



How Leaders are Starting 2016



What can you do to lead your organization to new levels of success in 2016 and beyond?

You have a great group of people, and you want to do more. You want to develop your employees to their fullest potential, increase day-to-day effectiveness, and increase profit growth.

Leadership steps to take now for a more successful year:

1. Conduct an honest review of 2015. What went well? What should have gone better? What do you need to improve in 2016? What projects or efforts did not give you what you needed? What initiatives from 2015 no longer serve you? What projects from the past are you going to leave behind?

2. Get rid of the low ROI. We do not have time to do everything, so we have to prioritize to make sure that we are doing what is most important, as my friend, Neen James writes in Folding Time. What gave you the best return on your investment of time and resources? What activity wasted time? As a group, resolve to eliminate those initiatives that did not provide a good return on investment or those that wasted time.

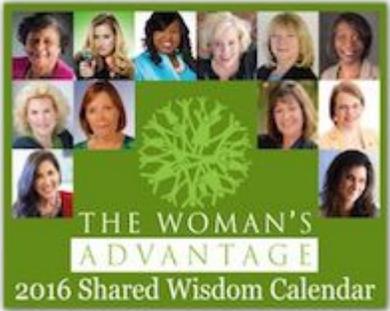
3. Review the financials. Is your department or organization solvent? Want to know a secret? Most people don't manage their own money as well as they should, and then we are somehow surprised when they don't understand how to manage financial information at work. If you need help understanding what you need to do, how to

9. Create a culture of expected results. Great teams have a culture of accountability. People need to understand that they have to produce outcomes and meet deadlines. The best organizations have a culture where people do what they say they are going to do because they do not want to let down the rest of the team.

Run your division, department, or team like a business. Have an executive strategy, an operations plan, a marketing plan, and a strategic and compelling vision that helps all members look to the future. Provide clear expectations and the tools people need to be successful to move toward your greatest organizational success.

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

Mary's Updates



I was selected from over 5,000 submissions to be featured in **The 2016 Woman's Advantage® Shared Wisdom Calendar**. The calendar provides advice for business owners from influential women leaders across the US and around the world.

Mary's Book of the Month

work your budget, or other financial aspects, ask. Most controllers are delighted to help their co-workers with understanding their budgets.

Where does your organization need to be, financially? How can you get there? Are you coming in under budget on your projects? Does your salary structure make sense?

4. Be crystal clear about your mission. The mission is what we actually do, produce, or provide. For example, “We play baseball” or “We make wine” is the mission.

5. Clarify your vision for 2016. This is not just New Year’s Resolutions in a business form. The vision is where we want the organization to go.

Leadership needs to articulate why people want to be part of our products or organization.

Our vision should be big, really big, and practically impossible, such as “We are going to play in the World Series” or “We make the best pinot noir in the Willamette Valley.”

One way to think big is to gather the leadership together and have a strategy session. Some organizations do this during their strategic retreats, but not every group has that luxury. Carve out some dedicated time to think strategically and create a vision that motivates, inspires, and maps out the future.

6. Ask strategic questions. Strategic thinking considers changes when everything is a variable.

What does this organization look like in the future?
What major changes will we see in the future?
How will these changes affect our purpose?
Who will we serve in the future?
Who will we serve in 5 years?
Who will we serve in 20 years?
What legacy do we want to leave?
What do we want our organization to be known for?
If there were no constraints, what would we do?

7. Identify the talent and skills you need to fulfill the vision. What will you need to move forward? Do you need a technical advisor? A skilled marketer? A social media expert? One way to put the right people in the right seats on the bus, as John Kotter would say and coalesce the talents of current team is to send out a survey asking people what other responsibilities they might be interested in fulfilling.

We had a 12-month project goal in an inner city that involved a complete tear down and reconstruction of the school’s antiquated library. The books were 20 years old, there



[The P.I.L.O.T Method](#) by Elizabeth McCormick

Elizabeth was an Army Warrant Officer and Black Hawk pilot. In this book she shares her journey and how she stayed focused and determined throughout her military career. It is personal and thought-provoking.

Do you need a shot of motivation to stay on track with your goals? The P.I.L.O.T Method is inspirational and, Elizabeth’s 5 truths are helpful for those needing a little guidance to stay focused and on track. A great new year’s read!

Social Media

On March 26, 2015 Twitter introduced Periscope, an app-based service that lets you live-stream your surroundings.

As of Aug. 12, Periscope had over 10 million users. Facebook is starting live-streaming as well. How do you feel about live-streaming for your organization?

Connect with Mary



Pet Tip

While rabies vaccination for dogs is mandatory for all U.S. mainland states, it is estimated that up to half of all dogs are not vaccinated. Some communities also require cats to be vaccinated, which is very important because there are currently more cases of cat rabies than dog rabies. Some estimates show that less than ten percent of the cat population is vaccinated, thus leading to the high incidence of rabies in cats. The standard vaccination protocol is to vaccinate cats and dogs when they are three or four months old and then again at one year of age. A year later, a three-year rabies vaccination is recommended. Sadly, rabies in cats is almost always fatal. Please protect our pets!

was no technology, and the lights were dim and often failed due to a decrepit power grid. The furniture was over 40 years old and chairs often broke when children sat on them. We had no funds and no district support.

We believed that for these children to succeed, they needed a safe place to read, learn, research, and do homework.

Our vision was clear: Build a library where children want to learn.

We needed volunteers and involvement, but the job was huge. We broke down every task into manageable chunks of work, and then we divided the jobs into areas of expertise. We made lists of what we needed: construction, plumbing, electricians, painting, Internet, wiring, computers, and books and we sent exactly what we needed, in small chunks, to groups that could help. We made it easy for people to commit to being a volunteer. We needed 80 hours of painting, but we only asked for a 2-hour shift. We wanted 20 computers, but we only asked for one at a time. We needed 30,000 books, but we only asked that people sponsor a single book.

By breaking down the multi-million dollar project into \$20 donations and 2 hour jobs, we had a state of the art facility for the school.

8. Prioritize roles and responsibilities of every member of the team. Having a contingency plan is helpful when things go wrong, but do not have jobs where people duplicate the efforts of others. Be clear about the jobs everyone needs to do, and make sure they have what they need to complete their responsibilities.



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, 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

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

Thank You Being Part of Our Community



Are you planning a conference or a business event? Please [contact me](#). I sincerely appreciate your referrals!

Mary C. Kelly

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