Molly’s Letter

Many things need to change in the workplace in order to more fully and effectively support women who wish to advance in their careers. Women need work environments that afford them challenging assignments, provide better work/life balance, and offer more engaged bosses and colleagues. One important aspect that needs to change is the manner in which women encourage other women. I have sadly found that over the years, women are not always as supportive of each other as they should be.

Recently, a client of mine had several encounters with a particularly difficult female colleague, and she is not alone. An astonishing 54 million Americans, according to the Workplace Bullying Institute, have direct experience with being bullied. The Workplace Bullying Institute defines bullying as verbal abuse; conduct that is threatening, humiliating or intimidating; work interference, sabotage, which prevents work from getting done; and exploitation of known vulnerabilities. According to their surveys in 2007 and 2010, almost 40% of all bullies in the workplace are women. In addition, the targets of female bullies are women 80% of the time! I can’t tell you how disheartened I am by this news and continue to be frustrated when I hear stories such as this. If women don’t champion, encourage and build up other women—where does that leave us?

(Continued pg. 3)

Women Leaders Globally: A Rollercoaster of Highs and Lows

Women’s progress across the global landscape has much to celebrate. Over the past several decades, women in many countries have begun to unlock the potential they can bring to various industries, fields, and organizations not typically receptive to women’s leadership and skills in the past. France, for instance, implemented legislation in January 2010 mandating French boards be at least 20% female within three years (2013) and 40% female within six years (2016). In anticipation of this law, 9 out of 10 French companies now have at least one woman on their board. Most notably however, almost a third of all French firms have at least three female directors—a number that has been found to constitute a critical mass for optimal communications between the genders in meetings, allowing companies to better leverage the leadership, skills, and talent of women (Catalyst, 2012; gmiratings.com, 2012).

Similarly, Australia’s female leadership on boards has been on the rise as they increased their female directors over the last year by 3.5%, which is even more significant considering there is no law in Australia compelling companies to place women in top leadership positions. A fascinating program established at the Australian Institute of Company Directors, however, is credited with contributing to the increase in women’s board leadership. This two-year-old mentoring program matches seasoned directors and board chairs with up-and-coming, high-potential women leaders to help guide them on their way up the corporate ladder. In addition, Norway has continued to lead the pack in terms of female directors for several years with a whopping 36.3% female director leadership on boards across the country. Sweden and Finland are tied for second, coming in with female board directors at 26.4%, driven by government sponsored gender equality policies.

But hold the applause—not all countries have quite so much good news to share. In fact, overall, the strides women are making globally are far from at parity with men’s achievements in the upper echelons of organizations across the world. Germany, despite having been under the jurisdiction of the first female chancellor for nearly six years, has shown a mixed report in terms of women’s leadership—some growth, but not nearly enough. Female representation on key board committees and in chair positions in Germany is well below average for the industrialized world as a whole (gmiratings.com, 2012). Furthermore, Japan’s lack of gender diversity on boards is downright shocking, lagging at a lousy 1.1% female directorship on boards—a statistic virtually unchanged since 2009. Only 11% of companies in Japan have a female on their board, and none have three or more! (Continued pg. 3)
Be Incompressible
by Linda Kane, Founder, LKW Solutions, linda@lkwsolutions.com, guest author

As leaders in our organizations, we know the value of being able to bounce back, to be resilient. Management changes course. Just when we get comfortable in our role, we’re asked to take on a new position or that big deal falls through. So what do we do now to help us persevere through the unexpected twists and turns of our careers? Be incompressible.

Incompressible leaders are spirited, flexible and strong at the core of their being. Incompressible leaders are fit in body and use the resulting energy to strengthen their mind and spirit. It can be challenging to fit regular exercise into your daily schedule but the benefits of facing each day in your peak physical condition are invaluable. As Robin Sharma, a best-selling author and leadership guru, has written, “You can’t do great things at work if you don’t feel good.”

Here are a few tips for becoming an incompressible leader through your fitness journey.

