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Productive Leaders

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Are You A Visionary Leader?



A COO of a major hospital just asked me about business planning. He asked: "Do we start with the business plan or start with the vision?"

Answer: **Start with the vision.** You need a vision before you start the serious strategic planning. It is like planning a vacation. You explore ideas on where to go, where to stay, and what to do, but you cannot start buying tickets and securing reservations until you know where you're going.

Then he asked: "Is this something I figure out on my own? How do I start?"

Answer: Ideally, **your team needs to be involved** in both the vision exploration and vision development phase. How you effectively get people to craft the vision is about the personalities and talents of your team and how you present the vision planning.

Getting your team to spend a full, uninterrupted day on a vision plan may sound to your people like a great opportunity to take a vacation day instead if you don't structure the day to create valuable outcomes, make it relevant to them, and include them in the decision-making process.

Few intrinsically-motivated people want to take a day away from their daily work responsibilities to provide feedback on an overly idealistic and un-implementable goal. They will interpret the exercise as a waste of time and they will push back. Hard.

When you tell a group of action-oriented, do-it-now, operationally-focused go-getters that you need them to get together for a full day to draft a vision statement for your organization, their

energy dies. We have all attended meetings where we knew our opinions didn't matter, so we did not participate, nor were we excited to be there.

However, if you tell your high-achievers that you need their help brainstorming and mapping future operations for the organization, and that what they determine on that day will decisively be the future of the company, they will show up with enthusiastic ideas.

So **start with the vision**, and package it so that **people are excited** to participate ([How to create vision](#)).

Running an organization without a motivating and clear vision is like an Olympic athlete training for 10 hours a day without knowing what sport they will be competing in. When you team pushes back about this day away from the office (and you should be grateful that your team is so dedicated to their office responsibilities), make it clear that a vision helps us know which event we are specializing in; ice skating or wrestling, or the long jump so that we know where to direct our energy.

Once we have the vision, that big, crazy vision is going to guide our actions as we head into the future. Then we can focus on the steps needed to achieve the vision. Remember, when crafting a vision, the operations people are the first to say, "No we can't do that because (insert your fill-in-the-blank objection here). "We don't know how," or "the technology doesn't exist," or "we don't have the personnel or the resources to do that." Yes. Exactly. That is exactly the reason for the session. We need to know what we need to develop, create, expand or hire.

Plan for growth. Plan for amazing growth. Take a step beyond where you want to go.

Norman Vincent Peale is credited with saying, "Shoot for the moon. Even if you miss, you land among the stars."

So plan a day or even two to focus on your organization's vision. Make the vision planning session relevant and important, and create a plan for the future.

Questions or feedback on this article? [Please comment here.](#)

Mary in the News

Mary made Forbes Magazine! And a bunch of other places!

- **Forbes:** [Why Leaders Fail, And Why The Fix May Be Simpler Than You Think](#)
- **Fox:** [Election 2016: How Leaders Can Keep Employees Focused on Work, Not Politics](#)
- **The News Tribune:** [It's just a twinge in the hip, but OK, I'll get my papers in order](#)



Why Leaders Fail Update

We are so grateful to everyone who has been so supportive of the book, ***Why Leaders Fail - And the 7 Prescriptions for Success***.

People who buy the book on Amazon can also get over **\$700 worth of Business and leadership resources**. [Just go here](#) and follow the steps. It takes about 30 seconds.



Also, we have **Chaper 2 of the book available for you to read for free online!** Just go here and click on the "Read an Excerpt" in the top menu for instant access:

<http://productiveleaders.com/why-leaders-fail-book-sales/>

P.S. For bulk orders, or to discuss the keynote, Why Leaders Fail, please contact me directly at Mary@ProductiveLeaders.com or at 719-357-7360.

Mary is already being booked for conferences and events into 2017 and 2018! Please contact us so we can schedule your event!

We don't assume, so here is a brief list of what we do:

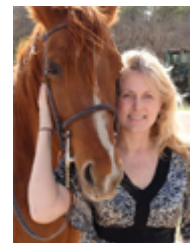
1. Motivational leadership keynote and breakout speaking for conferences, conventions, banquets, and events
2. Leadership events, particularly for the real estate, insurance, medical, and financial sectors
3. Executive coaching to improve strategy, business processes, and profits
4. Strategic business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

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

Thank You for 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



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