

# EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Taking your leadership skills to the next level

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## Leadership Tips

**Jim Koch, the CEO of the Boston Beer Company**, tossed a new rule out to his employees—the F\*\*\* You Rule. Employees are allowed to spew those two words to anyone in the workplace—including him. It's conditional, though, on mutual agreement to thoroughly discuss the issues. Koch believes his new rule can be a quicker, more honest way to help solve problems.

**A large percentage of leaders fit the profile of a psychopath**, Australian research finds. The study of 261 senior executives in U.S. companies found that about 1 in 5—roughly the same rate as prisoners—had clinically significant levels of psychopathic traits. In the general population, the rate is only about 1 in 100.

**About two-thirds of millennials swear at work**, compared to 58% of Xers and boomers, says new research by Wrike, a project management firm. About a third of millennials say swearing can strengthen a team, and more than a third say cussing reflects passion for work. ■

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## Leadership Styles

### Can yelling be a leadership strategy?

Some leaders berate employees and even lapse into cruelty—and still engender loyalty from the troops. Others who yell and harshly chastise people get labeled as ogres.

Why do some hotheads get away with it while others are tarnished?

New research shows that it's all in the context. A leader's perception can swing from abusive to motivating depending on a host of social factors:

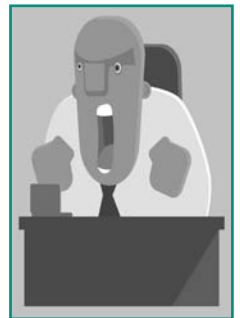
**Employees make progress.** People crave professional development. They want to gain skills, contribute to a winning team and advance their career.

Steve Jobs screamed at Apple staffers and often insulted them. But they tolerated his antics because they felt that they

were doing exceptional work and helping change the world.

**Leaders build trust.** If employees believe a leader is authentic and trustworthy, they're apt to accept stinging criticism without buckling. They may not like what they hear, but they will understand the leader's motivation for speaking out—to drive everyone to produce superior results.

**Leaders explain their actions forthrightly.** It's easier to withstand a CEO's



*Continued on page 2*

## Strategic Vision

### Do you know Alibaba? You should



Jack Ma

Jack Ma has built Alibaba, a Chinese e-commerce company, into a global giant. But he's hardly surprised.

When he launched the company in 1999, Ma intended to change the world. During his first planning meeting with a group of colleagues at his modest apartment in Hangzhou, China, he asked someone to film the gathering for posterity.

From the outset, Ma, 52, thought like a savvy strategist. He called his startup Alibaba not only because of its "open ses-

ame" imagery, but also due to its easy-to-pronounce name in many languages. As a bonus, he wanted a name that started with the first letter of the alphabet.

Other strategic insights that drove Ma's success:

**Pursue the right niche.** In 1999, many Internet startups sought to attract big companies as clients. But Ma chose to target small businesses.

A fan of the movie *Forrest Gump*, Ma noted that the main character builds a big business by fishing for shrimp. He called his main competitors—American e-commerce websites—"whales" while

*Continued on page 2*

## Yelling strategy

*Continued from page 1*

tirade if that CEO levels with the team about swirling crises or other pressure points. Openness about adverse circumstances, from navigating economic slow-downs to negotiating risky deals, can help a leader bond with a team and make employees more forgiving about temper tantrums.

**Peers support their fiery leader.** If employees keep hearing from peers—and informed observers such as consultants—that their leader is a genius, then they might overlook sporadic outbursts. They may think, “More experienced people than me think highly of our leader, so I should make the best of this.”

— Adapted from “Abusive Leader or Master Motivator?,” Robert Bies, Thomas Tripp and Debra Shapiro, [www.psychologytoday.com](http://www.psychologytoday.com). ■

## Know Alibaba?

*Continued from page 1*

concluding, “85 percent of the fish in the sea are shrimp-sized.”

**Ride a wave.** Ma was smart enough to identify a business on the cusp of explosive growth. In early 1999, China had 2 million internet users. Six months later, that figure doubled. Just over a year later, 17 million Chinese people surfed online.