• **Incompressible leaders are spirited.** Regular cardiorespiratory exercise reduces stress levels and can leave you feeling more energized, so make this a priority in your day. Block out time in your schedule and commit to that meeting with yourself as you would any other meeting. If you can’t squeeze a long cardio session into your day, keep active throughout the day by walking to a meeting instead of taking a taxi or taking the stairs whenever possible, for example. According to the American Council on Exercise, “research shows that breaking up your workout into very short segments throughout the day is almost as effective as one 30 to 45 minute segment.” Results-oriented? E-pedometers and mobile apps can track your every step and even suggest popular running routes for business travelers. Review your monthly results and you’ll be amazed at how far you’ve come.

• **Incompressible leaders are flexible.** Rounded shoulders and a forward-titled head is one of the most common postural and muscular imbalances that personal trainers work with today due to the extensive amount of time professionals spend sedentary in front of their computers. Work to counter this challenge by strengthening your trapezius muscles and opening the front side of your body through stretching your pectoral and latissimus muscles. Try a yoga class or incorporate a yoga series into your regular workout. You can even find illustrations online if you can’t meet with a yoga instructor. Not only will you be more flexible, opening the front of your body can make you feel like you breathe easier and who doesn’t want to breathe easy at work?

• **Incompressible leaders are strong at the core of their being.** Your core is at the heart of it all, literally and figuratively. Being the home for your life-giving organs, a healthy and strong core is essential for functioning at exceptional levels. Attempt to incorporate core exercises throughout your workout routine, not just through a set of sit-ups at the end. Explore standard exercises, such as standing bicep curls, while standing on one leg and pulling your stomach towards your spine. (Make sure to keep breathing). Overtime, with these modifications, your core will transform into a strong foundation for you in all aspects of life.

As we climb our professional mountains, through the peaks, valleys and hairpin turns, give yourself your best shot at reaching your peak by staying active. Be incompressible.
That brings us to the U.S. Yes, there is reason to feel proud—that we’ve hurdled some important barriers along the way—but, there is also reason to wonder why women’s prevalence in top leadership roles moves at a snail pace, despite all the incredible advantages women bring to the table. The number of women on U.S. boards is now at 12.6%, which has increased only marginally from 2009-2011, about 0.5%. Fortunately, over 70% of U.S. boards have at least one female director, but only 2% of board chair seats are held by women. In addition, recent studies have confirmed that women still only earn 77% of what men earn, and that gap is much larger in various parts of the country. In addition, U.S. government is an area in which women fair particularly poorly. Of the 100 available Senate seats, women hold only 17. Similarly unimpressive, women occupy just 16.5% of the seats in the House of Representatives.

All things considered, the world is a much better place for women then it was 100, 50, even 20 years ago. Women have begun to demand higher pay, better work/life balance, and in the U.S, women are now earning more college degrees then men and beginning to explore fields traditionally underrepresented by women like the STEM fields—science, technology, engineering and mathematics—in which women are now earning 40% of these bachelor’s degrees. On the other hand, we’ve got a very long road to go. The importance of women was poignantly summarized recently by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, “When we liberate the economic potential of women, we elevate the economic performance of communities, nations, and the world,” she said. “There is a stimulative and ripple effect that kicks in when women have greater access to jobs and the economic lives of our countries: Greater political stability. Fewer military conflicts. More food. More educational opportunity for children. By harnessing the economic potential of all women, we boost opportunity for all people.”

We, at The Leader’s Edge/Leaders By Design, remain committed to fighting for the advancement of women to all levels of organizations in the U.S. and around the world. Educating male leaders on how the contributions of women can impact higher ROI, add more stability within organizations, and provide richer, more diverse business outcomes is a key component to women’s advancement. In addition, women are constantly held to a higher standard and must ask for promotions they feel they deserve, speak up in conversations that matter, seek out challenging positions that will garner further opportunities, and identify with sponsors who will advocate for them. Leaving the workforce is not the answer—as hard as the road to the top may be. Women have incredible talent, skills, and knowledge to add to the world we live in today. Staying the course can only more positively impact the next generation of women leaders rising up the ranks.

