

From the Top

It's September. Along with a handful of expensive birthdays in my world (think wife AND daughter, one day apart...), it also marks the ending of Q3 2013. The year isn't done yet, but the fat lady is in rehearsal...

Start bringing a dose of reality to your 2013 plans. Abandon quickly those you are reasonably certain have decreased in priority or emphasis—they consume mental bandwidth better spent on those things you are actually pursuing or trying to achieve.

If I can help with the coaching, leadership development, compensation planning, or strategy parts of your now-high-speed efforts, you know how to reach me.

Save the dates!

Thursday, November 18th is **Foundations of Successful Leadership**, the kickoff session for our *Pathways to Leadership* 6-session program. This is the same high-level facilitation as my in-house engagements (without the homogeneity of the same group/company), and open to the public. 8:00am until noon in The Woodlands (venue announced soon). There will be a participant fee, but I'll throw in breakfast to make it a deal. More details coming...

On Stage...!

This month's video: *Executive Consulting* (<http://youtu.be/qvhoANmsilY>), I do a significant amount of individual coaching today. The best way I can describe "what makes me different," is that I consider the process much more than "Executive Coaching." It's closer to "Executive Consulting." If you need a life-coaching-semi-therapy "Dr. Phil," I'm probably not it. If you want added success in your leadership role—in both behaviors and decisions—give me a call.

Know thyself; our *first* awareness must be *self*-awareness. Click here to take and receive a **complimentary Personality Assessment** (<http://360solutions.us/cp0.aspx?id=96&cid=169>). If you took it before and didn't receive the results, we've "fixed the glitch," so take a few minutes and try again.

He speaks... (apparently I have a message that resonates with some... who knew??)

I recently spoke to a senior staff on **Emotional Intelligence**. As leaders, I believe Emotional Intelligence has become a key focus. The ability to succeed with relationships, create employee engagement, and build high-performing bonds with others in the workplace is at the core of these efforts, and most can certainly see the advantage such results can bring.



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You can't get there without a plan--HR Planning meets business success

(<http://annual.shrm.org/sessionplanner/session/4121>) I recently presented this as a preconference afternoon workshop at SHRM 2013 in Chicago on June 15. Participant feedback included:

- Kevin did a great job of taking complex subject matter and breaking it down into simple/uncomplicated terms.
- Kevin gave me some really solid steps I could take back to my work and present with the development of a business plan for my business.
- Excellent presentation. Exactly what I needed. Made me think.
- Like Kevin's focus on simplicity and practicality. Minimum on "theory."



You can visit my Speaker's Page (<http://triangleperformance.com/kevin-speaks>), and see some video comments from participants (<http://youtu.be/-fakEHRuD9U>).

In the News!



My Houston Business Journal feature covering my firm (and a large, multi-year client) for an article on team-centric executive development. (<http://triangleperformance.com/publications/>)



Fortune, Fortune Online's information website, recently quoted in article "Boom or Bust? Taking the brutality out of brutal honesty"

(<http://management.fortune.cnn.com/2013/06/18/taking-the-brutality-out-of-brutal-honesty/>)

I continue to present on various topic, one in particular:

Leadership is Easy... until it isn't.

Successful leadership in challenging times...

(www.triangleperformance.com/kevinspeaks/leading_is_easy.pdf).

If you'd prefer another topic for your event, let me know (and give me enough time to make something up to impress you--you won't be disappointed).

If you have a corporate, trade, or association event, I'd certainly enjoy speaking to your group. You can see more information regarding speaking topics and details on my website (<http://triangleperformance.com/kevin-speaks>).

Further, feel free to download and read a few articles that may be relevant:

C-Level leadership is, by definition, strategic

(<http://executiveimprovement.com/kevin-berchermann/c-level-leadership-is-by-definition-strategic>),

The difference between managers and leaders--does anyone even care?

(<http://leader-development.net/kevin-berchermann/the-difference-between-a-manager-and-a-leader-and-more-importantly-does-anyone-really-care>), and

Employee engagement--measure it or forget it

(<http://humancapitalresource.net/kevin-berchermann/employee-engagement-measure-it-or-forget-it-2>)

Have you visited my website recently? *Check back often*, as I update content each week. **If you would like me to address a specific topic, challenge, or event, email and tell me.** I'll see what I can do (your chances are good; surprisingly, I have opinions on most everything--that's a shocker).

Are you social? Like me on Facebook

(<https://www.facebook.com/TrianglePerformance>), follow me on Twitter

(@TriangleKB), or connect with me on LinkedIn

(<http://www.linkedin.com/in/berchermann>).



If you'd like to know how I can assist you, your organization, or a colleague of yours, please fill out this form (<http://triangleperformance.com/contact/>) and I'll send you some specific information, articles, engagement results, and so forth.

