



The Leadership Landscape

November/December, 2007

A bi-monthly periodical published by the faculty of the Federal Executive Institute to help you continue your growth as a public sector leader.

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."
Hamlet

Upcoming Programs and Courses at FEI:



[Building High-Performance Organizations in the 21st Century, January 15-18, 2008, Charlottesville, VA](#)

[Collaborating Across Organizational Boundaries, February 19-20, 2008, Charlottesville, VA](#)

[Leading Across Generations, February 21-22, 2008, Charlottesville, VA](#)

[Understanding the 360 Degree Leader, March 13-14, 2008, Charlottesville, VA](#)

[Leading Strategically: From Vision to Performance, March 31-April 2, 2008, Charlottesville, VA](#)

[Emotional Competence:](#)

Welcome from the Dean of Faculty:

Hamlet's exhortation to Horatio is perfectly fitting for those grappling with contemporary leadership: there are, indeed, more elements and challenges in public sector leadership than some of us ever imagined. For more than a year now, the Leadership Landscape has provided us with an excellent opportunity to review, test, and re-calibrate our own leadership philosophies. With December well underway, we celebrate the first year of our periodical, thank you for your readership and leadership, and wish you the happiest of holidays. Enjoy them, as the Bard would say, "Wisely and slow; they stumble that run fast."

~Dr. Peter Ronayne, Dean of Faculty

Values-Based Leadership: Sheila Gant discusses the concept and practical need for resonant leadership. [Read more...](#)

Values-Based Leadership: Amy Burge takes a closer look at one of FEI's exciting field experiences, Leadership Lessons from Shakespeare. [Read more...](#)

Policy in a Constitutional System: Tripp Purks reviews Daniel Pink's new book, *A Whole New Mind*, that public sector leaders may draw on to navigate leadership issues in a constitutional system. [Read More...](#)

Transforming Organizations: In the first of two articles, Al Cooke examines some conventional myths for maintaining sanity and stability in a time of change. [Read more...](#)

[Working with Others for Results, April 2-4, 2008, Charlottesville, VA](#)

[The Aspen Institute Executive Seminar, May 19-23, 2008, Charlottesville, VA](#)

[Executive Communication Skills: Leading the Process of Change, June 2-6, 2008, Charlottesville, VA](#)

Request a [Program Guide of all Courses](#) offered for FY 2008

or

Go Directly to [FEP's Website](#)



Wellness and Balance Tip of the Month:

Executive Exercise

“Executive Exercise” Is that what you say when you hit the treadmill after a long day of work? I’m not saying you’re wrong, but a recent [article](#), by *Nature Neuroscience* editor in chief, Sandra Aamodt, and Princeton molecular biologist, Sam Wang, suggests that this phrase also refers to the benefits you receive from physical training. Aamodt and Wang write that

“In humans, exercise improves what scientists call “executive function,” the set of abilities that allows you to select behavior that’s appropriate to the situation, inhibit inappropriate behavior and focus on the job at hand in spite of distractions.”

They suggest joining a gym. I agree and when you do, remember there’s more to “executive exercise” than the boss riding the stationary bike.

~ John Stroup, FEI Research Fellow

Values-Based Leadership

Becoming a Resonant Leader

Sheila Gant, FEI Faculty

How often do you regularly move from one unimportant task to another? Perhaps you feel that although those big goals remain out of reach at least you got something done. If this is your situation, Richard Boyatzis and Annie McKee’s new practical book [Resonant Leadership](#) contains questionnaires and helpful exercises to becoming a “Resonant Leader” whose timber and tone reverberate in concert with their teams and organizations.

The authors describe resonant leadership as “renewing your self and connecting with others through mindfulness, hope and compassion. Resonant leadership is benevolent, compassionate, optimistic and hopeful.” Its foundations are emotional intelligence and mindfulness. More importantly, these leaders have a good sense of themselves and their strengths and weaknesses. Ultimately, resonant leaders are self managing and align their emotions with their goals and help others to do so.

Boyatzis and McKee believe that resonant leaders inspire others by having a clear vision and a strong sense of optimism. They display enthusiasm and energy and are fully engaged in what they do. They demonstrate through their daily behaviors and actions their passion, commitment, and concern for others. The resonant leader inspires others to be the best they can be by creating environments for others to be and do their best.