When one woman takes it upon herself to bring down other women, not only does she topple the spirit and fortitude of her victims, but she leaves an impression about women in general—a very unbecoming one. On the other hand, when one woman advances into a more senior leadership role, it is a “win” for all women.

Female leaders now hold over 51% of all management positions, but only 7.5% are top earners in the biggest companies across the US! Do we really need to add more baggage to our already too busy, too stressful, too all-consuming work lives? I don’t think so! There is no patience for females not supporting females in the workplace. Women already have enough on their plates—they do not need criticism from other females they interact with professionally.

One way to begin to address this issue in your organization is to talk about it. You can form a women’s initiative to begin the educative process of making men and women aware of what women need to succeed. Another way is to gather all the women working on a team together to acknowledge that you are a group and that you are all dealing with the same stereotypes and micro-inequities and discuss ways to counteract them. Another route might be to bring in an outside speaker or consultant to address the issue with your department, division, or company, getting objective advice and counsel from an outside person who is removed from the situation. Talking about creating a supportive environment is the first step. Taking the time to be introspective about your own feelings about other women is also an important step. Reflect upon your own leadership patterns—are you a good boss to other women? Are you more critical of the women you work with then the men? Do you hold women to a higher standard? The more supportive we can be of one another, the better kind of environment we create for ourselves, our colleagues, and the workday becomes much more productive and enjoyable. As Madeleine Albright once said, “There’s a special place in hell for women who don’t help other women.”

Molly's Letter (Continued)
Cultivating Leadership: Nila Betof, Chief Operating Officer, On What Makes a Good Leader

Cultivating leadership is a continuous process. It draws from experiences in the classroom, at home, and in the workplace. Nila Betof, Ph.D., Chief Operating Officer at The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design, has an extensive resume of leadership roles that have bolstered her transition up the corporate ladder. From her days as a student to her tenure as a female leader, Nila has adopted a leadership style based on straightforward, strategic decision-making. She recently sat down to discuss the leadership qualities she values in both herself and in others.

Q: What experiences have factored into your own leadership?

Betof: I have a liberal arts undergraduate degree from Temple University. I graduated early and was accepted at the University of Pennsylvania for my master’s degree. Education was always very important in my family, and instinctively, I knew I wasn’t going to get to do the kind of work I wanted to do without going to graduate school. I really wanted to have the skills and competencies to work in the fields I wanted to work in.

My experiences breaking the “family model” shaped a bit of my own rebelliousness. If somebody said, ‘well, you couldn’t do this,’ I wanted to prove you could. That kind of challenge showed up a lot of times in my career. It allowed me to take some risks that maybe under some other circumstances I might not have been able to take. For example, I had a chance to do a very risky executive rotation in strategic planning for a chairman of a company I was working with, and I knew that it was a high risk opportunity in the sense that we had just been acquired by another company, so it wasn’t exactly the most stable time to do it and clearly, out of my area of expertise. I decided to go for it and do it any way. (Continued pg. 5)

An Insider’s Perspective: The Coachable Leader
by Monica Warner

I had the pleasure of collaborating with Peter Dean on his newest book, The Coachable Leader, by providing editorial and marketing support as well as acting as a sounding board for his numerous contributions to the pursuit of leadership excellence. Peter is a wealth of information on the topic of leadership based on his passion for the subject, continuous research, knowledge of leadership theory and its roots, and his first-hand experience as an entrepreneur and business leader. The trick with this book was taking all his accumulated information and putting it into an easy-to-use real-world model for executives.

The Coachable Leader is the culmination of the abundance of knowledge and insightful research that Peter wanted to share and I helped to simplify it. The result of all this collaborative work was a condensed model comprised of seven fundamental leadership skills as shown below. