Jim Clemmer's Leader Letter

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Practical Leadership:
From Inspiration to Application

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Summer here in the Northern Hemisphere means vacation travel for many of us. Heather and I just returned from a very enjoyable two week road trip through New York State, New England, and Pennsylvania. With record breaking heat and humidity during the "dog days" of July, we often put up the roof in our little two-seater convertible and cranked up the air conditioning.

Of course, like much of life, weather is all about perspective. When we returned we had dinner with a Client living and working in Doha, Qatar and back in Canada for a few weeks visiting relatives. As with my recent trip to Karachi, summer temperatures in that part of the world often reach 45 – 50 C (113 – 122 F) with very high humidity. They laughed at the complaints they were hearing from Canadians about our "record breaking temperatures" of 38 C (100F) with some humidity.

*August*, from the *Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry* showing a group of travelers

Most of this month's issue focuses on The Three Rings of Perceived Value. During our road trip we experienced a wide range of service/quality levels at inns and hotels, restaurants, ferries, tourist/info centers, and retailers. Our trip showed -- once again -- just **how tough it is to provide high service/quality levels across all three rings. When it happens, it's a rare and memorable event.** Sometimes two of the three rings are fairly strong, but the one weak ring quickly deflates the experience. A Japanese restaurant in Ithaca, NY for example, had excellent food (First Ring) and a very personable and attentive server (Third Ring), but their ordering and delivery system led to such serious errors and delays (Second Ring) we left with a negative overall experience.

When we returned, our July mobile phone bill came in with errors on the roaming plan we'd arranged for our travels. When I tried calling the phone company I was cut off numerous times. The recorded message apologized for their major technical problems and told us they were working on fixing them. So here's the phone company having big problems with its phone system! Another frustrating example of **First and Second Ring breakdowns leading to poor perceptions of value despite Third Ring service delivered by caring customer service representatives**.
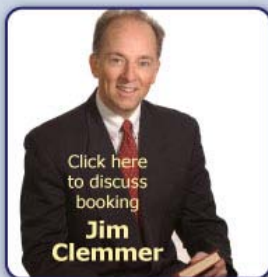
Blackberry-maker Research in Motion (RIM) and Apple are both at critical leadership and culture development crossroads in their travels toward sustained performance. Can they make the critical shift from building a business to building an executive team that builds the business**? Our first item looks at this hot issue and the heat on RIM this summer.**

RIM/BLACKBERRY IS AT A CRITICAL LEADERSHIP CROSSROAD

These "dog days of summer" are hot and tense times here in my home community of Waterloo Region for our biggest local employer and benefactor, Blackberry-maker Research in Motion (RIM). The company is a major start up success story coming out of the University of Waterloo's computer science program during the 1980s.

RIM created its industry and through strong market leadership built a world class brand. A strong feature is such high network security that President Obama was allowed to keep using his Blackberry for government business after his election in 2008. The company has become the inspiration and one of the main pillars locally for Communitech *"a network of more than 600 companies and organizations that believe in building a strong tech cluster in Waterloo Region."* Company founders and co-CEOs, Mike Lazaridis and Jim Balsillie have donated hundreds of millions of dollars to create The Perimeter Institute for Theoretical Physics, Institute for Quantum Computing, Institute for International Governance, as well as supporting the University of Waterloo, Wilfrid Laurier University, Conestoga College, hospitals, and community groups.

I've been a raving fan and Blackberry user for many years. I just purchased their PlayBook and love it. The WIFI web browser is incredibly fast and very easy to use. Integration with the Torch (by far my favorite Blackberry so far) for e-mail, contacts, tasks and web browsing is excellent. Screen resolution is outstanding. Video is amazing. It seamlessly runs multiple programs at once. The size was a pleasant surprise since it fits nicely in my current wallet/portfolio. Once the 300,000 applications (apps) are available through Google's Android system for the PlayBook, it will be even more useful. I am also eagerly awaiting Amazon's release of the Kindle for PlayBook so I can use it to read the e-books that I am currently reading on my Kindle for PC and Blackberry Torch.