The authors point out that many of the challenges leaders face also increase stress. Although stress is necessary and can be healthy, some of these challenges are situations where authority is ambiguous or there is a lack of support or burnout. Often the stress of these situations limits the potential of individuals and their organizations. When this stress becomes pathologic, the authors note that leaders have improperly incorporated a healthy “Cycle of Sacrifice and Renewal.” We all know what it means to sacrifice: putting in long hours, making great personal demands, pushing issues and others to meet difficult goals. On the other hand, we often forget to rejuvenate ourselves after these physical and mental exertions.

The authors suggest that the best way to manage the “Cycle of Sacrifice and Renewal” is through mindfulness, hope, and compassion. The authors’ believe that many of us don’t live our lives engaged in full conscious awareness of our physical, mental, and spiritual capacities. Being mindful requires being consciously attentive, fully awake and aware of one’s self, and in touch with the “context” in which we live. As difficult as this may sound, it is vital for accurate personal and organizational assessment.

A second suggestion is to use “vision and hope as a driving force” in your personal life and throughout your organizational relationships. Why hope? Because hope motivates action and agency and it is far less stressful than relying on crisis for inspiration and effort.

Finally, resonant leaders who successfully balance the cycle of sacrifice and renewal are compassionate, or what Boyatzis and McKee call, “empathy in action.” Facing difficult choices is the condition of leadership. Mentoring, coaching, and listening are necessary, and compassionate, actions that enable leaders to create solutions that resonate throughout the organization.

If you want to know whether you are a “Resonant Leader” or have fallen into the “Sacrifice Syndrome” without finding the necessary renewal, there are several questionnaires in *Resonant Leadership* to help you identify the things you want to start doing, others you want to keep doing, and some you want to quit doing. I’ve included a selection of those questions below (p. 54-55):

Am I:

- Working harder with less result?
- Getting home later or leaving home earlier each day?
- Feeling tired, even after sleeping?

Have I noticed changes in myself or my relationships, such as;

- I can no longer really talk about my problems with my significant other.
- I don’t care what I eat, or whether I eat too much or too little?
- I can’t remember the last time I had a long conversation with a trusted friend or family member,

Do I:

- Have frequent headaches, backaches, or pain?
- Feel as if no one can understand what I need to do, or how much work I have?
- Feel too overwhelmed to seek new experiences, ideas, or ways of doing things?

How well did you do on these questions? If too many of your answers are in the affirmative and have been so for extended periods of time, then perhaps it’s time for you to reduce your stress? Boyatzis and McKee suggest that seeking out renewal will not only serve you personally but that there is a strong “business” case for taking steps towards renewal.

FEI offers many courses that incorporate the concept of resonant leadership. For more information on these programs please contact Bonnie Boston 434/980-6277 or Cynthia Morgan 434/980-6275

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Global Perspectives

Learning Leadership Lessons from Shakespeare

Amy Burge, FEI Research Fellow

In addition to experiencing values based leadership lessons through the study of presidents and preeminent American leaders, FEI executives had the chance to study leadership lessons through the works of William Shakespeare. A recent field experience to the Blackfriars Playhouse at the American Shakespeare Center in Staunton provided the opportunity for participants to learn from Shakespeare as well as to demonstrate their personal acting prowess.

Utilizing an opportunity to explore leadership lessons outside of the FEI grounds, this field experience re-familiarized the executives with powerful leadership lessons in Shakespeare's work. American Shakespeare Center actors performed selected scenes from some of Shakespeare's most powerful plays, articulately demonstrating how quickly power dynamics can change through a simple facial expression or word choice. For example, as the famous St. Crispin's Day speech in Henry V was presented on stage, the participants were able to observe Henry's persuasion skills as he rallies his followers towards the Battle of Agincourt. In his pre-battle speech to his followers, Henry appeals to their sense of brotherhood and pride when he states:

We few, we happy few, we band of brothers; For he to-day that sheds his blood with me Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile, This day shall gentle his condition: And gentlemen in England now a-bed Shall think themselves accursed they were not here, And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's Day. (William Shakespeare, Henry V. Act IV, scene iii)

The participants were able to observe a powerful persuasion tool as Henry emphasized positive outcomes, such as brotherhood, to persuade his followers to accompany him. The actor's portrayal of this scene, as well as the analysis that followed, provided the participants the opportunity to explore this portrayal of persuasion.

The great value in this field experience is three-fold:

- First, the participants were able to observe leadership skills in action. By observing actors initially act out the scene followed by an analysis of the scene, the observation and thorough understanding of the leadership lessons presented allowed the participants to see these lessons in action.

