. Some individuals are all about the money; others thrive on challenging assignments. Some individuals need mentoring; others find advice to be grating.

The trick is to manage individuals the way that THEY want to be managed, rather than the way that YOU'd prefer to be managed. The only way to do this is to ASK.

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