**Find a wise mate.** An exuberant communicator, Ma partnered with an investor who was more staid. When he met Joe Tsai in 1999, he found his ideal business cohort.

Unlike Ma, Tsai knew finance and practiced law. He understood how to raise money to sustain a company through its early stages; and he spoke in a calm, reserved manner that contrasted with Ma’s high-energy enthusiasm.

— Adapted from *Alibaba*, Duncan Clark, Ecco Press. ■

### Can Alibaba stay on top?

Revenue at Alibaba grew more than 50% from a year ago, and its third quarter earnings for 2016 exceeded expectations, thanks in part to its new cloud services. The company’s shares have risen almost 80% since February.

## Public Speaking

# 2,300 years old ... and a terrific speaker

Modern public speaking got its start in ancient Greece and Rome. Over 2,300 years ago, Greek philosopher Aristotle found that orators could win over audiences by integrating three elements: logos, ethos and pathos.

With **logos**, you harness logic, evidence and reason to build airtight arguments. If you make an assertion, cite evidence to support it.

**Ethos** relates to a speaker’s character. You’re more likely to persuade people if you bring a solid, upright reputation to the podium.

You can build credibility by having someone introduce you to the group. When a moderator lists your accomplishments along with your experience and expertise with the topic at hand, you can impress audiences before saying a word.

Weave **pathos** into your speech by radiating appropriate levels of emotion.

The ability to arouse sympathy at the right moment, or excite the crowd with an enthusiastic appeal that’s aligned with their beliefs, injects life into your presentation.

To maximize your persuasive power, mix all three ingredients into your speech. Construct a logical case so that your remarks flow in a coherent, easy-to-follow manner. Make sure the audience has a clear understanding of your background or training on the subject matter. And tell vivid stories that make your topic come alive, varying your voice tone and volume so that you sound like you care passionately about your message.

Even seasoned speakers fall into the trap of lacking pathos. If you talk in a monotone and appear uninterested in what you’re saying, you’ll lose potential allies who decide to tune out.

— Adapted from *The Gift of the Gab*, David Crystal, Yale University Press. ■

## Resilience in Action

# How an injury propelled Edwin Moses

As a 17-year-old competitive runner, Edwin Moses lined up for a high school race. Turning to the backstretch, he felt a stabbing pain in his hamstring.

Determined not to let his injury stymie his dreams of becoming a top track-and-field athlete, Moses spent his senior year of high school rehabbing his pulled hamstring. As an experiment, he tried to hurdle leading with his left leg.

Right-handed people, like Moses, tend to lead with their right leg in the hurdle. But his hamstring injury made it impossible for him to do so.

Moses trained himself to do what initially felt awkward—push off with his left leg. Eventually, it came naturally to him.

Despite the severity of his injury, Moses was lucky in terms of timing. He was still young enough to alter his hur-

dling technique and switch legs before it became ingrained.

Arriving at Morehouse College in the fall of 1973, his hurdling skills had measurably improved. He was on his way to perfecting his craft.

Now 61, Moses went on to earn gold medals at the 1976 and 1984 Olympics. The 1980 boycott deprived him of another chance to win the gold.

His decision to treat his injury as a challenge to overcome, rather than a crushing blow, exemplifies how champions think. Growing up in Dayton, Ohio, Moses loved science and even collected fossils and plants. His hamstring setback enabled him to test his skills as a scientist and experimenter—and he passed.

— Adapted from *Players*, Matthew Futterman, Simon & Schuster. ■

## How to find their motivations



Over a 26-year career at DDB Chicago, an advertising agency, Jim Crimmins has gained insight into how to craft a message to persuade others. Formerly DDB Chicago's chief strategic officer, Crimmins is now a Chicago-based marketing consultant and author of *7 Secrets of Persuasion*.

**EL: What's the most important lesson you've learned on how to persuade people?**

**Crimmins:** It's what Dale Carnegie once said, that the only way to influence people is to talk about what they want and show them how to get it. The trick is not to try to change what people want. You want to give them what they want.