RIM has been losing market share in the smart phone market to Apple and sellers of Google's Android system. Their stock price has dropped off a cliff this year. There's been a barrage of criticism and handwringing among some Canadians that RIM may go the way of Nortel Networks and slip from its dominant position to irrelevance and oblivion (Nortel is now bankrupt.)

A bad sign coming from RIM was Jim Balsillie's June discussion of a few hundred layoffs from their workforce of over 15,000 people and then a July announcement of 2,000 people losing their jobs. **There is so much evidence that the "savings" gained by layoffs are overwhelmed by the very negative energy and lack of leadership signals it sends**. See Wise Managers Treat Layoffs as a Last Resort for some of this earlier research. **"Dumbsizing" doesn't work and isn't leadership.**

But much of the anguish and fear for RIM is over the top and premature. The company is at a critical leadership crossroad. As with many fast

growing startups, their pioneering product development and marketing power made them a major international success. **Now Lazaridis and Balsillie face the critical entrepreneurial growth test**; *can they shift from building the business to building an executive team that builds the business*?

RIM's primary competitor, Apple, is at the same crossroad. Their stock price has also been floundering as investors fret about whether Steve Jobs' ongoing health problems will force him to leave his post as chief product and marketing genius. An in-depth investigative analysis of Apple's culture by *Fortune* magazine earlier this year produced a very telling organization chart on the key senior executive levels of the company illustrated by concentric rings rippling out from Steve Jobs at the centre.

Researcher and author, Jim Collins (author of *Built to Last* and *Good to Great*), says *"Whether you prevail or fail depends on what you do to yourself than on what the world does to you."* The single biggest factor that separates flash-in-the-pan successes from enduringly successful organizations is their culture. **Culture is the critical X factor that boosts or blocks strategy, change, and improvement initiatives. And that culture ripples out from the founders and executive team.**

For our community and the glimpse I am getting of RIM's possible future products with its new QNX operating system running the [PlayBook](#), I am strongly cheering for the company. **An adage that's becoming a truism teaches, "culture eats strategy for breakfast."** Let's hope they choose the leadership and culture road that leads upward to greater success!

Further Reading:

- Blog posts on [Culture Change](#)
- Selection of articles on [Culture Change](#)
- [Learning from Southwest Airlines: Nurturing a Culture of Volunteerism](#)
- [Focus and Context are the Core of Built-to-Change Cultures](#)
- [Toyota Under Fire: Leadership Lessons on Turning Crisis Into Opportunity](#)

LEADING A HIGH PERFORMANCE CULTURE

Leading @ the Speed of Change has consistently been my most requested keynote, workshop, or retreat topic. But coming up fast in popularity during the last few months, are customized variations of a *Leading a High Performance Culture*. We've also been doing a lot of very **successful and exciting work with our long-term Clients on culture change**.

I am currently putting together a one hour webcast on November 4 at 1:00 PM EST (Toronto/New York time) summarizing our **key lessons learned**. **Mark your calendar and watch this space!!**

OUTSIDE IN: CUSTOMER PERCEPTIONS DEFINE SERVICE/QUALITY LEVELS

First in a four part series on [The Three Rings of Perceived Value](#).

Customer service and continuous quality improvement have always been important. **As organizations struggle to grow revenues and reduce costs in our challenging economic times, service/quality is becoming even more critical.** It's where organizations thrive, survive, or nosedive.

A previous blog post, [Our Dell Dance to the 'Bureaucratic Boogie' Highlights a Common Service Breakdown](#) highlighted the breakdown of "second and third ring service." This draws from [The Three Rings of Perceived Value](#) model we developed at The Achieve Group (now part of AchieveGlobal) and featured in my second book *[Firing on All Cylinders: The Service/Quality System for High-Powered Corporate Performance](#)*. This blog outlines how that model developed and introduces a series of three more blogs (see the articles that follow in this issue) summarizing each of The Three Rings.

