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Productive Leaders

Mary Kelly, PhD, CSP, CDR, US Navy (ret)
Keynote Speaker | Business Consultant | Author



Leading Your Team's Training



What do you do to continuously learn, stay current in your field, and improve your job skills? If you are like most managers and leaders, you read articles, books, and blogs on your subject area. You attend conferences and workshops about leadership, marketing, and sales, and your industry. You network with peers, and spend time learning from others.

What do your people do? Do they rely on you and your organization to provide them with the training they need to do their jobs? Do you know what they need to improve? Do you know what they want to learn to be better?

Here is a **crazy** idea that actually **works**.

Implement a "train-yourself" training day.

We proposed this to a forward-thinking company that is committed to employee development.

Instead of telling your employees where they need to improve, give them the responsibility and freedom to decide what they need to do to deliver **even better results**.

In this model, every employee gets one full day, every 6 months, to get training to teach themselves a new skill or expand their learning. There is a budget allowance, let's say, \$300 every 6 months, and the employee gets to decide how to use it on bettering themselves.

Employees get excited about improving human capital, their resumes, and their own ability to contribute more. For this to work, employees need maximum freedom, but a consistent payout – so if the budget for everyone is \$300, then that is \$300 across the board.

Employees get to research where they want to go and what they want to learn about on their training day.

What do employees do when they have the freedom to choose their own training? As it turns out, a lot. Often they look to local SCORE (formerly known as the Service Corps of Retired Executives), Small Business Development Centers, community colleges, or online resources. The only caveat to this freedom is that they have to come back to the organization and report to their teams (usually 2-5 minutes) on what they learned.

Managers appreciate that their employees identify areas they want to improve. I've gotten reports back on employees who attended traditional training classes on:

- Website design
- Excel/Access programs
- Publisher
- How to create and deliver a better online experience
- Customer Service

Some employees surprised their managers by attending programs on:

- Managing Teams
- Leading Your Boss
- Time Management
- Mentorship
- Productivity at Work
- Communication
- Working with Millennials
- Working with Seniors
- Change Management
- Diversity
- Cyber security

Still others opted to use the time to binge watch YouTube videos that showed them how to:

- Develop an app for the organization

- Effectively budget management
- Use Evernote
- Produce podcasts
- Deal with conflict
- Improve productivity

Some employees opted to pay for a professional business coaching session. Some asked to attend conferences. Others subscribed to a series of webinars or e-learning options such as Highbrow. Here are 24 other great online learning options:

<http://www.lifehack.org/articles/money/25-killer-sites-for-free-online-education.html>

The ideas are endless.

Not only do employees get to choose what they want to explore, but they are also excited about improving their abilities with training that matters to them. They are also taking responsibility to continue to learn new skills and stay current in their fields. And they are **EXCITED** by the prospect of a day devoted to their own improvement. Let's face it - when was the last time you got excited about a mandatory training session?

If we are not getting better, we are getting worse, or staying the same. As a manager, this exercise gives you insight into your people and helps you help them continue to develop and grow on a professional basis.

Give people control and see where they go!

Please share your feedback on this article on [my blog](#).

Why Leaders Fail book and bonus!

We're excited to announce that **Mary Kelly** and **Peter Stark's** new book ***Why Leaders Fail*** is available for pre-order and as a Kindle!

Why do so many leaders fail, and what do the best do differently?

Thousands of leadership books tell you how to be a great leader. Far fewer books delve deeper into the surprisingly common mistakes managers, CEOs, and supervisors unknowingly make that derail their successes.

Using real scenarios and examples collected through their combined years of leadership and management expertise, Peter and I pinpoint the 7 most common

reasons some managers fail while others are so successful, and describe the 7 guaranteed prescriptions for success complete with 49 actions to take.

The book is available for pre-order here:

<http://www.amazon.com/Why-Leaders-Fail-Prescriptions-Success/dp/1935733176/>

BONUS!

To celebrate the launch, we are matching all hardcover orders between 3 and 10 books over the next 30 days! Simply buy the books through Amazon, forward your receipt and mailing address to mary@productiveleaders.com, post a quick review on Amazon, and **you'll receive an equal number of complimentary, signed copies shipped straight to you when they are hot off the presses in May.**



P.S. Pre-order the hardcover version of the book NOW, and stand by for **more surprise bonuses coming your way** in the near future. :)

Mary's Update

I was extremely honored to receive the Volunteer Excellence Award from the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Welsh (via a very nice Colonel) for service to the military and the community. This is SUCH a huge honor! Thank you to my military family!

Mary's Book of the Month

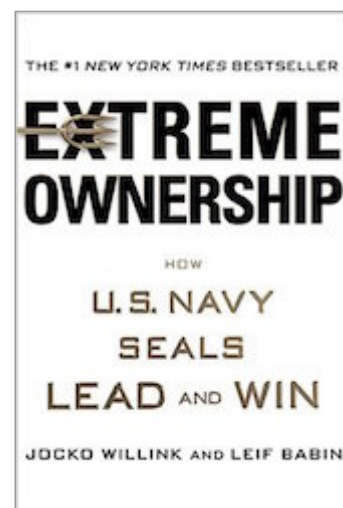
[Extreme Ownership: How U.S. Navy SEALs Lead and Win](#)
by [Jocko Willink](#) and [Leif Babin](#)

This isn't just another military leadership book or a book on how cool Navy Seals are (even though they are). Willink and Babin use their training as Navy Seals and experience in Iraq and apply them to today's leadership problems. They discuss combat examples, and how we can apply those lessons to business today.

The overall message of the book addresses the importance of owning the results of what you do. Actions have consequences.

One of the best reminders the importance of discipline in leadership. According to Willink, waking up early was the difference between the good Seals and great ones. When you have the discipline to get up early, you are rewarded with more free time. You can get more done in a given day.

Willink and Babin repeat that "Discipline is the pathway to freedom." It may seem counterintuitive - that having more disciplined procedures would take away freedom, but eh opposite is true. In leadership, discipline and structure creates power. Discipline leads to



more flexibility and control over your every aspect of your life. Discipline creates great leaders.

The authors challenge readers to take a hard look at their leadership, and more importantly, how disciplined we are in terms of our habits and routines your discipline, and then they challenge us to make the commitment to improve in at least one area over the next month.

What Does Mary Do?

We don't assume, so here is a brief list of what Mary does:

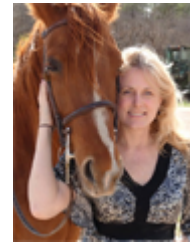
1. Motivational leadership keynote and breakout speaking for conferences, conventions, banquets, and events
2. Leadership events, particularly in the real estate, housing, insurance, medical, and financial sectors
3. Executive coaching
4. Strategic business planning

Call Mary at 719-357-7360 or email at Mary@ProductiveLeaders.com.

Thank You Being Part of Our Community

Do you know anyone planning a conference who needs a motivational leadership speaker, or a business that needs a push forward? Please [contact me](#). I sincerely appreciate your referrals!

Mary C. Kelly



Would you like to use any of these articles in your newsletter or website? You can, as long as you include this at the end: With over twenty years of leadership experience and a diverse background leading teams in the U.S. and abroad, Dr. Mary Kelly makes leadership a reality for all levels of an organization. Register for her free newsletters at www.ProductiveLeaders.com

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