**The mistake many leaders make is they ask people directly, "What do you want?"**

**How do you find out what they want?**

The mistake that many leaders and pollsters make is they ask people directly, "What do you want?" The fact of the matter is most people don't really know what they want. But when asked, people will immediately make up an answer. So to find out, you can do it in two ways. First, observe how people act. What are they really after? Second, you can ask them indirectly.

**Can you give an example?**

Let's say you have a new process that you want to implement at work. You talk to your employees and ask, "Who has adopted this new process?" and "What do you think of how they're doing?" By finding out what employees think about the performance of those who are implementing the new process, you will get them to reveal their motivations. You can then find out how to influence them. It's all about asking others what they think of those who are doing what you recommend, and what they think of those who

are not doing what you recommend.

**Why does indirect inquiry work better than direct questions?**

Asking people indirectly gets people to reveal what they really want. That's how you can find things that are really important to them. People will choose the option that feels right and then find reasons to justify that choice later.

**What motivational techniques can managers use to improve staffers' performance?**

Salary alone does not motivate people to throw themselves into the job. The two best ways to motivate someone are recognition and making the job more interesting to them. If you can change the circumstances and make the work more interesting to them, you can get better performance from them.

**Why is that?**

Because if a job is more interesting, this gets to the importance of changing behavior without changing one's attitude. Attitudes are much harder to change. But behavior is much more malleable.

**What tips on messaging would you give CEOs on how to promote their company?**

First, ask yourself, "How can I get my business to be the first to pop into peoples' mind?" Figure out ways to make your brand be distinctive. Second, pair your brand with the need that you satisfy for people. It's important to elevate your advantage from a practical advantage to an emotional advantage.

**What communication skill do you admire most in others?**

I most admire the ability of marvelous persuaders to totally identify with their audience. They're not thinking about what they are going to do or say. They're focusing on what does my audience want and how can I help them to get it. ■

## Don't follow the pack

Leaders lead. Followers follow. You can't do both.

After 23 years of climbing the corporate ladder "like some crazed workaholic monkey," tech executive Steve Tobak quit his job. He was tired of meetings, conflict and politics. He was tired of living on airplanes and waking up not knowing where he was.

It was early 2003. Blogging was new, so Tobak started a leadership blog, The Corner Office, to augment his consulting.

He noticed that founders and executives at companies like Virgin, FedEx and Airbnb didn't make it big by following the pack. They made it by finding a problem that needed to be solved and solving it.

Leadership requires thinking differently. It requires breaking rules and carving new paths.

"It's about doing what you think is right," Tobak says, "not what everyone else is doing."

— Adapted from *Real Leaders Don't Follow*, Steve Tobak, Entrepreneur Press. ■

## Moms are the best (workers)

Kids might be the ultimate efficiency hack, according to a working paper from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

It may seem counterintuitive, but a compilation of research by nearly 10,000 economists shows that over a 30-year career, mothers outperform childless workers at nearly every step of the way.

This is true despite drops in productivity while moms raise toddlers, compared to those with no children. But the mothers make up for that dip in productivity by being hyperproductive before having children and again when their kids are older.

— Adapted from "The ultimate efficiency hack: Have kids," Jenny Anderson, Quartz. ■



# Deal with procrastinators

Telling a chronic procrastinator “Just do it” is like telling a clinically depressed person to cheer up.

Procrastinators often worry what co-workers think about them. Others would rather be seen as lacking effort than lacking capacity. Some are further hindered by perfectionism. They often feel guilty. Plus, now we have all the distractions of social media.



One way to fight dithering is to break down a project into small steps that take from half an hour to two hours each—three hours tops.

But for chronic procrastinators, you may need to bring in a psychologist who uses cognitive behavior therapy to get your employees’ jobs under control.