As always, I hope this finds you well, personally and professionally; please give me a call if I can ever help in any way, and **feel free to forward this to anyone you feel may be interested.** (Really!) *I appreciate your referrals.*

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K.B.' with a stylized flourish.

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Strategy & Leadership

Talent Management

-- Align it with business goals

Talent management came into focus in the late 1990's, but only in the past few years has it become highly formalized. If you're seeking high performance, it just makes sense to plan for and create strategies for developing talent. There's an obvious link between leadership and organizational effectiveness, so if you really believe you'll succeed, why aren't you planning?

Business as usual just isn't enough...

Your organization puts the time in, you spend effort and money on charting a viable SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). Flip charts and laptops are everywhere, and McKinsey invoices are giving you heartburn.

You have finally determined that you have a great grasp on reality in your company and industry. A few of your best minds have put their heads together and created a future that Orson Welles would be proud of—one that is actually visionary, and takes real data and information into account.

You trend financials and benchmark with other, equally astute and successful companies and industries. In the end, you bless it, print it, bind it, and distribute it.

If you are in the top 5 percent of firms, you're most likely even comfortable creating a mission that supports it and an execution plan that appears to match that incredible vision.

Finally, you begin working your plan.

Despite your efforts, something isn't quite right. Six months later, sitting around the same conference table in those same, familiar chairs, you lament to a group of like-minded, equally talented executives: "We're doing it guys, we're kicking butt. Now, if only we had the management talent, we could really make this work."

Whaaat??

Did you not believe your research, SWOT, or strategy? Did you feel uncomfortable in your comparison benchmarks? Did you not really trust that \$200K McKinsey consultant's input?

Why on earth would we spend the effort required to create viable strategy and subsequent plans for product, service, and marketing results, and not spend that same effort analyzing, identifying, and creating leadership talent we will need when we get there?

Talent management simply must be an integral part of business strategy.

Keep in mind, Human Resources is not Talent Management. Nevertheless, we still need to make the same effort in identifying the supporting talent management strategy. That means conducting SWOT analysis, current state identification, desired outcomes and competitive benchmarks. And there are two reasons why.

First, to make sure we have the horsepower to carry out those grandiose plans and execution items toward our vision, and second, in case we actually achieve our results.

Don't get caught unprepared. Spend the same effort ensuring you have the leadership and management talent available, both sourced and developed, when launching any viable business strategy and execution effort.

You can't get there without it- but then, you already knew that.

Musings

Leadership is Easy

-- *Why do we make it so hard?*

People – clients, colleagues, even family – are forever telling me something like, "Kevin, you don't understand; it's just not that simple."

To that, my typical reply is "balderdash." It usually is that simple. A story...

I recently played golf at Champions Golf Club in Houston. No, I won't share my score here in this post. Great course, owned by golfing legend Jackie Burke, winner of 16 PGA events in the 1950's, including the Masters, the PGA, and two very lop-sided Ryder Cup victories. He was Hal Sutton's assistant coach for the 2004 Ryder Cup.

Anyway... I was in the locker room afterward, having a drink with my host, when Jackie comes in. Now, my host has been a member there for over 25 years, so they know each other quite well. Jackie sat down at our table and we had a chat.

During that conversation, Jackie mentioned that he had attended a small, Catholic college in the northeast, and during a business class, his regular professor was out ill, so they had a substitute professor lecturing one day. This guy told the class that he wasn't nearly as smart as the regular professor, and in fact, had only one lesson he could teach them.

There were chalkboards on either side of the classroom; this professor went to one of them and wrote "50." He walked to the other one and wrote "51." Then he asked this class, "Why are these numbers significant to you as business leaders?"

The class dove in. Some said it had to do with market indicators; others that it was the ages of prominent CEOs or other chieftains. They talked, discussed, argued, and haggled for almost an hour.

Finally, this professor stopped them, and said: "It's simple," he explained. Walking over to the chalkboard with the 50, he pointed to it and said, "If you make this..." then walking over to and pointing at the 51, he concluded "...don't spend this."

I asked Jackie, why is that such a hard lesson? He looked at me and said, "Kevin, we complicate things unnecessarily."

If you make this (50), don't spend this (51). Zero-based budgeting before it was a fad.

I don't know how you can make a business leadership lesson any simpler. Whether you like/dislike, agree/disagree with the veracity of the lesson, know that nearly all leadership lessons are this simple. We have to go out of our way to make them hard, and generally when there's no need.

Lessons from Leadership 101:

Simple: Treat people right. And no, we don't need a Wikipedia definition of "right."

Simple: Do what you say you'll do. No excuses, no justifications.

Simple: Accept—**embrace**—personal accountability

Simple: Apologize when wrong. And no lengthy "but" qualifications, either.

The list goes on. This stuff just isn't all that hard.

KISS. "Keep it simple." And I won't even add the "stupid" to the end.

But that's just me...

(Thanks for the conversation, Jackie. And many thanks, Roy, for the invite.)