

Leadership & Strategy Review

Upcoming Leadership Education Programs

July 27, Federal Executive Institute, Lexington

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

Sept. 18, Treasury Executive Institute, Washington, DC

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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.

Are you a strategic leader?

By Lauren Simonds, *Time.com*

Do you know anyone in business that has jumped on the strategic-leader bandwagon? Someone who's quick to tell you how he or she is a strategic thinker? You know the type, lots of big ideas, lots of talk, but very little to show in terms of actually accomplishing anything. You probably know several given the overcrowded state of that particular bandwagon. Everyone, it seems, wants to be seen as a strategic leader.

The problem, according to a *CIO Insight* article by Charles Araujo, is that in our business culture being perceived as strategic has taken on nearly mythic importance. If you're not "strategic," you risk becoming invisible. Don't misunderstand; we need strategic business leaders desperately. But there seems to be considerable confusion about what it really takes to be one.

In order to be a true strategic leader, you need to deliver in three critical areas.

1. Know your mission
2. Have a vision
3. Get it done

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Are you a visionary business leader?

By Dave Lavinsky, *Forbes*

Vision in business requires that you clearly see where you choose to be in the future and formulate the necessary steps to get your organization there. Creating and sustaining a vision for an organization calls for discipline and creativity.

A visionary leader turns vision into reality by creating a vivid image of the target they need to attain and creating a specific strategic plan for the coming year.

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The leader details what goals the company must accomplish and the specific responsibilities of each key team member. Along the way, the leader keeps the team informed of their progress. And the leader celebrates small victories with the team, while remaining focused on the big goal.

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Vision: how do women leaders communicate it?

By Kay Koplovitz, *Huffington Post*

Common wisdom holds that any good leader must be a visionary: without vision, a company won't know where it is going or how to get there. A good leader creates a vision and communicates that vision very clearly to her followers, so that there are established expectations from the top to the bottom of the organization. Since there can be differences in leadership styles between men and women, we must ask if vision is among those differences? Do women leaders struggle to determine and communicate vision?

The *Harvard Business Review* published an article in 2009 on this very topic called "Women and the Vision Thing," with interesting information and conclusions. Originally, their study found that women tested higher than men in many leadership categories except one: envisioning, or the ability to recognize new trends and opportunities and develop new direction for the organization. Perception of women as poor visionaries, in this study, comes from male peers. Now, the newly released and well researched "Athena Doctrine" by John Gerzema and Michael D'Antonio reported that being a visionary is a neutral trait, that it was neither a masculine or a feminine trait.

So which is it? Are women visionary or not?

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Six people who determine your future

By Lewis Schiff, *Inc.*

How many "best friends" do you have? Social scientists say most people count just four friends with whom they can discuss very important matters, but the maximum possible number of such friends is around six. With rare exceptions, it's just not practical for anyone to maintain close, truly meaningful relationships with more than six people.

Super-successful people know this better than anyone.

Researchers say that network size isn't the most important thing. Network structure makes an even bigger difference, and the strongest networks are structured strategically with a small core that branches out to encompass lots of people who, most importantly, *don't* know each other. Build

a network like that, and you put yourself in the center as a connector who can make introductions, summon resources, and create valuable interactions in ways no one else can.

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Five characteristics of a next-level leader

By Scott Williams

The definition of a Next-Level Leader is a leader who not only elevates his or her personal leadership to the next level but also elevates the leadership of team members, peers and competition to the next level also. They challenge those around them to dream BIG and think BIGGER.

Next-Level Leaders always do these things:

1. Challenge things
2. Ask the right questions
3. Dream BIG
4. Learn
5. Produce next-level leaders

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