

the
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PROJECT**

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"C" NOTE QUOTE:

"The key trait for any CEO today is the ability to balance your epiphanies with your execution. Big ideas and bold strategies are important, but given the times we're in, what matters most are results. There's a saying that 'good ideas are common – what's uncommon are people who will work hard enough to bring them about.'"

● If you know who said this quote, please send an e-mail to kari.baltzer@proutyproject.com or call 952.942.2922 by **Friday, April 29** – 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.

And last issue's winner is... Nicole Dodge, Quality Tech Services, Bloomington, MN.

Nicole knew that Alan Mulally, President and CEO, Ford Motor Company, said the following: "This is why I emphasize relentless implementation. Get everybody at the table. Everyone must participate, know what the plan is, and know the current status against the plan, the areas that need special attention. It comes down to using everyone's talents – and I mean everyone."

Congratulations Nicole! Nicole would like to split the award money supporting both the **Minnesota Public Radio** and **Twin Cities Public Television**.

Ability, Disability, and Possibility

STRETCHing and expanding beyond our limits, we are preparing our minds and bodies for the **2011 STRETCH Expedition: Adventure Team Challenge**. On a mission dedicated to breaking down and through barriers, inclusivity and connection, we have created the ultimate team and leadership learning experience.

Imagine white water rafting, mountain biking, rappelling, ziplining as a person who is blind, has quadriplegia, cerebral palsy, or is able bodied and has not exercised in a few years.

Can't visualize it? Go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yiLmnT6Y2I>

Our goal is to raise \$150,000 to fund participants and contribute to No Barriers USA and Courage Center, two premier nonprofits serving people with disabilities.

To learn more, please join our STRETCH Gathering: Saturday, May 7, 7-10 p.m., Bearpath Country Club. \$40 per adult, \$20 per child, guaranteed fun. Light hors d'oeuvres, cash bar, entertainment, silent auction. Bonus: Last-minute Mother's Day gifts! Please RSVP to maryann.em@proutyproject.com.



Jeff

Race with us as we interconnect ability, disability, and possibility.

jeff.prouty@proutyproject.com



● BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Governance: Board Engagement (Part 2 of 4-Part Series)



Article by
Mike Felmlie

mike.felmlie@proutyproject.com

This is our second in a four-part series on board governance. In our introduction to this series, we shared our belief that we are in the midst of a board governance revolution. To overcome this adversity, we challenged all board members – public, private, and nonprofit – to answer three fundamental questions:

1. Are you spending your time on the right things?
2. Are you performing these things well?
3. Are you meeting the needs of the organization and performing up to the best of your abilities?

In Part 1 of the series, we learned that a recent study by Ram Charan and Geoff Colvin revealed most boards today spend only one-fourth of their time on the most critical matters. To improve upon this disparity, we shared with you a board engagement tool created by David Nadler in his [Harvard Business Review](#) article entitled, *Building Better Boards*, to evaluate whether your board is appropriately engaged in the right things.

In Part 2 of the series, we will explore the process of creating a robust board assessment process.

I had the opportunity recently to hear Bill George, former Chairman and CEO of Medtronic, speak about board governance. I captured one of his comments:

“You really never know that you have a true high-performing board until you have adversity. Then it’s really easy to tell.”

His comment begs the following questions:

- How do we know board members serving public companies are really protecting our interests?
- Do they come prepared to ask the right questions?
- Do they really know the business and industry in which the company operates?
- And, how do they know the current company strategy is the right one or not?

Typically, boards are judged based on how the company is doing. But how do you reconcile that when much of what a board does is focused on preserving the long-term sustainability of the organization? Sometimes, it is really difficult to correlate a board’s actions and its current performance. In fact, you could be doing everything right as a board and the company could still suffer due to unforeseen economic or industry conditions. So, how do you know you have a high-performing board?

Our experience suggests high-performing boards have several elements in common. These include directors who:

- Are competent and have a good working relationship with the CEO and management team.
- Work well together.
- Have a good understanding of the business and the environment in which it operates.
- Possess a solid understanding of overall strategies and risks.
- Have a robust board assessment process to continually improve the directors overall performance.

We offer the following six elements of a robust, board assessment process:

- 1) Find a CEO that wants the board to be high-performing. Bill George also mentioned, “I’ve never seen a high-performing board where the CEO didn’t want it to be.” Thus, the CEO has to set a positive tone with the board and between the board and the management team.
- 2) Utilize a survey to solicit input from each of the board members. Involving individual board members to create the assessment is a good way to engender trust and buy-in to continuously improve the board’s performance.
- 3) Meet or interview each of the board members to get a complete picture of their view of board performance.
- 4) Summarize the results of the survey and interviews and share them with the board members. Identify those areas where the board demonstrates strength, areas with room for improvement, and areas where there is a greater than normal disparity of responses.
- 5) Use the knowledge gained to improve the overall board’s performance. Utilize the annual board calendar to ensure issues you identify in the process get discussed and resolved. And, remember to receive the feedback in the spirit in which it is offered.
- 6) Repeat this process annually.

In Part 3 of the board governance series, we will discuss individual board member assessments and how they can help you enhance the overall performance of your board.

In the meantime, keep working to develop a high-performing board. You deserve nothing less!



● ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Readers Are Leaders



grayce.belvedere.young@proutyproject.com

peter.bailey@proutyproject.com

Article by
Grayce Belvedere Young & Peter Bailey

In the spirit of sharing great ideas, we have asked several of our clients to offer one of their favorite leader development resources. Following you will find many great ideas and valuable insights that have helped people be better leaders. If you haven't read them yet, you should!

