

# Managing to Be a Great (& Fun) Leader

Managed by Ron Culberson, MSW, CSP, CPAE

*It is my belief, you cannot deal with the most serious things in the world unless you understand the most amusing.*

- Winston Churchill



*Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself.*

- Leo Tolstoy



*Be yourself. No one else is qualified.*

- Anon



*We judge ourselves by what we feel capable of doing, while others judge us by what we have already done.*

- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



*I never did a day of work in my life. It was all fun.*

- Thomas Edison

## The “Do it Well, Make it Fun” Philosophy

Everything in life and work is a process.  
Every process involves a series of steps.  
Every step has the potential for being improved.  
Every step has the potential for being more fun.

Once we make the processes in our life and work better and more fun, success becomes a reality.

## Doing Leadership Well

Great leaders understand the difference between seriousness and excellence. An excellent leader can still create a work environment that is fun and that attracts good staff. To begin, the excellent leader must make sure that he/she is being a good role model for those being led.

1. Take responsibility for your leadership.
2. Develop the skills and values you need to do an excellent job as a leader.
3. Walk the talk by displaying the behaviors you expect of others.

## Say What? — Connecting to the People

Staff need to feel valued and one of the most important roles of a leader is to create an environment in which staff not only feel valued, but are inspired to work towards the organization’s vision. This is done through the power of words and your communication style.

Here are a couple of other tips for communicating with individuals or groups:

1. Understand the power of your words. What are some of the words that can create stress among staff?
2. Understand the needs of your staff when communicating with them.
3. Provide clear information to help staff understand.

## **Presentations Are All about You...And Them**

The most effective speakers are those who bring with them a unique gift, skill or experience. By tapping into your own uniqueness, your style is more authentic and you connect to your audience more effectively.

Additionally, when a speaker truly knows the audience, he or she is able to develop material that meets their needs. This means not only knowing the roles and responsibilities of the group but also the demographics. By considering this information before a presentation, you avoid delivering the wrong message.

## **It's More Than Just a Story**

In a world full of information overload, we are inundated with so much information we often miss the message behind the data. Stories are a powerful way to reach the hearts and minds of those in your audience assuring that the message gets through.

## **It's Time for Some Humor**

One of the most effective tools for presenters is humor. Humor entertains the audience while making a human connection that keeps them interested and engaged. Since humor also reinforces the content, it should be a regular and integral part of any presentation.

## **Creating a Culture Where Excellence and Fun Coexist**

A work environment must be both productive and enjoyable. You must have the right people and the right processes to make the environment attractive to quality employees.

1. Assure that your work environment is congruent with your mission and vision. What are the processes or practices within your organization that are incongruent with your mission?
2. Break down broken processes and look for areas of improvement.
3. Look for ways to have more fun with the routine, mundane processes in your organization.

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### **5 Ways to Make Processes More Effective and Fun**

1. Develop a plan for every process that includes a clear goal, an effective team, and an outline for the steps to get you to the goal.
2. Create excitement for the work by connecting the process and the goal and by involving the team in the plan.
3. Establish fun benchmarks along the way that allow the participants to enjoy achieving mid-process goals.
4. Regularly reward the participants for successes along the way and for the work that is being done.
5. Celebrate the process after the goal has been reached (or not). Acknowledge the value of the contributions of each member of the team.



(Leadership is) the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.  
-Dwight D. Eisenhower.



Only the mediocre are at their best at all times.  
- Anon

## Recommended Reading

Achor, Shawn (2010). *The Happiness Advantage: The Seven Principles of Positive Psychology That Fuel Success and Performance at Work*. Crown Books.

Bennis, Warren (1994). *On Becoming A Leader*. Addison Wesley.

Bethel, Sheila Murray (1990). *Making A Difference: 12 Qualities That Make You A Leader*. Berkley Books.

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Gladwell, Malcolm (2008). *Outliers: The Story of Success*. Little, Brown, & Co.

Gostick, Adrian & Christopher, Scott (2008). *The Levity Effect: Why it Pays to Lighten Up*. Wiley.

Hsieh, Tony (2010). *Delivering Happiness: A Path to Profits, Passion and Purpose*. Business Plus.

Maguire, Jack (1998). *The Power of Personal Storytelling*. Tarcher/Penguin.

Morgan, Nick (2005). *Give Your Speech, Change the World: How to Move Your Audience to Action*. Harvard Business Press.

Reynolds, Garr (2008). *Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Delivery*. New Riders Press.

Rinpoche, Sogyal (2012). *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*. Harper Collins.

Robertson, Jeanne (1998). *Don't Let The Funny Stuff Get Away*. Rich Publishing Company.

Tolle, Eckhart (1999). *The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment*. Namaste Publishing.

## Your Speaker

Ron Culberson, MSW, CSP, CPAE is a former hospice social worker, middle manager, and senior manager whose mission is to change the workplace culture so that organizations are more productive and staff are more content. He was the 2012-2013 president of the National Speakers Association and in 2014 was inducted into the CPAE Speaker Hall of Fame®.

Ron's book titles:

- *If Not Now, When? Making the Most of Your Life, Your Relationships, and Your Work* (2017)
- *Do it Well. Make it Fun. The Key to Success in Life, Death and Almost Everything in Between* (2012)
- *My Kneecap Seems Too Loose: 365 Random Thought to Inspire Deeply Shallow Thinking* (2010)
- *Is Your Glass Laugh Full? Some Thoughts on Finding Humor in Life* (2004)