It starts with the belief that service/quality is not the absence of defects as defined by management, but the presence of value as defined by customers. [The Three Rings of Perceived Value](#) uses concentric rings to show that as ever-higher levels of customer-defined support and service are added to a high quality product or service, the customer's perception of value increases. **In high service/quality organizations, all three rings are strong and growing. Perceived value is high.**

We originally used [The Three Rings model](#) to show that adding value through Third Ring enhanced service was the key to increasing customer perceived value. However, as we then helped Clients apply this approach, we ran into **two problems:**

1. **Shortcomings in the customer-perceived quality of the organization's core product or service and the quality of the support processes often subverted attempts to enhance Third Ring service;**
2. **Our narrower focus on service was not harnessing the power of the techniques within the emerging Total Quality Management/Continuous Quality Improvement movement (now evolved to Lean/Six Sigma.)**

In our search for incorporating "Quality" into our approaches **we found as many definitions of service, quality, and TQM/CQI as there are gurus, experts, consultants, and organizations striving to make improvements.** As we worked with various – sometimes conflicting – definitions we looked for a way of finding the common ground among them. We were searching for **a simple way to bring many of the service/quality improvement approaches into a common framework that allowed them to work together.**

This developmental effort led to the expansion of our system **to bring together service, quality, and our lengthy experience in the field of organization and leadership development.** Our resulting [Three Rings model](#) was used extensively by large companies like American Express and Black & Decker and dozens of other international corporations, health care institutions, and public agencies in their progress toward higher service/quality.

The next three articles below will briefly overview each of the three rings. **Use these to broaden and assess the value from the inside out that your team/department/organization adds as seen through the eyes of the customers you service or the internal teams you support**.

THE FIRST RING: MEETING BASIC PRODUCT/ SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Second in a four part series on [The Three Rings of Perceived Value](.).

The 18th century English potter, Josiah Wedgwood, once declared *"a composition for cheapness and not excellence of workmanship is the most frequent and certain cause of the rapid decay and destruction of arts and manufacturers."* That's as true today as when he built his pottery manufacturing empire. **The inner product ring is the basic, bare product, service, or core offering on its own.** This could be a piece of equipment, financial service, government program, restaurant meal, or complex technical system. Internally, it can also be a report for the boss, information for the manager in plant no. 3, training and development, or technical support. **The size of this ring depends on the level of quality the customer feels he or she is getting.** The customer appeal of that product or service depends on the extent to which it meets minimum requirements and specifications.

If an organization, department, or individual contributor's basic product doesn't meet minimum standards, then the next two concentric rings don't matter. Some organizations put lip stick on that proverbial pig by providing support services or teaching "smile training" to frontline staff when their core product or service is grossly inferior in design, performance, or cost. Airlines are classic examples. If we miss critical meetings or have vacations ruined because planes aren't on time or baggage is lost, the type of service we get after the First Ring has collapsed doesn't make a big difference.

Today, **the minimum standard that's considered acceptable in product manufacturing is much higher than it was just a few years ago**. Similarly the standards of basic service requirements such as ease of access, flexibility, and the suitability of the service are also rising. Just to stay in the game today calls for a functional basic product -- there is simply no market for products and services that don't work. However, **in a globalized world with an unprecedented supply of good products and services, minimum standards of acceptable quality are increasing exponentially.** Just keeping products or services up to swift changing minimum standards of ever more demanding customers is an increasingly tough job.

Team or departments producing basic products or services primarily for internal consumption also feel this pressure to improve. Changing requirements of external customers, coupled with growing pressures on every organization to do more with less, are radically shifting internal partners' base requirements. **Internal support groups need to keep their basic product strong and evolving just to keep up with the fast moving needs of the organization they serve.**

One of the biggest challenges to expanding the inner ring is **getting the technical experts who design and build the basic product or service to look beyond their specialty, industry standards, tradition ("we've always done it this way"), competition, or their own "I know best because, after all, I am the expert" tendencies.**

They need to understand what problem the customer is trying to solve, or what need they are trying to fill. **We have to look through the customer's glasses to determine what kind of product or service features to offer.** Then we **use the customer's yardstick to measure the product or service's quality level**. This calls for a much closer relationship with customers or internal partners to get behind the product or service and see "where the customer is coming from." High performing teams/organizations move out of the traditional "product (or service) push" approach which involves selling "things" to "customer pull" which involves finding solutions. That means **a very high degree of customer listening.**

DEFINING THE SECOND RING OF SERVICE/ QUALITY: SUPPORT THAT SATISFIES

Third in a four part series on [The Three Rings of Perceived Value](#).

