



## Organization Development

# Developing Global Ambassador Proficiency

by **Peter Bailey**  
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I have just returned from a week in the Philippines where I delivered a **Global Ambassador Proficiency Program**. Participants hailed from Dubai, Korea, China, Thailand, India, and South Africa, among others, and they were a perfect cross-section of the global workforce of engineers and sales people from companies around the world like their own.

We gathered for a Global Leadership Institute to raise the skill level and visibility of these high potential staff and to enhance the likelihood of them achieving higher level positions within the company. The days were long, often running past midnight. Teams of people who had never met each other before were learning new tools to communicate and better ways to work together. Distinguished guest faculty were flown in to facilitate presentation skills, interpret Insight Discovery instruments, and in my case, to deliver foundational global content to help them know themselves better and to work better globally.

My key goal in developing Global Ambassadors is to enhance their global business acumen so that they are better prepared to answer three questions for themselves:

1. What is really going on in a global business situation?
2. What can I do to prepare for the best possible outcome?
3. What can I do to repair a situation for the best possible outcome?

The first question is about developing their global "bandwidth" or "Longitude" to help them make more accurate assessments of current cross-cultural situations. By expanding one's cultural literacy one can better understand the often invisible nuances "under the water line" that may be influencing global business behavior. I like to help people think in terms of deeper "cultural tectonics" so that they are more keenly aware of the



impact that their culture and the cultures of their international counterparts have on daily business communications.

The second and third questions are about Preparation and Reparation. After my global participants have thoroughly digested the key foundational tools of cultural communication in the "Longitude" section, we move on to the "Latitude" section which puts their adaptive skills to the test. Each Global Ambassador Proficiency participant is required to identify key scenarios in their day-to-day lives where they have bumped into cultural confusion. Perhaps it was a meeting between colleagues that ended badly, a misinterpreted interest in a critical negotiation, or even struggling with frustration with the level of participation they get on weekly conference calls. These mini-case studies are not contrived, but are scenarios gleaned from their own work experiences and are the laboratories for our "final exams" in the last half of the Global Ambassador Proficiency program. Randomly selected teams of three and four people are tasked with resolving each of these critical

business issues. With a limited amount of time and all the global tools at their disposal, the room was abuzz with energy.

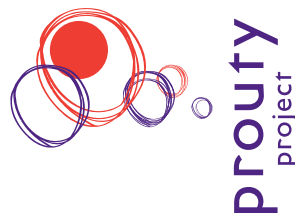
Colorful drawings of cultural diagrams appear on flipcharts around the walls. Loud voices with global accents and laughter fill the room as solutions are presented, tested, challenged, and modified. An excited, energized group of new Global Ambassadors applaud their contributions to solving business issues which previously had them perplexed.

If you or are interested in developing your team's Global Ambassador Proficiency, please give me a call. I would love to discuss ways we might support your efforts to enhance their global business acumen.

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Strategic Planning • Organization Development • Board and Team Development

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# Rave Retreat and Thank You

**Rave Retreat:** Every year on the first week of January, we go offsite to stretch our minds and lay out our annual flight plan. This year, I wanted to try something different.

Years ago, I read about college kids hosting "rave parties." Parties where you don't know the venue until the last minute. With that concept in mind, I gave a budget to Melissa Gennert, and said, "Please plan our strategic planning retreat and no one, including me, will know where we're going or what the agenda is; we'll just show up."

We were told three things: Be at the airport at 5:30 a.m. on Wednesday. Plan to return to Minneapolis at 11:45 p.m. Friday. Be prepared for temperatures from 35 - 65°F.

Ultimately, we ended up at the Silverado Resort in Napa Valley, and had three wondrous days of strategic thinking. Melissa gave the agenda to us hour by hour, and it worked beautifully.

Stay present. I share this as an idea you might consider with your board and senior management team. Will it take you out of

your comfort zone? Probably. Will it help you reflect on the complexities, ambiguities, and surprises in business today? Probably. Try it, let us know how it goes, and let us know if we can help. "A mind stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions."

**Thank You:** A hearty thanks to all the clients with whom we had a chance to work with in 2012. From the "zero revenue start-up" to the "\$100 billion publicly-traded company," it was a real joy to work with you. Some of you, we've had the honor of working with for over two decades. Thank you.

Keep stretching,



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## "C" NOTE QUOTE:

*"The idea of doing something unexpected, something unpredictable – daring myself to tune in to another way of seeing and feeling things – intrigues me."*

## Know the quote?

If you know who said this quote, please send an email to: briana.cain@proutyproject.com or call 952.942.2922 by **Friday, May 3**; one guess per individual. If we have more than one correct answer, we throw those names into a hat and draw the winner of a \$100 gift card.

## Last issue's "C" Note Quote winner is...

**Colleen Larson, Re/Max Results, Excelsior, MN.**

**Colleen knew that Stephen R. Covey, educator, author, and organizational consultant said:**

**"Many people mistake uniformity for unity; sameness for oneness. One word - boring! Differences should be seen as strengths, not weaknesses. They add zest to life."**

## Congratulations Colleen!

Colleen says, "I am going to use the \$100 gift card as a drawing during one of my coaching seminars - Engaged and Alive at Work or at Radical Leadership."



Colleen Larson

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or email stretch@proutyproject.com

Thanks.