— Adapted from “Overwhelmed, and Prone to Procrastinate,” Phyllis Korkki, *The New York Times*. ■

# The benefits of downtime

David Stirling “lacked the most basic military discipline, could not march straight, and was so lazy his comrades had nicknamed him ‘the Giant Sloth.’” Yet somehow, he came up with the idea for a commando unit that became the prototype for special operations teams, including America’s Delta Force and Navy SEALs.

The 25-year-old “sloth,” temporarily paralyzed after a failed parachute jump during World War II, was trying to wiggle his toes in a hospital ward when he dreamed up a scheme to send small groups of commandoes behind enemy lines to attack high-value targets. This kind of asymmetric warfare was a completely new concept 75 years ago.

On Nov. 16, 1941, Britain’s Special Air Service carried out its first mission. Since then the SAS has become the template for special ops units around the world.

— Adapted from “How a lousy soldier devised a revolutionary wartime tactic,” Mary Louise Kelly, *The Washington Post*. ■

## Correcting Performance

# Know just when to demote

A former university chancellor, John Ryan recalls a management challenge that he didn’t handle well. He liked one of his subordinates, an administrator, but Ryan realized this employee did not manage his staff effectively.

The situation grew steadily worse and became a chronic issue. The administrator’s poor management undermined the morale of his team, and Ryan knew he had to intervene.

Ryan decided to engage in numerous private coaching sessions with the administrator. He figured that he could lift the administrator’s performance by teaching him certain skills.

But his efforts backfired. The administrator continued to exhibit poor leadership and the team’s morale sunk even lower.

“In the end, I invested too much time trying to help this individual make changes that he didn’t really want to make,” Ryan says.

Eventually, Ryan had to demote the

administrator. It finally dawned on Ryan that the administrator never would develop into a more enlightened leader.

By spending too much time trying to overhaul his employee’s personality, Ryan made matters worse. His attempt to coach and teach wound up prolonging the problem rather than solving it.

“I was more than fair with him,” Ryan adds. “I also should have been much more decisive in realizing the limits of my influence and focusing on his colleagues who were performing at a high level and truly deserved more of my time.”

Today, Ryan runs the Center for Creative Leadership, a Greensboro, N.C.-based leadership development firm. He understands the temptation to help poor managers improve, but he also warns senior executives not to go overboard trying in vain to transform an ineffectual individual into a dynamic leader.

— Adapted from “4 classic leadership mistakes you can avoid,” John Ryan, [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com). ■

## Emotional Intelligence

# To the calm and collected go glory

In 2013, Jack Ouellette retired as CEO of American Textile Co. after 39 years. Like many leaders, he gained confidence with each passing year and loosened up as he matured. He also learned to listen to others and admit what he didn’t know.

A young Ouellette served nine years in the U.S. Army, flying recon missions in Vietnam. He recalls his struggles during his first time piloting a plane in flight school. Instructed to maintain the aircraft at 4,000 feet, he kept going above and below the target. He couldn’t keep the plane steady until his trainer gave him some priceless advice.

“It takes a light touch,” the instructor said. Ouellette realized he needed to stay calm, make incremental corrections and show patience.

He applied this insight to his business leadership. To get the best from employees, Ouellette patiently offered guidance and supported them in their efforts to improve. He opted for “a light touch” instead of heavy-handed bossiness.

“Good leaders always get the best possible result,” he says. “But it’s great leaders who get the best possible result and leave nobody behind.”

Patience plays an especially important role during crises. Ouellette recalls a lesson from Army Ranger School: Even if you’re terrified of impending disaster, you cannot show it. Exhibiting outward cool can help the rest of the team stay composed and clear headed.

— Adapted from “Jack Ouellette shares leadership lessons from the military and American Textile,” Jayne Gest, [www.sbsonline.com](http://www.sbsonline.com). ■

# Kellogg rode Kashi's success—until...

In 2000, Kellogg Co. made a brilliant move. Carlos Gutierrez, Kellogg's CEO, bought a small natural cereal startup called Kashi.

Ahead of his time, Gutierrez anticipated America's embrace of pure and organic food. Within five years, consumers craved healthy alternatives to sugary cereals.