Today's external customers or internal partners are looking beyond the core product or service (First Ring) to broader levels of support. The Second or Support Ring encircles a huge array of services and factors. **Basically it includes anything an organization does to make the Basic Product/Service more reliable, accessible, useable, enjoyable, convenient, dependable, accurate, or useful.** This may consist of training, web sites, parts, repair service, warranties, emergency assistance, information, status updates, user hotlines, instructional videos or manuals, recipes, partnerships… the list is endless.

With the huge growth in the quantity and quality of products and services available today, **customer expectations (and relentless competitive pressures) are dramatically expanding the amount, type, and quality of support services and activities required to just keep customer perceptions of the Second Ring static, let alone push it outward.** In the past two decades companies like IBM focused so heavily on providing software and consulting support to their "big iron" hardware that these services that were once Second Ring Support have migrated to the First Ring and now form their core business.

How many times have you had an excellent restaurant meal but vowed never to return again? **Weak -- even nonexistent -- Second and Third Rings doom many organizations and internal support teams.**

As you look at your team/organization's basic products and services in the First Ring and then assess what makes up your Second or Support Ring, **you'll probably have some difficulty deciding what the minimum requirements are and what Second Ring expectations would lead to satisfied customers**. If you took that discussion to your management team, a conflicting array of opinions would further confuse things. One way of clarifying what belongs where would be to **ask those frontline staff or team members on the serving lines who hear what customers are asking for and commenting on**. Their opinions and weighting of customer expectations have constantly been shown to be more valid than those of management.

But the obvious people to ask are your customers or internal groups you serve. And there's the power and simplicity of [The Three Rings model](#). **Ask your customers or internal partners what their minimum standards are and have them rate how you've been doing. Then do the same to find out what support they expect and how you've been doing at satisfying those expectations**. Get each

team to do the same for the external customers or internal groups they serve and to communicate the results to everyone. Do that, and you've just taken a giant step toward developing a consistent definition of service/quality in your organization.

Blurring the Lines: A Broader Definition of Service/Quality

A telecommunications company discovered that when company representatives periodically called customers, those customers perceived improvements in their service -- such as fewer dropped calls -- whether there actually were less calls dropped or not. **The line between products and services is so fine it often disappears. It's been called the servicization of products and the productization of services.**

Service/quality levels move higher when companies who once viewed quality in a narrow product or technical definition expand their focus to include both the First and Second Rings. **Broadly speaking, quality means quality of design, quality of fit and finish, quality of service, quality of information, quality of process, quality of people, quality of systems, quality of listening, quality of marketing, and quality of brand.**

Vital to Second Ring quality are organization and management systems, processes, practices, and structure. Sitting in the middle ring between the Basic Products/Services and the Enhanced Service Ring, these vital components determine what comes outside in to strengthen the Basic Products/Services and the cost and effectiveness of all support and enhanced service activities that move inside out along the service/quality chain through internal partners to external customers.

Further Reading:

- The Three Rings of Perceived Value: An Integrated Customer Focus
- Customer Service blog posts
- Customer Service articles/book excerpts

THE THIRD RING: ENHANCED SERVICE THAT DELIGHTS CUSTOMERS

Fourth in a four part series on The Three Rings of Perceived Value.

Years ago author and speaker on organizational excellence, Tom Peters, declared, *"we can no longer afford to merely satisfy the customer. To win today, you have to delight and astound your customers -- with products and services that far exceed their expectations."* That's even truer today.

The first two rings deal with things -- technology, products, services, systems, processes, structures, and so on. That's much of the high tech component of service/quality. The Third Ring deals with people. This is the high touch side of service/quality. **To push our customer's**

sense of perceived value out to the max we need a healthy balance of service/quality high tech *and* high touch.

