

Turning West for News

A Publication for Friends and Clients of M. H. West & Co., Inc.

November 1996

Message from the President

During October 31 through November 7, my thoughts automatically turn to the subject of leadership. I am certain that much of the impetus for this comes from the local, state and national elections that take place and the extensive array of leadership styles and credentials that are displayed by the men and women who are courageous enough to run for public office.

This year the Coalition of 100 Black Women, Commonwealth Chapter, one of two Richmond chapters of this national organization also stimulated my thinking about leadership through the superb program that it sponsored on November 1 called "The Color of Success: African-American Men of Distinction". I also felt very privileged and honored that I was asked to present four of the twelve honorees.

Among the greats were a former governor, a congressman, a legislator, several business owners, a physician, an attorney, a director of employment and training for a Fortune 500 company and a newspaper publisher. All the honorees further inspired and reinforced my pursuit of excellence, my efforts to be the best that I am no matter what that may be, and to shoot for the moon because I will be among the stars trying to get there.

Clearly, leaders help us stand a little taller, work a little harder and become a little stronger. Leaders have built their success on qualities such as hard work, perseverance, being prepared, sacrifice, thinking innovatively and strategically, setting goals, being resourceful, exercising good judgement, and reading wisdom into rejection and denial.

Although I did not inquire, I believe there must have been times when the honorees felt like quitting. I am delighted that they did not. Perhaps they did not because they realized that:

"Success is failure turned inside out. The silver tints of the clouds of doubt. You can never tell how close you are because it may be near when it seems so far. So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit. It's when things seem the worst that You Must Not Quit."

(Excerpt from a poem called "Don't Quit" - Author Unknown)

Being a leader has its challenges. Everyone has an important role to play in helping our current and future leaders to succeed. We must help to inspire them as they inspire us. We must look over our leaders and not to overlook them. We must work with them to bring about the changes that promote new opportunities, new hope and new horizons.

In leadership, we all have a role to play. So who are you today? Are you the leader or are you the follower? *Leadership is built on the presence of both.*

LEADERSHIP VALUES

- **Leadership by example** - A leader can expect no more from people than that which he or she personally is willing to contribute.
- **Leadership responsibilities and prerogatives** - The higher the position, the greater the responsibilities of the leader.
- **Leadership and change** - The leader accepts responsibility for accomplishing concrete results in a changing environment.
- **Leadership and decision making** - Leaders are responsible for decisions that are based on uncertain and imperfect information.

- **Leaders and organizational culture** - The leader depends upon the assistance of supportive professional people whose shared values contribute to organizational effectiveness.
- **Leadership and people** - A leader achieves results through the actions of others and therefore is foremost concerned with managing people effectively.
- **Leadership and trust** - The leader believes that people are trustworthy and that they possess the desire to perform and contribute.
- **Leadership and control** - The leader attempts to keep controls to an absolute minimum.
- **Leadership and delegation** - The leader realizes that organizational performance improves with delegation of authority to the lowest possible level.
- **Leadership and confrontation** - The leader readily uses constructive confrontation as a technique to improve performance.

THINKING OUT OF THE BOX

This is a new section of "Turning West for News". In building excellence in individuals and organizations, one of the cornerstones of M. H. West & Co., Inc., it is necessary for either the firm or our clients to think outside of the box from time to time. This helps to overcome a challenge or to take advantage of an opportunity. The following articles prepared by Dr. John Rothermel of M. H. West & Co., Inc. demonstrate this. The first article focuses on regulations while the second article deals with workforce development. Both of these areas encompass services provided frequently by M. H. West & Co., Inc. to clients.

"The Ivy Gardner"

Have you ever thought of the similarity between the growth of regulations and the growth of ivy in your backyard?

You have a bare spot in a shady portion of your garden. You plant a few sprigs of ivy in the spot, water it and nurse it carefully, and after a couple of years, it has covered the spot.

Unwatched, in another year it has covered twice as much space, which is all right. It looks better than what was there before.

Untended, in another year it has expanded to the edges of the garden and into the lawn. Now you have to prune it.

If you do not prune within another year it will be up in the trees and well out onto the lawn and ready to go other places it is not wanted.

Regulations can be much like ivy. They are very necessary when they are instituted. Simple and straightforward, they cover a bare patch. Within a couple years, modest improvements become necessary.

But, then, another few years pass, and the newest version of the regulations have become long and intricate. And finally, comes the day when the regulations are more than double the originals and are openly invading the provinces of other programs' regulations. **Understanding regulations that affect your business is a critical element that affects your performance and the bottom line.**

"The Sturdy Ship"

Managing an organization today is a little bit like being the captain of a beautiful tall masted sailing ship all set to clear port. The high rigging is in place, the ship is newly painted, the decks are clean, the holds are full of precious goods and the weather report is for clear sailing. Whereupon the captain looks around for the crew and discovers that some have disappeared, others are thinking about it, some deck hands are too new to know their jobs, some able seamen are no longer able, and the cooks are sleeping in the galley. Delayed departure becomes inevitable.

The problem for many organizations today and, increasingly, tomorrow is to find and retain a crew-able, skilled, and enthusiastic work force to do the jobs that move a sophisticated ship. *Dependable work forces like a sturdy ship must be carefully built.*

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

An energized organization has vision, mission and values; employees have motivation, are competent and have influence.

Source: John Burns

Effective leaders...do not delegate the one thing that only they can do with excellence, the one thing that will make a difference, the one thing that will set standards, the one thing they want to be remembered for. They just do it.

Source: Peter Drucker

By the year 2025 the human population of the planet will reach 8.3 billion, a 50% increase on the current level. Two thirds of these people are expected to be living in urban areas.

Source: Joint Report by the World Bank, UN, and World

"The average American is exposed to more than 600 advertising messages a day."

Source: Richmond Ventures

Beginning January 1, 1996, one American will turn 50 every 7.5 seconds for the next 10 years.

There are 18 doctors in U.S. called Dr. Doctor, and one called Dr. Surgeon. There is also a dermatologist named Dr. Rash, a psychiatrist called Dr. Couch and an anesthesiologist named Dr. Gass.

Source: Journal of the American Medical Association

As of September 1, 1996, approximately 4.5 million Medicare beneficiaries were enrolled in managed care plans, accounting for 12 percent of the total Medicare population. That represents an 87 percent increase in managed care enrollment since 1993.

Source: DHHS

Almost 16 million Americans suffer from diabetes, putting them at an increased risk of developing complications which are often debilitating and/or life-threatening. An estimated 6 million are unaware that they have the disease. Direct and indirect costs of diabetes total more than \$92 billion each year; diabetes accounts for 27% of Medicare costs, or \$30 billion annually. *Check with your doctor today to make sure that you do not have diabetes.*

Source: DHHS

Broccoli is America's favorite vegetable, at least according to a new survey. Corn comes in a close second. America's least favorite vegetable? Brussel Sprouts.

Source: Land O Lakes' Butter Company

WORDS OF WISDOM

Lose an hour in the morning and you will be all day hunting for it.

One can live in the shadow of an idea without grasping it.

What is now proved was once only imagined.

Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.