Kashi's revenues soared 25-fold by 2008. By the late 2000s, however, the company's strategic miscues ruined Kashi's sales momentum. Gutierrez had left Kashi alone from 2000 to 2004, his last year at Kellogg. But after 2004, new leaders started to encroach on Kashi's space and micromanage it.

Kellogg started imposing its own processes related to product planning, procurement and manufacturing. It also combined sales teams and stifled Kashi's zest for innovation, driving

many longtime Kashi employees to quit.

Due to Kellogg's increasing involvement in resetting Kashi's strategic direction, Kashi lost its entrepreneurial spirit and brand identity. As consumers gained awareness of the push for non-GMO (genetically modified organism) foods and gluten-free options, Kashi fell behind. Kellogg's reputation took a hit when reports revealed that it had donated to a campaign opposing the labeling of GMO foods. Kashi fans were outraged.

By 2014, revenues from Kashi's cereals fell 21 percent. Licking its wounds, Kellogg is trying to revive the brand.

"A large organization can sometimes help too much," says John Bryant, Kellogg's current CEO.

— Adapted from *The Network Imperative*, Barry Libert, Megan Beck and Jerry Wind, Harvard Business Review Press. [www.tinypulse.com](http://www.tinypulse.com). ■

## Team Building

# Steve Kerr on leading the Warriors



Steve Kerr

In his first two years as a head coach in the National Basketball Association, Steve Kerr has proven a quick study. At 52, Kerr acts like a confident leader with decades of experience.

Kerr has built the Golden State Warriors into a formidable team of selfless contributors. Players rave about his leadership and credit his steely drive and determination for their success.

How does Kerr do it? Here are some clues:

**Stay close to your team.** Some leaders remain aloof under the assumption that it's unwise to get too close to underlings. But Kerr prefers to know what his players are thinking and feeling.

He engages them in wide-ranging conversations, listens to their views and observes their body language. By empathizing with them, he builds trust and

shows that he cares about their wellbeing.

**Control your emotions.** Kerr never flies off the handle. Even under duress, he keeps his temper in check.

In rare cases, Kerr unleashes his fury in a way that jump-starts his team. During the first game of the NBA finals in June 2016, he smashed his clipboard on the sidelines to vent his fury at his team's poor play. They responded by winning the game.

"Destruction tends to ease some of the anger, so I try to take it out on the board rather than a player," Kerr says.

**Involve everyone.** A big believer in making everyone feel like a vital part of the team, Kerr gives every player a chance to shine. While many coaches build their squad around a superstar, Kerr expects greatness from his deep bench of talent.

— Adapted from "4 Leadership Lessons Every CEO Can Learn From Steve Kerr," Dennis Yang. ■



## Best of the Leadership Blogs

### Ask front-line supervisors

Isolated leaders are the dumbest people in the building, says leadership "freak" Dan Rockwell.

Don't be dumb. Talk with your front-line supervisors all the time because they know the most about what's going on with customers, and working with them is how you'll find solutions to long-standing problems. Bring front-line supervisors to senior management meetings. Push information and authority to them. Walk their floors at least twice a week. Don't plug your ears to nagging complaints. Don't rush to solutions or give quick answers.

— Leadership Freak

### Running on empty?

A report from Statista reveals that as many as 62% of North Americans report high stress, and workload ranks as the top source of stress for those employees.

And how about you? Leaders are not immune to heavier workloads, either.

The key is R.E.S.T. Remember you're only human. Examine priorities. Set boundaries. Take away low-priority tasks ... and take vacations.

— Doug Dickerson on Leadership

### 8 truths behind leadership

Behind business executive and blogger Terry St. Marie's eight principles of "More Human Leadership" are some fundamental ideals:

1. Humility gets us from "I" to "we."
2. Trust builds confidence and lowers costs.
3. Values keep away parasites, naysayers and narcissists.
4. Teaching shows the next generation the way forward.
5. Accountability keeps all moving parts running smoothly.
6. Metrics tell us where we are and where we're going.
7. Positivity helps maintain momentum.
8. And love gives us purpose.

