



IN THIS ISSUE

FROM THE TOP

- Half-way Point

STRATEGY & LEADERSHIP

- Leadership Can Hurt

MUSINGS

- It's About the People, Stupid...

From the Top

The end of this month marks the half-way point for 2010. No more "maybe we'll get around to it." If you haven't started – and made substantial progress – on some significant component of operational or functional strategy, you likely are "behind the 8-ball" for this year.

How about you *personally*? Have *you* made the progress you hoped to make so far this year? Are *you* meeting/exceeding *your own* objectives?

I've sad this before and it bears repeating at this stage... you should be seeing measurable progress towards your strategic, operational, and functional goals and objectives. If not, then **reconsider**.

- *Reconsider* the goal or objective.
- *Reconsider* the path toward accomplishing that goal.
- If need be, even *reconsider* the person charged with that goal.
- **Reconsider**. Then refocus, re-emphasize, and press on.

This is **the** best time to review compensation and related incentive plans, making sure they're doing what they are supposed to do. The *law of unintended consequences* frequently rears its head in these things.

Triangle Performance LLC's 2010 Survey of Senior Leadership (www.surveymonkey.com/s/879N652) begins now! You should also receive the survey link in a later email, around mid-month. This will be our third such survey; the participant rate continues to grow, as does the validity of the data presented.

Many thanks in advance to all have participated so far, and please do take the time to complete it when you receive the email later in June. It only takes a few minutes. If you're interested, you can click here to see the results from the *2009 Survey of Senior Leadership* ().

Current efforts in my world include new and existing client efforts in coaching leadership development, compensation planning, and continued efforts around strategic and operational planning. New clients in Energy and Power Transmission here in the Gulf Coast and Mid-Atlantic.

Some newsworthy mentions:

Repeat mention: Archer Daniels Midland (ADM) was recently ranked the **most admired company** in the food production industry for the second year in a row by Fortune magazine (money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/mostadmired/2009/snapshots/36.html). ADM (Cedar Rapids) has been a Triangle Performance client for several years; they are a dedicated group of really *good*, hardworking people -- congrats to them for continuing their successful efforts!



HOUSTON BUSINESS JOURNAL

The Houston Business Journal
(www.triangleperformance.com/articles/newsletter/images/HBJ-article4-24.pdf) featured my firm (and a large, multi-year client) for an article on team-centric executive development. Appeared on page 5B of the April 24th print edition of the HBJ.

The following is a date change – thanks to a reader who let me know that I was using the incorrect dates for the SHRM conference...

I've been selected as a featured speaker
(www.shrm.org/Conferences/annual/SessionsandTopics/Day/Pages/WednesdaySessions.aspx) at the 2010 Society for Human Resource Management's (SHRM) national conference in San Diego, July 23. It's billed as a **MEGA SESSION**, and is titled: **HR Leadership is Easy... Until it Isn't; Successful HR Leadership In Challenging Times.**



Speaking of speaking... I've presented several times recently on one of my favorite topics: **Sit Down, Shut Up, and Color! Breaking through employee entitlement...** (www.triangleperformance.com/kevinspeaks/index.html)



National Rural Electric
Cooperative Association

I've been invited to speak at the 2010 NRECA HR Conference in San Antonio this summer, where I'll present on strategic Human Resources and its levers on successful business today.

If you have a corporate or association event, I'd certainly enjoy speaking to your group. You can see more information regarding topics and details on my website (www.triangleperformance.com/kevinspeaks/index.html).

Further, feel free to download and read a few articles that may be relevant today:

New! Letters From the Field #1 – *Why don't we develop leaders??*
(www.triangleperformance.com/articles/articles/letters_from_field_1.pdf),

HR2 -- *Human Resources Returns (as in ROI)...*
(www.triangleperformance.com/articles/articles/hr2.pdf), and

New! Letters From the Field #2 – *KITA is dead; long live KITA*
(www.triangleperformance.com/articles/articles/letters_from_field_2.pdf).

...and don't forget to check out my blog (blog.triangleperformance.com); some interesting (I think) posts *on the oldest profession*, and working smarter or harder... **please comment, complain, or scream at me** if you agree, disagree, or just want your opinion read, seen, and heard.

Berchermann's Blog (blog.triangleperformance.com)

If you'd like to know how I can assist you, your organization, or a colleague of yours, please fill out this form (www.triangleperformance.com/contactus/requestinfo.html) and I'll send you some specific information, articles, engagement results, and so forth.