The Third Ring moves beyond customer satisfaction to *customer delight*. It's the "wow factor" that exceeds expectations. That's what keeps customers coming back -- and raving to everyone else. The quality guru, W. Edwards Deming, once declared *"It will not suffice to have customers that are merely satisfied... profit in business comes from repeat customers, customers that boast about your product and service, and that bring friends with them."*

The Third Ring is where the large investments made in Basic Products/Services (First Ring) and supporting services (Second Ring) can multiply exponentially. Third Ring enhancements are often small monetary investments with huge pay-offs. The Third Ring is where the human touch is added. It's those intangible signs of personal care and commitment that say, **"We're pleased to serve you. We want to do whatever we can to make your relationship with us as delightful as possible."** In the first two rings we can objectively point to specifications, selection criteria, equipment, facilities, support systems, and the like to give clear, rational reasons why an organization did or didn't live up to customer requirements and expectations. The Third Ring is about feelings. It's emotional and often irrational. **At its best, the Third Ring is a series of tiny gestures and insignificant signals that make dealing with an organization a rare delight. It's a sense of warmth and attention that makes for true user friendliness.**

The Third Ring is made up of thousands of little things that either add up to a high "wow index" or that bit by bit drive customers and internal groups nuts -- a death of a thousand paper cuts. These **"moments of truth" are any time a customer or partner makes contact with your team/organization, whether by phone, electronically, letter, or in person. Each interaction forms some kind of impression.** Each day in a medium or large organization there are thousands of moments of truth. Each one is so minor it's almost insignificant. So what if the phone rings a few extra times? And does one little typo really make that much difference?

On its own, each moment of truth is pretty small stuff. Your team/organization is certainly not going to sink or soar on the basis of that one tiny event. But **each moment of truth is like a grain of sand placed on the scales of justice. Either that minute, almost weightless grain of sand goes on the side of mediocrity** ("So what else is new? You just can't get decent service these days.") **or it is placed on the side of outstanding performance** ("Incredible! What unbelievable service. They are such a delight to deal with!"). Over time, the scale will start to tip in one direction or the other. Thus are apathetic, antagonistic customers or raving, enthusiastic fans created. And **from such tiny beginnings are reputations made and brands built.**

American Express finds that one of the most sensitive issues their frontline call center staff deal with is how to tell a cardholder who has been called to the phone in the establishment he or she is using an American Express card that the purchase can't be authorized. Their customer research shows that **how the situation is handled actually has a greater effect on satisfaction than whether the customer is approved or declined for the charge**.

Who makes your organization's First and Second Ring decisions? Who decides what products, services and support your organization will offer? Who establishes the organization's systems, processes, practices, and structure? In virtually every organization it's management. Those are big dollar or overhead decisions. The bigger the decisions, the higher up they're made.

What about your moments of truth? Who decides whether to bend a rule to help out a customer? Who decides whether to answer that phone on the second ring? Who spots the error in the invoice and pulls it out for correction? Nine out of ten times frontline staff make those decisions. **Of a thousand moments of truth in a given day likely over 900 of them are managed by a staff or team member with no supervisor or manager in sight. Team members live in, control, and get their job satisfaction (or disengagement) from the Third Ring. This is their territory. They own it.**

John Sharpe, founder of The Four Seasons hotel chain summarizes the distinctive challenges of the Third Ring: *"The trouble with service delivery is that it can't be checked in advance, like a piece of crystal, or a luxury car. We can't sample it, package it, systemize it or automate service, though Lord knows a lot of managers try. It's only produced at the moment of consumption, our win-or-lose moment. That service delivery is often performed by the most junior of our employees, often the lowest-paid and presumably least-motivated."*

Further Reading:

- [Customer Service](#) blog posts
- [Customer Service](#) articles/book excerpts

THOUGHTS THAT MAKE YOU GO HMMMM... ON UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER PERCEPTIONS OF VALUE

We often hear the axiom that "perception is reality." **When it comes to assessing the service/quality levels delivered by our teams/organizations just who's perception of reality are we using?** Reinforcing this month's four-part series of blog posts on The Three Rings of Perceived Value, here are **key perspectives on using our customer perceptions of their reality with your product or service.**

> **"No two people see the external world in exactly the same way. To every separate person a thing is what he thinks it is -- in other words, not a thing, but a think."**
> - Penelope Fitzgerald, *The Gate of Angels*

> **"The starting point has to be what customers consider value. The starting point has to be the assumption -- an assumption amply proven by all our experience -- that the customer never buys what the supplier sells. What is value to the customer is always something quite different from what is value or quality to the supplier. This applies as much to a business as to a university or to a hospital... what the customer buys and considers value is never just a product. It is always a utility, that is, what a product or service does for him."**
> - Peter Drucker, *The Essential Drucker* [(click here for my book review and more excerpts)](#)

> **"Your opinion is your opinion, your perception is your perception -- do not confuse them with 'facts' or 'truth.' Wars have been fought and millions have been killed because of the inability of men to understand the idea that EVERYBODY has a different viewpoint."**
> - John Moore, *Quotations for Martial Artists*

"(Study featured in the Journal of the American Medical Association)... found that impaired communication -- rather than the actual number of mishaps -- largely predicted that a given physician would be sued for malpractice. By contrast, doctors whose patients felt more rapport sued them less. These doctors did simple things that helped: they told patients what to expect from their visit or treatment, engaged in small talk, touched them reassuringly, sat down with them, and laughed with them -- humor builds rapport quickly and powerfully. What's more, they made sure patients understood their comments, asked for their opinions, cleared up all their questions, and encouraged them to talk. In short, they showed an interest in the person, not just in the diagnosis."
- Daniel Goleman, *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships*

Sign in a company cafeteria – "**Warning: Customers are perishable."**

"...Bain & Co. survey reveals just how commonly companies misread the market. Surveying 362 firms, the company found that 80% believed they delivered a 'superior experience' to their customers. But when we asked customers about their own perceptions, we found that they rated only 8% of companies as truly delivering a superior experience. Clearly, it's easy for leading companies to assume they're keeping customers happy; it's quite another thing to achieve that kind of customer devotion. So what sets the elite 8% apart? They take a distinctively broad view of the customer experience."
- James Allen, Frederick F. Reichheld, and Barney Hamilton, "Tuning Into the Voice of Your Customer"

"British food researchers who served up exactly the same chicken dish in 10 different places found that the better the ambiance, the better diners said the food tasted... a meal of chicken a la king, which was given low marks in a residential home for the aged and a boarding school, got top marks when it was served up at a four-star restaurant, although it had been made from the same ingredients, cooked in the same kitchen, stored in the same plastic bag and accompanied by the same Uncle Ben's rice. 'The results show that in many cases the environment is actually far more important than the food,' said Professor John Edwards of Bournemouth University, who led the study."
- Michael Kesterton, "Ambiance matters," *The Globe & Mail*

CLIENT NEWSLETTER CHOCKED FULL OF PRACTICAL LEADERSHIP TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

Last November I began delivering a series of half-day leadership development workshops (part of their ongoing "management forums" series) for City of Guelph supervisors and managers. This is a rare treat to work with a group of learning leaders just 30 minutes from my home in Kitchener, Ontario. Given our close proximity, we pulled out the most relevant components of our two to three-day *Leading @ the Speed of Change* workshop

and spaced them over a series of morning sessions. After building a base with our Lead, Follow, Wallow model and The High-Performance Balance, we systematically focused the remaining sessions around the Timeless Leadership Principles from *The Leader's Digest*.

To summarize our previous workshops and to bridge over the summer vacation period until our next September session, the City's Organization Development Specialists Aidan Prince and Kerry Pletch put together an excellent issue of their regular newsletter (I'll admit to some bias here)! They've agreed to share it with you. The hyperlinks in the newsletter don't work because they are part of the City of Guelph's internal Intranet. Click here to access the 8-page summer issue of *Leadership Link*.

If you're not familiar with my work around *Moose on the Table* (referenced in the newsletter) you can read an overview of the concept at Authentic Communication: Dealing with the Moose-on-the-Table.

