



Leading Hope and Optimism



I believe we need the Christmas season because we need to set aside time that is focused on hope and optimism. Watching the news, there sadness, mistrust, greed, and violence. This is both overwhelming and depressing. We need a time to remind us of the goodness in human nature and the potential for people to make a positive difference in the world.

As leaders, we have to do our best to make sure that people are motivated, focused, and optimistic about possibilities, even when updates or industry forecasts look bleak. This doesn't mean we are unrealistic or Pollyanna-ish, but it does mean that we help people concentrate on how we can leave a legacy of kindness, hard work, and service to others.

What can leaders do to lead hope and optimism?

1. **Be optimistic.** People watch what you do, how you respond, and your mannerisms. If you are not genuinely optimistic, your people will see right through you. Be genuinely and sincerely happy to be at work, happy to have a job, and happy that you get to work with other professionals in an industry that you enjoy. One of the best ways leaders can be optimistic and inspire hope for the future is by focusing on their employees. Meet with employees to discuss their careers, training programs, attending conferences,

Mary's Updates

Why Leaders Fail



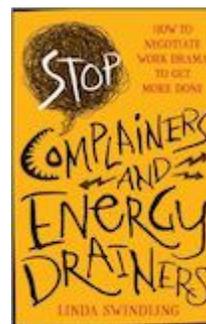
My friend, Peter Stark and I have been busy over the past two years, co-writing a new book on leadership. We are pleased to announce that the book is available in March 2016!

This book is about why good people, when faced with leadership responsibilities, so often fail and what they need to do succeed. It's based on extensive research from over 100,000 employee surveys and we hope you'll like it.

Stay tuned for bonus offers and promotions! Please join our Facebook group to get the latest on the book!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/WhyLeadersFail/>

Mary's Book of the Month



[Stop Complainers and Energy Drainers: How to Negotiate Work Drama to Get More Done](#)
by Linda Swindling

Did you know that 78% of people surveyed said they spent at least 3-6 hours a week dealing with complainers and energy drainers? Negative people seem to be all around us. There seems to be a certain satisfaction in complaining, but as a leader, we have to get people working together and focused on team goals. Paradoxically, when faced with a complainer, instead of solving the problem, many people complain about the complainer!

and increasing responsibilities so that they are eligible for future opportunities.

2. **Don't complain to your team or your customers.** One of the generals I worked for said part of his job was making his job seem worth striving for, but in a way that inspired instead of alienated his troops. He also said his job was to listen to their issues, not have them listen to his, which is good advice. I once watched a highly paid corporate executive telling his team that his vacation was practically ruined because aircraft turbulence meant they didn't have first class food and beverage service for a portion of the return flight from the Mexican resort. His team rolled their eyes and tried hard to appear sympathetic in obvious disbelief. This vice-president didn't even notice that he had just alienated most of his team with his self-absorption. Great bosses learn not to complain in front of their people, even when they have something to complain about.

3. **Listen more than you talk.** You've heard it before, "no one is bored talking about themselves." If you ask your team members, "How are things going?" be prepared to hear "fine" and "good" and not much else.

Ask probing, open-ended questions to find out what is really going on.

Ask questions that inspire answers with substance, such as:

"What are you working on right now?"
"Is there anything you think we do here that wastes time?"
"Can you think of ways we can decrease frustration?"
"What can we provide that would help you do your job better?"
"What do you think senior leadership should know?"

Employees are smarter than many leaders realize and they know when they are wasting time and resources. Likely as not, they are frustrated when their time is wasted on non-productive activities and they are happy with the opportunity to make the workplace better.

4. **Watch for crises.** Yes, the holidays are a time of celebration, but for many people who have lost loved ones, are living alone, or may have experienced significant change, it may also be a time of loneliness and sadness. Be mindful of individual situations, and give people a little more attention. Let people know they are valued and show extra

Linda Swindling helps us stop the cycle that leads to lost time and productivity. Linda provides strategies to deal with difficult people, and that might be helpful as we move into the holidays. (Really! I am looking forward to the Christmas family reunion!)

PLUS, as an added gift to my tribe, Linda has given us TWO free assessments! Thanks Linda!

Use the code "Mary" in both.

Spot Your Complainer's Type
<http://www.stopcomplainers.com/quiz1/register2.php>

Are You Seen as a Complainer
<http://stopcomplainers.com/quiz1/register.php>

Good luck!

Social Media

More love from my [Nerdy Best Friend](#), Beth Ziesnis. Her latest app review is on [Accapella](#), and it allows you to sing and harmonize with yourself. And maybe friends. Sounds like a fun holiday idea!

Connect with Mary



Pet Tip

Many beautiful holiday decorations are toxic or dangerous to pets. Keep poinsettias far away from dogs. Don't let dogs drink the water for the Christmas tree. Some cats like to climb Christmas trees, and many dogs like to chew on the branches. Keep pets safe during the holidays!



Did you know?

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

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

appreciation. Managers also need to make sure that employees know that help and friends are available in the event of depression or other issues, even during the busy holidays.

5. **Give the gift of time.** Celebrating the holidays means decorating the house, hanging lights, shopping for gifts, attending religious services, and going to parties. This all takes time, which is one of the reasons people also experience stress during the holiday season. Many people feel overwhelmed with everything they feel they need to do.

If you can, give people some paid time off. It shows you understand their pressures and helps them alleviate some of the stress.

Leadership is critical creating communities where people love to work, play, and live.

Let's lead our way into the New Year!

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

Call Mary at 719-357-7360 for a free 15-minute initial consultation.

Thank You Being Part of Our Community

Do you know anyone planning a conference who needs a motivational leadership, team-building, or change management speaker?



We are booking now for 2016!

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