As always, I hope this finds you well, personally and professionally; please give me a call if I can ever help in any way, and **feel free to forward this to anyone you feel may be interested.** (Really!) *I appreciate your referrals.*

Warm Regards,

D. Kevin Berchermann
President
Triangle Performance, LLC
www.triangleperformance.com
kevinb@triangleperformance.com
281.257.4442

Strategy & Leadership

Leadership Can Hurt

-- *Wear a helmet...*

Leadership is inherently fraught with risks; we can no more avoid them than we can the decisions that cause the concerns. Wringing our hands won't fix it, neither will running around the figurative circle waving our arms about.

Trust me, it's been tried. And it ain't all that pretty...

Any way you cut it, *there's risk in leadership.*

We trust people because we have to... and because we should be able to. Sometimes, that trust is misplaced, and that can leave a mark. Other times, we make decisions – timely, well-thought decisions – that simply don't work out as planned. Those hurt, too.

Such is life... so, what to do?

1. Realize that there really is risk involved with this stuff. It's not just your occasional bad luck, or some ne'er-do-well intent on sabotaging your otherwise-meteoritic approach to stardom; sometimes the best laid plans... just *aren't*.

Happens to the best of us. Brush yourself off, put a band-aid on the injured body part (usually located somewhere near our ego), and move to the next risk-filled challenge.

2. Surround ourselves with really good people. They make the difference, and are the ones who make us look good. We simply make decisions; for the most part, those working for us make them *good* or *bad* based on their actions, input, and level of support.

That should serve as a reminder regarding the care and feeding of those we depend on to implement our seemingly brilliant decisions.

3. Man-up (ok, or "woman-up"). Maybe it's not a fluke, or some piece of ill-gotten destiny that caused our misstep. Maybe – just maybe – our process for problem solving, decision-making, or our understanding of which levers makes the parts move in what directions... needs *work, growth, or improvement.*

In other words, *we may not be all that*, and we need to engage in some additional development to acquire, hone, or perfect some of those skills that could minimize our risks.

Just maybe...

And realize that – as hard and "risky" as leadership is for us – most of us have a reasonable amount of judgment, experience, and skill to fall back on. In other words, many of us are ***pretty good at this stuff***, and still fall victim to errors, mistakes, misplaced trust, and other hiccups seemingly driven by some unforeseeable force majeure.

Think of how difficult it can be for someone without all that experience... Let's spend some time and effort developing them, shall we?

Finally, remember this: Sometimes, when we make a decision, we must immediately make another. It doesn't necessarily mean our first decision was dumber than dirt, it's just that the second one was made with additional information -- one more thing we now know that "didn't" work.

That's my story and I'm sticking to it...

Musings

It's About the People, Stupid...

-- *It's ALWAYS about the people...*

A recent article in the Houston Chronicle caught my attention...

Seems there's this 73 year-old woman who runs a precision machine company (that's right, *she's a machinist*), having learned the trade – and running a company – from her late husband.

Anyway, she's showcased in the Chronicle because her business is growing, has been quite successful, and has managed to keep and grow her workforce in the face of various and less-than-ideal economic conditions.

We can't all make that claim...

What caught my eye, besides the general uniqueness of her success in a traditionally male-dominated field, was her comment when asked about her initial concerns some decade or so ago when she took the reins of the company. She said, "A manufacturing plant isn't about the product or machinery, *it's about the people.*"

She went on to state further that her chief concern was that now there were people – real, living people – who were depending on her for their livelihood, and that scared her.

And well it should, Martha Pylateof USA Industries, Inc. Well it should...

It should scare us all, or at least give us enough pause to realize that our decisions – nearly *all* of them – may in some way affect the livelihood of others.

This caution shouldn't lead us to delay necessary decisions, or act as though we've got mafia-driven concrete shoes impeding our progress. It should, however, lead us to make sure we give adequate consideration... take adequate input from others... consider fully the available alternatives and potential impacts... when such decision-making time is available to us.

In other words, we have a *duty* – a real, *personal responsibility* – to be **good at leadership**, and all that means.

My hat's off to Martha Pylate of Houston. Sometimes, we're fortunate enough to experience someone fairly new to this whole leadership thing that *really gets it*.

She does.

But, that's just me...