Use Aidan and Kerry's summaries of **key leadership points, practical tips, and checklists** to keep you growing along your leadership journey!

TWEET READING: RECOMMENDED ONLINE RESOURCES

This section summarizes last month's LinkedIn Updates and Twitter Tweets sent about online articles or blog posts that I've flagged as **worth reading**. These are usually posted on weekends when I am doing much of my reading for research, learning, or leisure.

My original tweet commenting on the article precedes each title and descriptor from the original source:

More powerful evidence that strong and positive leadership creates a highly satisfied and engaged workforce that produces peak performance.

The Happiness Dividend – Shawn Achor
http://blogs.hbr.org
"A decade of research proves that happiness raises nearly every business and educational outcome: raising sales by 37%, productivity by 31%, and accuracy on tasks by 19%, as well as a myriad of health and quality of life improvements."

Many managers have trouble shifting from doing and micromanaging work to ensuring the right work is getting done by strong independent teams.

Why bosses don't need to know all the answers - By Linda A. Hill and Kent Lineback - *Fortune* Management
http://blogs.hbr.org
"As a boss, you must be knowledgeable and bright, but demonstrating expertise in your field is no longer your most critical professional asset."

An excellent summary of vital leadership keys for involving and engaging -- getting what you want by helping others get what they want.

[The 7 Secrets of Inspiring Leaders](#) - Carmine Gallo
http://blogs.forbes.com
"It is up to you as leader to satisfy what Emerson called a person's "chief want:" someone who will inspire us to be what we know we can be."

Seven excellent questions as contemplation points for the pausing and reflecting so vital -- and rare -- to personal leadership development.

[Looking in the Mirror: Questions Every Leader Must Ask](#) **—
HBS Working Knowledge**
http://hbswk.hbs.edu
"Most leaders spend a lot of their time looking for answers. Very often, they may feel isolated and alone. I want to help them refocus their attention on framing and then discussing the key questions that will help them regroup, mobilize their team…"

Click "Global Report" and "Executive Summary" for succinct data and potential checklists on personal/organizational leadership development.

[Global Leadership Forecast 2011: Time for a Leadership Revolution!](#)
http://www.ddiworld.com
"We need to radically rethink the way we develop leaders, the way we make promotion and selection decisions, and the very role of leadership itself."

THE LEADER'S DIGEST NOW AVAILABLE IN FRENCH, PORTUGUESE, AND SPANISH

You can now purchase *The Leader's Digest* in French, Portuguese, and Spanish through our [web site](#), or from your favorite bookseller:

READ *THE LEADER LETTER* IN TWICE WEEKLY INSTALLMENTS

Last month an overwhelmed reader with an overflowing in-box cancelled his subscription to *The Leader Letter* because he said it was too long. I do try to provide much more value than subscribers are paying for! He didn't realize that **items in each month's issue of *The Leader Letter* are first published in my twice weekly blog during the previous month.** When he learned this, he promptly signed up at http://www.jimclemmer.com/blog/ (enter your e-mail address in the upper left corner box under "Sign up for E-mail Blog Notification").

If you read each blog post (or issue of *The Leader Letter*) as it's published **over twelve months you'll have read the equivalent of one of my books**. And you'll pick up a few practical leadership tips that help you use time more strategically and tame your E-Beast!

FEEDBACK AND FOLLOW-UP

I am always delighted to hear from readers of *The Leader Letter* with feedback, reflections, suggestions, or differing points of view. Nobody is ever identified in *The Leader Letter* without their permission. I am also happy to explore customized, in-house adaptations of any of my material for your team or organization. Drop me an e-mail at Jim.Clemmer@Clemmer.net or connect with me on LinkedIn, Twitter, FaceBook, or my blog!

Keep learning, laughing, loving, and leading - **living life just for the L of it!!**

Jim

Please post or forward this newsletter to colleagues, Clients, or associates you think might be interested — or on a 'need-to-grow' basis. If you received this newsletter from someone else, and would like to subscribe, click on the link below:

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