— More Human Leadership ■

To read these full blog postings, go to [www.ExecLeadership.com/bestblogs](http://www.ExecLeadership.com/bestblogs).

# The lessons of innovation

In building its list of the world's most innovative companies, the editors of *Fast Company* found precious few repeats from last year. Some lessons:

**Organizations can learn.** The top two firms in 2016, BuzzFeed and Facebook, thrive by embracing constant evolution in products and processes. BuzzFeed's video teams are reorganized every three months, its native ad programs evolve through iterative testing, and new data metrics like viral lift are developed.

**Tech has no monopoly on speed.** Fast food has never been faster. Take Taco Bell. CEO Brian Niccol urges his team to "break a little glass." The chain rolls out a new menu item every five weeks.

**Mobile is just beginning.** The devices in our pockets are not just phones or computers but platforms for entirely new markets. Robinhood has burst into investing, and Shyp will pick up and pack anything for you.

— Adapted from "15 lessons of innovation for 2016," Robert Safian, *Fast Company*. ■

## Effective Presentations

# Make every second of silence count

Everyone knows that it's easier to sell yourself and your ideas if you're able to listen well. And the best way to listen is to keep quiet.

Penny Herscher, former CEO of Simplex Solutions, shares the best advice she ever received about selling: Ask a question, shut up and the first one who speaks loses.

That's tough to apply, because it's often uncomfortable to remain quiet in a one-on-one conversation. It's tempting to fill pockets of silence rather than wait patiently for someone else to chime in. We do this with friends, strangers, spouses and co-workers.

But like many savvy leaders, Herscher has found that when you zip your lips, you learn more. Given more time to think about what they want to say, others will eventually reveal more of themselves.

From her 20 years of experience as a CEO for high-tech companies, Herscher has found that many salespeople talk themselves into failure. They lose sales by over-explaining or lecturing would-be buyers instead of letting them voice their needs and concerns.

Mastering the art of questioning helps. After you ask a question, wait in silence for a response. If a few seconds go by, remain quiet.

"Don't jump in to fill the silence," Herscher warns.

Your silence signals your respect for the other person—and your eagerness to listen and learn. If you answer your own question or interrupt just as someone starts to speak, you show that you're really more interested in talking than gathering information.

— Adapted from "Selling with Silence," Penny Herscher, [pennyhersch.blogspot.com](http://pennyhersch.blogspot.com). ■

## Emerging Trends

# Score two for 'slacktivism'

Finally, there's some good news for development directors and other non-profit leaders.

About two years ago, the web was deluged with videos of people dumping buckets—even front-end loaders—of ice water over themselves to raise money for research on the neurodegenerative disease ALS.

Wags called it "slacktivism." But the Ice Bucket Challenge raised \$220 million for research that paid off in two big discoveries: This past summer, researchers identified a gene that contributes to ALS. And last year, researchers discovered why a certain protein builds up in the brains of ALS patients. Scientists said their findings wouldn't have been possible without that influx of cold, icy cash.

What's more, donations to the ALS Association are still about 25% higher than they were before the challenge, the

average age of its donors is down from 50+ to 35, and there's no evidence that the challenge hurt other charities.

So how to duplicate this fundraiser?

No one knows yet, but these factors helped:

1. It's a dare
2. You can laugh at yourself and your friends (and celebrities)
3. It's for a good cause.

— Adapted from "Remember the ice bucket challenge? Well, it worked," Lyz Lenz, *The Daily Dot*. ■



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# When the competition has you for lunch

In every industry, there are white whales that everyone is either chasing or just envious of. Their products, prices and market viability can't quite be matched. Even their workplaces and employee policies are to be envied.

Most people work somewhere else.

We've all had jobs at companies that labored under the wink-wink delusion that they were the gold standard. But it's in a business' best interest that employees believe they're #1, right?

Perhaps not. A so-so company's upper management can start to lose credibility when it emptily trumpets the brand's superiority.