- Second, the participants were able to experience leadership lessons in an additional format to those presented in their other programs at FEI. Complementing their coursework, this field experience presented the participants with a chance to examine new leadership lessons as well as to further explore those examined while in classes.
- Third, this field experience gave the participants a chance to reinvigorate their appreciation of Shakespeare. Many participants in fact remarked that they wished that Shakespeare was always taught in such a clear-cut and exciting manner and that perhaps their earlier experiences with Shakespeare may have been more favorable had they been as informative and engaging as this field experience!

Perhaps we all should take time to consider where we may encounter powerful leadership lessons in often forgotten places, such as Shakespeare. Revisiting Shakespeare and other texts or sources may enlighten or add depth to your experiences in learning leadership lessons.

To learn more or register for programs that incorporate this field experience and many others, please contact Bonnie Boston 434/980-6277 or Cynthia Morgan 434/980-6275

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[Policy in a Constitutional System](#)

A “Right-Minded” Look at Shifting Trends in the Marketplace of Thought

Tripp Purks, FEI Research Fellow

Can literature affect litigation? Will an affinity for Bach contribute to an effective business plan? Maybe... but you can be sure that creative thinking will. Here at FEI we emphasize the connection that public sector leaders have with the Constitution. We suggest that our work as public sector leaders requires a two-brained approach to fulfilling the mandates originating in that document.

In his recent book, [A Whole New Mind](#), [Daniel Pink](#) explores this two-sided approach to leadership as he examines the surprising impact that “right-brained” thinking is having on the business world. According to Pink, the twenty-first century is witnessing a major evolution as the Information Age is now giving way to what he refers to as the Conceptual Age. In light of this transformation, skill sets that were once seen as imperative for success in American businesses are becoming less in demand as the overseas outsourcing of everything from number crunching to technical support becomes the norm.

Everything about this book, from its grand ideas to its chapter layout, feels and functions with what Pink refers to as “high concept” and “high touch.” Pink paints pictures and builds metaphors rather than gathering data and analyzing charts, and the result is an engaging and effective read which both *sticks* in the mind and *challenges* conventional assumptions. As public sector leaders in this burgeoning Conceptual Age, we must consistently see the connections in broad systems and networks of organization. However,

we must also make deep connections with the relationships that support an integrated web that includes our immediate stakeholders, our own organizations, and the public itself.

If you looking for an entertaining challenge that pushes you to think in the future, then this book will serve you well. The structure of the book is loosely based around six innovative “senses”: design, story, symphony, empathy, meaning, and play. As Pink unpacks each concept he also seamlessly ties them all together offering the reader a complete “portfolio” of skills and ideas to improve their leadership capacity. Moreover, each section offers examples and tells stories of success where entrepreneurs and problem-solvers employed innovative right-brained approaches. Finally, Pink offers a number of helpful resources for further exploration.

One of the most astute pieces of this work is the idea that there is no hierarchy between the two “mind” parts. A reader might be tempted to see the glorification of a right-brained individual as the answer to all leadership problems. In contrast, Pink fosters ways of thinking that have been seemingly buried by left-brained logistical methods for the past two decades. As a pragmatist, he bridges a dichotomy in conventional leadership development programs. Though he metaphorically describes the MFA as the new MBA, the heart of Pink’s argument is based on supplementing the emphasis on logic and reason, not replacing it. This complex thinking is necessary for teasing out multiple values by multiple stakeholders inherent in a Constitutional system.

Moreover, value in today’s marketplace is often achieved by some of the most unorthodox methods, and *A Whole New Mind* unfolds like a colorful roadmap to understanding this new frontier. As public sector leaders faced with often intractable problems, you must bridge the divide between innovation and entrepreneurship with the necessity of regulation, hierarchy, and accountability. As Pink notes, these two sides are not in competition as we often think. Instead, bridging this divide is the work of all leaders.

Pink leaves us a compass-of-sorts for integrating right brained thinking that emphasizes the sequential, the textual, and the analytical issues of our work with left brain thinking that highlights the simultaneous, the contextual, and the synthetic. As a practical application consider how the sense of *symphony* which Pink refers to as “the ability to see relationships between seemingly unrelated fields; to detect broad patterns rather than to deliver specific answers” can work into your leadership strategies, to allow space for effective growth and development.

One of FEI areas of excellence is the development of leaders who work in the United States constitutional system. For more information on how we integrate the US Constitution into our programs please contact Bonnie Boston 434/980-6277 or Cynthia Morgan 434/980-6275

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Transforming Organizations

Maintaining Sanity and Stability in a Time of Change (The first article in a two part series)

Alfred L. Cooke, Ph.D., Director Center for Organizational Performance

Everything in the universe is subject to change---and everything is on schedule!