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## Strategic Planning

# Execution: Big Doors and Little Hinges

by **Mike Felmlee**  
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I had the opportunity to catch up with Charlie Westling, CEO of Computype, a privately-held, global leader in the integrated product labeling and tracking solutions business. We helped Charlie and his colleagues develop their strategic plan that included an emphasis on sales growth and have been following their outstanding execution results. Here are some of the highlights from my recent discussion with Charlie:

**Have you ever heard this phrase: "If I had a nickel for every new CEO who said we will double our sales in 3 years, I'd be a rich man." As a new CEO of Computype how did you convince your colleagues that your new growth strategy was realistic?**

Yes, and I can assure you I didn't want this said about me when I joined Computype. A 2020 vision to double the company (a "big door" strategy) sounds good in theory but few could relate to it. To avoid this, we had to demystify our growth goals. We showed how much of the growth would be organic and how much of it would come from acquisitions. We then created 3-year plans around which products and services and market verticals we expected to grow and when. I think breaking it down in this way helped our team believe this was realistic and not a dream.



**Charlie Westling**

**How did you gain alignment at Computype?**

The first step was to break our vision down into bite-sized chunks. We then went to great lengths to ensure our senior leaders really understood and believed in it. To keep it simple, each leader had three things (the "little hinges" execution steps) they were responsible for. We then shared our story with all employees asking them to challenge our thinking and to identify what if anything we had missed. We then cascaded this "Magic of Three" thinking down throughout the entire organization. Each of us knew our three things to make growth happen. This has proven critical to our execution strategy.

**You mentioned the average tenure of your employees was long, almost three times the national average. How do you get your 30+ year employees engaged?**

Despite common perceptions about long-tenured people being set in their ways, I found our employees eager to change. They genuinely want to do the work they do well. We learned that you can't separate change management from execution. Our people want to understand the "why" behind the change and be engaged in developing solutions. If you don't take the time to do this, change and success won't happen. And, when you get these experienced people on board, it sets the tone for the whole organization.

**What were a couple of your biggest learnings?**

We realized early on in the process that we needed an answer to the question: "What's in it for me?" for everyone. People really appreciate being asked this question. It shows you care. We also learned that everyone wants to be part of a winning team. You can never underestimate the power of winning.

**Any execution rituals that come from your experiences?**

We hold a monthly bag meeting for employees to come forward to share their execution success stories. It's become a platform for greatness. I listen like everyone else. It's an unfiltered reaffirmation that we are going down the right path and it gives us an opportunity to reinforce the right behaviors. And, each quarter we review our strategy with our employees and share what's working, what's not, and any mid-course corrections we need to make. Then we listen for their feedback.

Thanks Charlie for sharing how "little hinges" are helping you open your "big door" growth strategies!

**Thank You**

A very special thank you to the following individuals who introduced us to new clients in 2012! We always appreciate our clients and friends sending us new business referrals.

We put each person's name in a hat, and drew Jan Haeg as the winner of the \$1,000 donation to the charity of her choice! Jan has chosen to split the donation between the Minnesota 4-H Foundation and World Servants. Congratulations Jan!

**Referral Recognition**



**Marcia Ballinger**  
KeyStone Search



**Abigail Barrett**  
Leadership Transitions, Inc.



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**Charlie Westling**  
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**Dalyn Dye**  
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\*Photo credit to Mike Ekern, University of St. Thomas



## Board and Team Development

# From Cannonballs to Cryogenics: Sparking Revolutionary Change in an Industry Mainstay

by **Grayce Belvedere Young**  
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I recently had a very insightful conversation with Eric Rottier, CEO of Taylor-Wharton, International (TWI) about what it is like to run a 270-year old company. Eric shared that the company has "contributed to technologies that have enhanced lives from the very serious medical advancements in Cryopreservation of biological samples and rocket propulsion, to the assistance in the USA's War of Independence by making George Washington's cannon balls." Founded in 1742, TWI produces a comprehensive range of bulk and portable cryogenic storage equipment and a complete line of high-pressure precision valves and propane cylinders.

**Tell us about the strategy for the next evolution at TWI.**

TWI went through a structured bankruptcy three years ago and the organization was underfunded until earlier last year. As CEO, my first area of focus was to promote from within and bring in a team of experienced industry leaders to replace the restructuring team that was in place. These leaders understand the marketplace, our competition, and how we can value engineer our products.

Our focus is to expand our position, both nationally and internationally. We will do so by leveraging our two key market platforms – Cryopreservation and Industrial Gas – while adding a third platform focused on LNG. LNG is a Mega-Trend that we are positioned to benefit from.

Acquisitions are certainly being explored, both nationally and internationally. We know that increasing geographic coverage will be a part of our future strategy.

**You are at a flux point in your organization. How do you attract and retain the talent you would like for future growth?**

In our recruitment efforts, we are seeking people who are comfortable with change

and uncertainty. We know that we have manifold challenges and we are looking for people who are energized by seeing these as opportunities versus problems, where they can roll up their sleeves, dig in, and really fix our processes.

We are revitalizing the company and we are seeking people who thrive in this environment. These are people who know that their role will change in two years because the company's needs are dynamic. They are constantly looking to enhance their capabilities and grow different skill sets throughout their tenure with TWI. This requires a unique mindset that embraces risk and uncertainty, but also lots of upside and opportunities for one's career progression.

**What unique aspects of your culture will support people being successful in this environment?**

Every organization talks about a team oriented culture and that is true for us as well; however, with a slight twist. We want a culture that operates in a thoughtful, crisis management approach. This sounds like an oxymoron, but it's not. Our culture will embrace making bold moves quickly with perhaps only 80% of the information needed to make a final decision. Speed is of the essence here and we need to

be comfortable with making decisions and moving ahead. We must embrace this in order to win. Our culture will support being dissatisfied with the current state to quickly move to improve it.

**What does success look like in 3 to 5 years?**

A couple of key factors of success. We will be three to four times our current size. We will stand out as a recognized leader in our industry. We will have the "wow" factor when considering our heritage, resurgence, and our presence in the global marketplace.



**Eric Rottier**