Leadership Becomes Us

The Art of Contemporary Leadership: Vision, Passion, Purpose, and Joy

Joan V. Gallos
Professor of Leadership, Director of the Bloch Executive MBA
Bloch School of Management
March 10, 2012
Our Learning Logic

• BIG IDEAS — me
• REFINE YOUR SKILLS — skills bootcamps
• COME BACK TOGETHER — connect as a community and practice some of the skill and new confidence you’ll have gained
Goals

New ideas
New skills
New confidence

New networks and opportunities to make a difference
The Art of Contemporary Leadership: Vision, Passion, Purpose, and Joy

five truths, five strategies
Truth # 1

The seeds are within us all.
Recognize and claim them.
Leadership is no mystery-mastery

Joining with others for a common cause
We’re leading all the time

Not just title, position, rank, or level in the hierarchy

Process of mutual influence

Coming together with others to obtain some common goal
Strategy # 1

Claim your inner leader:
if you don’t believe you can lead, who will?
Leadership works when we bring our full self to the task.
Skill makes for a good manager or mechanic. Passion makes for a good zealot or lover. Soul makes for a good philosopher or saint.

Skill + passion + soul make for a good leader.
Leadership begins and ends with authenticity.

Bill George

former president of Medtronic
from Authentic Leadership (Jossey-Bass, 2003)
authenticity =

Being comfortable being yourself
Learning to use your personal gifts and quirks
Finding the right cause to fit your passions
Leadership is a function of...

- **Where you lead from**
  - understandings of leadership
  - confidence in yourself

- **What you do**
  - skills and capacities to act consistent with the role

- **What you lead**
  - the organization or context in which you find yourself

- **Why you lead**
  - personal mission and contribution you want to make
What’s your authenticity quotient?

- **Where you lead from**
  - How confident are you in your sense of self as a leader?
    - What can you do to strengthen your confidence?

- **What you do**
  - How well-developed are your leadership skills?
    - How can you increase your competencies?

- **What you lead**
  - Are you in the right organization/cause?
    - If not, where should you be? What should do?

- **Why you lead**
  - Are you making the kinds of contributions to which you aspire?
    - What will get or keep you on track?
Strategy # 2

Develop and bring your personal best to the table
Truth #3

Satisfaction is built on joy
Joy comes from using your true talents
We listen for guidance everywhere except from within.

-- Parker Palmer

Traces of Talent
Finding our true talents

• **Spontaneous reactions**
  - How do you respond, for example, when
    - at a party where you know few people?
    - faced with incomplete information?
    - are under a tight deadline? etc.

• **Yearnings — our *daemon***
  - Clearly expressed talents at an early age
    - At 10, Ben Affleck and Matt Damon were holding “project meetings” in the school cafeteria; at 13, Picasso was in art school; at 5, Frank Gehry was building intricate wooden models; by 12, Mozart had composed his first symphony
  - Latent or buried talents
    - Anna Mary Robinson “Grandma” Moses – began painting at 87: 15 one-woman shows
    - BEWARE: mis-yearnings: desire for the perks, not the work

• **Rapid learning — natural synapses**
  - Matisse, bored and sickly law clerk → gift of paints to pass recovery time
  - Frederick Law Olmstead, restless, few accomplishments by age 30 → hedge rows of England

• **Deep satisfactions** — feeling good while doing something
  - Takes deep searching – diverse options
Think about it . . .

- What activities – work or non-work related – bring you the greatest joy?
  - when you do them, time flies
  - they are things you have loved for a long time
  - they are things when done you think *when can I do that again?*
  - they are things from which you derive great satisfaction
  - they are thing that come easy to you
Strategy # 3

Identify your true talents
Act on them

Have patience and persistence: takes time, courage, experimentation, ignoring “helpful” others
Truth #4

Our capacity to lead others is directly related to our capacity to lead ourselves on our own leadership journey.
Leadership journey

- A learning journey
  - Find ourselves and identify our contribution
  - Accept our full humanity – gifts and foibles
  - Augment our courage and take risks
  - Integrate mind, heart, and soul
- Twists and turns along the way
  - Stay the course
- Success requires
  - Comfort with our travel companions (including self)
  - Patience in the delays and unexpected inconveniences
  - Appreciation of the joys of travel
  - Adequate supplies, but no heavy baggage
Strategy # 4

Learn, learn, learn
While planning is important . . .

• Stay loose to respond to the unexpected bumps in the road
Truth #5

Leading requires bounce
Bounce = resilience + coping

Strength and strategies
Bounce

• **Resilience – a learned skill**
  • recognizing choices for how to interpret and respond to events
  • keeping things in perspective
  • trusting one’s instincts
  • practicing new behaviors, like letting go
  • Learning to *reframe*

• **Healthy coping strategies**
  • plenty of laughter
  • a good nap!
  • viewing mistakes as opportunity to learn
  • learning to “wear life loosely”
Strategy # 5

Give yourself support to strengthen the leader within
Onward to learning!

To the boot camps!