Several years ago as a part of another life I had responsibility for a major change initiative that resulted in the merger of two large organizations and creation of an additional scaled down organization. The resulting chaos and anxiety was palpable throughout the three year process. I noticed, however, that there were some people who took the change in stride and moved on to be a part of the implementation. In contrast, there was another group who fought the process and only increased their frustration as the “locomotive of change” barreled on down the tracks.

So...what was the difference between these two groups that allowed one to move along with the change and to embrace it while the other increasingly became belligerent and frustrated? The difference I found was how the two groups felt about power: one group focused on their lack of power and the other moved focused on their empowerment during the process.

Change means that an organization is entering a period of uncertainty. It threatens the status quo. Most change initiatives fail because organizational leaders do not paying attention to the “people” implications of the change. Many of the misconceptions that we have about change are at the core of our ability... or inability ...to deal effectively with it.

That said...this article focuses on some of the intractable issues of change and makes some clarifications about some of conventionally held myths about these issues. In the next issue of the *Leadership Landscape (Volume 3, Issue 1)*, I discuss some strategies for personally traversing a difficult change situation.

First, some clarification of the myths about change...

Myth #1 - *Feelings of powerlessness are inevitable with change.* When we get comfortable in the way we do things we gain a sense of power because of the competence we develop over time. Our jobs become routine, and we can almost do them with our “eyes closed.” Powerlessness is a state of mind. When one steps into a state of powerlessness it is usually, at least partially, conscious decision. Just as easily as we make decisions to feel powerless, we can also make a decision to be empowered. Choosing the latter means choosing to be proactive about finding ways to relieve the stress of change. We do this by taking a number of actions:

- Learning everything we can about the change process;
- Being realistic about the “old way” of doing things. (Was it really that great a way of working or is it possible that a new way of being could be better?);
- Finding ways to get involved in creating the processes that make the new paradigm work to our advantage;
- Looking for “what’s in it for me” by examining how the change may make life better in some way?
- Seeking out others around you who seem to be adapting to the change and finding out what they are doing and thinking;
- In the early stages, avoid the “nay sayers” until you have gotten yourself in a positive place. Later you will be able to engage these negative individuals and help them to move forward as well.
- Remember the passion that is at the core of the work that you do. Change is so much more manageable if you keep your eye on what motivates you at a visceral level.

Myth #2 - *Change is always disruptive and chaotic.* Despite [Margaret Wheatly](#)’s much discussed theories on chaos, much of change is not as disruptive as we anticipate that it will be. In fact the cases of total chaos resulting from change are the exception rather than the rule. Often what transpires is more evolutionary than revolutionary. To diminish the impact of disruption, first begin with how you perceive the change and try to put yourself in a place of thinking that the “glass is half full” rather than half empty. You can

do this by educating yourself as much as you can about the process and developing a support system with others in the organization.

Myth #3 - *Change always throws out every thing that we hold dear and near.* Much of what happens in change initiatives is an attempt to create a different infrastructure to guide the unchanged work of the organization. Core processes often remain the same. Thus, the day-to-day work that the typical person does is unchanged. Getting clarification of the impact on the change on your specific job is often a way to relieve some of the anxiety surrounding change. As soon as there is an announcement of a change initiative you should sit down with your supervisor and gather as much information as possible about the implications and expectations under the new process or initiative. Anxiety is largely the result of “not knowing.”

Myth #4 - *Change happens quickly and at such a pace that it is overwhelming.* Not true! The typical major change process takes from 18 months to two years in order to be implemented...and then it can take three or more years to be fully functioning. “Take one day at a time.” Track the implementation process daily. Be observant of each initiative whether it directly affects you and your job or not. Taking a systems level perspective can serve the typical person well in controlling the pace and disruption of change.

Taken together these myths constitute some of the most difficult and inevitable issues that one faces in a time of organizational change. Recognizing the danger of certain myths and taking proactive steps to arm oneself for the change process gives you the best opportunity to remain sane and stable in the face of great uncertainty. In the second part of this article, I talk about some tangibles steps to move beyond staying sane to becoming a leader within that process of change.

If you want assistance with designing, implementing, and evaluating change in your agency, contact Dr. Alfred Cooke, Director of the Center for Organizational Performance at the Federal Executive Institute (Alfred.cooke@opm.gov or 434-980-6360).

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