A New Brand World: Eight Principles for Achieving Brand Leadership in the Twenty-First Century

by Scott Bedbury and Stephen Fenichell

This book helped me recognize that branding is not about corporate naming, product positioning, or key messaging, as much as branding is all about the emotion created inside. It is about belonging and longing – the **need** for one to possess your brand. After reading this book, it helped me do, a highly successful, inside-out transformation and re-branding of our organization.

Greg Niemi, President and CEO, Nexstar Network

Closing the Leadership Gap: Add Women, Change Everything

By Marie C. Wilson

As a leader of a foundation, I was captivated by Marie Wilson's book. It is a quick read and mixes facts and statistics with stories of obstacles that real women have faced. This book provides tools and courage for women – and men – to be a leader and make a difference. With women occupying only 18% of leadership positions in any sector in the U.S.A., Marie encourages all of us to step up.

Lee Roper-Batker, CEO, Women's Foundation of Minnesota

Death by Meeting: A Leadership Fable... About Solving the Most Painful Problem in Business

By Patrick Lencioni

The topic of effective meetings is a significant subject frequently discussed throughout many organizations, and Tastefully Simple has had their share of conversations on this theme. Lencioni's national best-seller helped to provide a framework for our "Best Practices Go Guide" which works towards eliminating waste and frustration among teams and creates an environment of engagement and passion. Simply said, time spent in meetings has become more effective and productive.

Jill Blashack Strahan, CEO, Tastefully Simple

First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently

By Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman

Buckingham's book provided a transformational shift in my perception of management. The book was stacked with innovative ideas, but three concepts really resonated – leverage a person's strengths (don't attempt to "fix" their weakness), spend the majority of your time with your best people, and don't promote people to a level of incompetence. This book will re-define how you manage.

Brent Longval, President and Chief Financial Officer,
Marketing Architects

fruition: Creating the Ultimate Corporate Strategy for Information Technology

By Chris Potts

As our business strategy work matured, I wanted to complement our business strategy with an updated technology strategy. Potts' book, written in a compelling narrative, introduced us to a new way of articulating the value of technology to the business which ultimately contributes to maximizing the value of the investments we make in IT.

Dana M. Vogen, Second Vice President, Retirement Business Technology, Securian Retirement

What Got You Here Won't Get You There: How Successful People Become Even More Successful

By Marshall Goldsmith and Mark Reiter

I really appreciate Marshall's 20 habits that hold us back, in particular #2 Adding Too Much Value, and #3 Passing Judgment, both of which remind me to listen more and talk less! The whole list is a great reminder to constantly think about how I'm behaving as a leader and how my team might be perceiving my actions, which are invariably very different than my intentions!

Helen Goldson, Vice President, Talent Management, Goodrich

Yes! 50 Scientifically Proven Ways to Be Persuasive

By Robert B. Cialdini, Noah J. Goldstein, and Steve J. Martin

Cialdini is the most cited social psychologist in the field of influence and persuasion. He shares practical and applicable insights on how to employ impactful, and ethical, strategies to enhance the reader's ability to persuade and influence others. It highlights that leaders can indeed strengthen the likelihood of creating desired action through the practice and implementation of scientifically-proven methodologies.

Lars Leafblad, Principal, Keystone Search

The Lombardi Rules: 26 Lessons from Vince Lombardi--the World's Greatest Coach

By Vince Lombardi

My father is from Green Bay and I grew up enveloped in the passion of being a Packer fan. I attended Super Bowl XLV and witnessed the Lombardi trophies return to Green Bay. In the weeks since, I have been in awe of the leadership displayed by the Packer organization and have reflected on the inspiration and foundation for success that Lombardi established. Regardless of what your business or passion is you should reference Lombardi's philosophy.

Eric Rottier, Sr. Vice President Corporate Development, Chart Industries

REFERRAL RECOGNITION

A very special **"thank you"** to the following individuals who introduced us to new clients in 2010! We always appreciate our clients and friends sending us new business referrals. We put each person's name in a hat, and drew **Bill Cook** as the winner of the \$1,000 donation to the charity of his choice! Bill has chosen MS150 (Multiple Sclerosis Bike Ride). **Congratulations Bill!** — We wish you all the best on the bike ride!



Connie Braziel
Minnesota Zoo



Ken Brooks
Signature Bank



David Buck
SHiFT



Jim Buffo
Minnesota Timberwolves



Bill Cook
Donaldson Company



Charlie Westling
Computype



Dennis Doyle
Welsb Companies



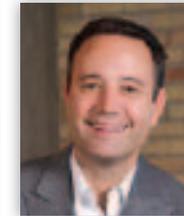
Andy Hunter
Northwestern Mutual



Michelle Jahn
It's About You Business Consulting



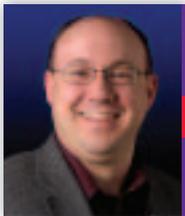
Stacy Kruse
ELCA Board of Pensions



Rick Kupchella
IE Network



Oak Ridge Hotel & Conference Center



Brian Numainville
Nash Finch Company



Mark Wellman
No Limits



Chuck Squires
Robert Half International



Mike Trucano
Dorsey & Whitney



Erik Weihenmayer
No Barriers USA

No photo available:
Keith Guggenberger
Starkey Laboratories

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THANKS!