If you know you're second best, or trailing even farther behind, confess it. Embrace it. Come clean with the staff with three steps toward using your very deficiencies to propel the organization forward:

**1. Call an "attack" meeting.** Spread your competitors' products out on the table beside your own. Identify exactly the areas where they have an edge. Ask: How does our inability to match this make us feel when we leave the office at night? Determine how your rivals bested you, and assign a number measuring the difficulty of overtaking them in those areas.

**2. Concede the impossible.** It could be that it would take resources or expertise far



beyond your capabilities to vanquish the competition. Acknowledge this to your staff—then go to work on the shortcomings you can seize upon. There's likely something the public wants that perhaps you can give them even as your rivals overlook it, or consider it not worth their while.

**3. Raise the bar.** By adopting a culture of excellence instead of mere clock-punching, your people will feel successful even if they can never be the big dog on the block. Excellence means hiring those who aren't afraid to nix poor work or overhaul systems when they need to. It means not a single process is ever considered unimportant.

Replace "Is this the most money we can make?" with "Is this the best we can do in this moment?" The latter credo attracts mission-oriented, happy people to your organization, which in turn makes for a company they stay loyal to even when fame and glory remain out of reach.

## Before getting to yes, get to 'that's right'

Consultant Andy Raskin learned something from a book called *Never Split the Difference*, by 24-year FBI veteran Chris Voss, who served as lead international kidnapping negotiator in the bureau's Crisis Negotiation Unit.

Voss's insight is that nearly every hostage release happens only after a negotiator establishes an emotional link with the kidnapper.

In the business scenario Raskin describes, a CEO stepped in and asked a series of questions of his sales guy who

wasn't buying the company's strategic narrative. After asking the salesman how he would describe the narrative, the CEO said, "Now I'm going to summarize what you told me, and I'd like you to let me know if anything is missing or incorrect. OK?"

The reply "that's right" signals that your negotiating partner feels heard and acknowledged, which opens the door to solutions.

— Adapted from "To Be a Better Leader, Learn This FBI Hostage Negotiation Tactic," Andy Raskin, *The Mission*. ■

# Jackie Robinson on bitterness

Brooklyn Dodgers pitcher Don Newcombe set a standard as the first pitcher to win Rookie of the Year in 1949, the National League MVP and the Cy Young Award.

Along with Jackie Robinson and Roy Campanella, he was among the elite black players who integrated major league baseball, becoming the first African-American to pitch in an all-star game and the first in a World Series. Newcombe remembers how Robinson framed the challenge facing them.

"Jackie delivered the message," he says. "I remember him saying, 'Gentlemen, we are very bitter now over the years it has taken to reach this point, and we are going to be very much more bitter over what we are going to have to endure every day we are on the field, but one day—and I promise both of you—one day we are going to change that 'i' in bitter to an 'e' in better.'"

"We have to do it," he said, "so let's go out and get it done."

— Adapted from "Newk's Triple Treasure," Ross Newhan, *Memories and Dreams*, National Baseball Hall of Fame. ■

## Double standard hanging on

Sometimes it's harder for female CEOs to rebound from mistakes than it is for men.

Between 2003 and 2013, 38% of female chief executives were forced out of their companies, versus 27% of male CEOs.

And of 93 male CEOs who resigned under pressure, five returned later as CEOs of a public company, while no women did.

Former Yahoo CEO Carol Bartz once caught a lot of flak for her use of profanity—which is something that male CEOs often take as a point of pride. Bartz's advice to women in the executive suite is to know that you will be held to a higher standard.

— Adapted from "The Disappeared," Jennifer Reingold, *Fortune*. ■



## Faced with two-faced boss? Hunker down

**Q: I just don't trust my boss. He's so calculating in everything he says, and has misled me on numerous occasions. How am I supposed to respect him—and respond positively to his attempts to motivate me—when I don't believe a word he says?**

**A:** Join the club. Everyone I golf with (mostly retired CEOs) has at some point dealt with an untrustworthy manager. Early in my career, I had a few slimy bosses. If you're enjoying everything else about the job—and you aspire to grow with your organization—then remain civil with the guy. Don't roll your eyes when he makes promises. Don't badmouth him. Wait him out, and soon enough he'll move on—or you will. Meanwhile, forge alliances with other senior folks around you.

