

By Patrick Smid, Reprinted with Permission

Discovering The Leader Within

A hush falls on an audience when either Ed Oakley or Doug Krug takes the stage.

The people in the audience are veterans of organizational change. They've fought hard to implement TQM, re-engineering, team building, empowerment or other programs of organizational renewal. But despite their best efforts, the programs have fallen short of intended goals and objectives. Something was missing.

How Does a Manager Become a Leader?

Enlightened Leadership facilitators, like Oakley and Krug, have created something akin to a battery. To use their analogy...

It's 5:50 PM as you turn the key, start your car and begin your evening commute.

Suddenly a news flash...

A severe thunderstorm is barreling in your direction.

According to the report it's almost certain that power and phone service will be disrupted. So, you tear across town to your local hardware store to stock up on storm supplies. Then you head home to bunker down.

You get home 5 minutes before the storm hits hard and 11 minutes before you lose all electricity.

You fumble feverishly in the dark. Finally you find your newly purchased Flashlight. You rip it out of the "impossible-to-open" plastic packaging. A split second after you turn it on you realize - "in your haste" - you forgot to read the fine print...

Batteries not included.

Are you ready for the storms in your organization?

Enlightened Leadership is the battery that energizes lagging initiatives, quickly turns around failing projects, and ensures the success of key strategies.

Many of the people are here today because their flashlights need new batteries.

Oakley and Krug believe there is a leader within each of us, even though some individuals find it difficult to find that side of themselves. Like painters working on a great public mural, these master facilitators illustrate how individuals align their attitudes with goals and objectives, accepting responsibility for success and accountability for results.

As the mural materializes, session participants realize the dramatic impact even subtle colors and brush-strokes have on the overall picture. Art is the result of many small details which may seem insignificant if viewed separately. The same is true for a leader's words and actions in the workplace.

"What you do shouts so loudly in my ear, I can't hear what you say."

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Session participants develop an appreciation for the importance of every little thing they do and say in creating an effective work environment. They realize that a leader is constantly on stage. Like a painter with a passion for detail, a leader nurtures acute self-awareness to monitor both intent to do the right thing and commitment to do things right.

During a session, Enlightened Leadership facilitators produce a shift in participants' attitudes that creates a bond of trust between all of them. Using "The Framework for Change" and modeling the session experience, emerging leaders inspire the same shift in their own associates, customers and peers. The result is a Change-friendly(r) workplace where the bond of trust enables employees to truly share ownership of renewal programs such as TQM, re-engineering and empowerment.

"In the future, organizations will require levels of expertise beyond anything they've known in the past" Krug says. "The good news is that the expertise already exists within an organization's people. Individuals just need to be awakened to it."

Enlightened Leadership facilitators aren't magicians, but they do seem to create a kind of magic in their sessions that helps participants become better leaders. As participants transform themselves into the change-masters their organizations so desperately need, they develop a magic of their own to help associates discover that they also have a leader within. This on-going process is the work, the reward, and the power of Enlightened Leadership.

They Wrote the Book on Leadership

Oakley and Krug documented these ideas in their book, "Enlightened Leadership: Getting to the Heart of Change". Released nationally by Simon & Schuster in August 1993, the book's initial printing received praise from many business leaders and has frequently been the best selling business book in Denver.

Og Mandino, author of "The Greatest Salesman in the World" and known as the world's best selling personal growth writer, sums up the value of Oakley and Krug's work with this endorsement: "To be a great leader in the years to come, one must learn and apply the powerful principles explained in this great book...or perish."

Some of the organizations that have benefited from Enlightened Leadership services include: U.S. West, Unisys, GTE, Hewlett Packard, various Federal government agencies, Texaco and the Colorado State Patrol.

Referring to the retreat facilitated by Oakley and Krug, board member and CEO/Chairman of Norwest Banks/Denver, David Bailey said: "I've been through lots and lots of retreats. This was, by far and away, the best I have ever experienced."

Prepared to Re-Build

"Leadership is in every one of us," Oakley says at the beginning of each session. While at this point in the session some participants may not fully understand this statement, by the end of the session most are ready to apply "The Framework for Change" within their own organizations.

The trademark results of an Enlightened Leadership session are: a new level of confidence, a renewed sense of competence, and a clarity about how what they've learned. These can produce amazing results.