

Productive Leaders

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Deadlines and Dinosaurs: Leading Accountability



Why do professional, smart, highly motivated, ambitious people need other people for accountability?

Because we do.

Our Paleolithic, survival-motivated, dinosaur brains tell us that life is short, so enjoy today. Don't do anything difficult right now because you might need that energy to escape the dangerous woolly mammoth that is chasing you. Conserve your energy. Why stand up when you can sit? Why sit when you can lie down? Take it easy. Whatever you need to do can probably be done tomorrow.

Lots of people apply this to their daily lives all too frequently.

This is why college students write papers the night before they are due. This is why we plan work a week out, and then scramble to finish it right before the meeting with the boss. This is why we delay doing our taxes until April 15th. This is why children have a bedtime. People work to deadlines.

Most people need deadlines to help them prioritize what they need to get done, and what they need to get done first or now.

So give your people some deadlines!

Most people actually LIKE deadlines because we know we will accomplish what we need to do by that time. This gives us the sense of accomplishment and achievement, and makes us feel proud of ourselves. I know people who LOVE making lists so they can cross things off the list.

Few people like the idea of more and more projects piling up with no end in sight. We need to know there is an end. Deadlines give us that end and ensure we complete what we need to do.

As a leader, you are not being mean by giving your people deadlines. You are helping them prioritize. You are giving them an end. You are giving them an opportunity to cross something off their list.

Creating a series of milestones for a big project is not micromanaging. It is breaking things down to managing goals which can be done as a series of achievement.

Being a leader means understanding how humans process information and managing that in the workplace.

Now go adjust your own dinosaur brain and get something done.

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

Mary's New Book, *Why Leaders Fail*, Update

Introducing Peter Stark, my co-author of *Why Leaders Fail*

The launch date of the book **Why Leaders Fail** is just around the corner and I'd like you to 'meet' my wonderful co-author, [Peter Stark](#).

Peter is President of Peter Barron Stark Companies. An accomplished consultant, executive coach, and speaker, Peter and his team brought the assessment pieces to the book.

I'm honored and thrilled to be partnered with Peter on this project.

One of Peter's recent terrific articles is called "[Why Do You Lead?](#)" A must read!



Mary's Book of the Month

[Winning Well: A Manager's Guide to Getting Results---Without Losing Your Soul](#)

by Karin Hurt and David Dye

I am a fan of David Dye and I am excited that he has another great book! Building and managing an effective team is much more difficult than succeeding on an individual level. As managers, it's necessary to create an environment where teamwork, individual initiative, and creativity are encouraged.

Without a clear roadmap of how to accomplish this, managers may soon find the ambitions of themselves and their teams frustrated.

In *WINNING WELL: A Manager's Guide To Getting Results – Without Losing Your Soul*, leadership experts Karin Hurt and David Dye guide current and aspiring managers to achieve consistent excellence. The authors encourage managers to think beyond the next monthly or quarterly earnings report, and to think about how to build teams that create long-lasting value. Hurt and Dye claim “Winning managers build teams that produce results today as well as next year. Winning well means sustaining excellence over time.”

Hurt and Dye tackle today's difficult challenges with pragmatic, helpful solutions, and Winning Well Action Plans at the end of each chapter. They understand the struggles of leading people and managing tasks in high-pressure situations and in the age of constant data, and offer ways to genuinely help both employees and customers, including reinforcing behaviors that produce results and correcting poor performance without drama. Written with empathy and experience, *WINNING WELL* is essential reading for managers who want to be create a positive corporate culture.



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. 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 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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