**Q: It seems like we're always reconfiguring our office space. I'm not privy to why we're always building new cubicles, then knocking 'em down and hammering away at an addition. I do know the constant noise is driving me insane. Whenever I complain that the noise is causing a distraction, I'm labeled a "malcontent." What gives?**

**A:** You answered your own question. When you complain, you're asking for trouble. No matter how much value you bring to your employer, whining is the ultimate self-sabotage. And I'd wager a steak dinner that you've complained dozens of times, right? I'm sure the conditions aren't ideal and you wish you could work in a quieter place. Why not initiate solutions like working from home more often, finding a temporary workspace far from the havoc or using earplugs? Yeah, it's tough luck. But repeatedly voicing your displeasure only makes it worse.

*A veteran of the corporate battlefield, Z is an executive who prefers to remain anonymous. We have agreed to protect Z's identity in return for his promise to hold nothing back when answering your toughest questions with hard-charging honesty. Submit your questions to Z at [ELeditor@BusinessManagementDaily.com](mailto:ELeditor@BusinessManagementDaily.com). ■*

## Company Building

# Facebook's hacker culture drives it

At Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg adopted an unusual motivational strategy from the start. Rather than prod employees to excel, he and his co-founders left them alone.

In Facebook's early days in the mid-2000s, Zuckerberg gave his software engineers near-total autonomy. They bought into his lofty vision of helping create the "dream of a different human experience," a far more sweeping goal than developing the dominant online social network.

Zuckerberg urged his engineers to see themselves as subversive hackers. He egged them on by making them feel like they were part of something special—working for an organization unlike any other.

To underscore this point, Zuckerberg and co-founder Dustin Moskovitz welcomed kindred spirits into the fold. When they learned that a college stu-

dent, Chris Putnam, devised a computer virus that made a Facebook profile look like MySpace (an early competitor), they could have sued him or even enlisted the FBI to arrest him.

Instead, they invited Putnam to interview for a job. The charm offensive worked, and he became a star engineer at Facebook.

Another motivational technique favored by Zuckerberg involved the need for speed. He knew that Facebook's success largely depended on its agility in a fast-moving, hotly competitive business. So he plastered office walls with the rallying cry, "DONE IS BETTER THAN PERFECT."

He made sure that employees celebrated the anniversary of their start date. They even called it their "Faceversary" and received surprise gifts from the company every year.

— Adapted from *Chaos Monkeys*, Antonio Garcia Martinez, Harper. ■

## Meeting Management

# 5 questions to spark meeting debates

Many managers host weekly meetings that serve as status updates. The leader goes around the room asking attendees to share the latest news on their projects.

It's better to use the limited time you have as a team to examine important issues.

Use these questions to spark constructive debates:

**1. What has changed?** This question can kick off a valuable conversation about unfolding developments inside or outside your organization. You want your team fully informed so that they can anticipate and address the next set of challenges.

**2. What key outcomes do we seek?** The group needs to agree on priorities. That may only happen after a lively exchange of views on what's most

important and how to measure it.

**3. What risks do we face?** Knowing what variables can upend your best-laid plans can help you develop contingencies. It's also revealing to examine how different personalities calibrate the odds of success and failure.

**4. What data do we wish we had?** Identify what information is knowable and not knowable. From there, you can either gather data that increase your knowledge or discuss scenarios to address what you cannot control.

**5. What mistakes are we making?** Prod attendees to speak out about afflictions that undermine your workplace. Where's the waste? What processes need improvement?

— Adapted from "11 Things Leaders Need To Talk About When They Meet With Their Staff," Patty Azzarello, [www.greatleadershipbydan.com](http://www.greatleadershipbydan.com). ■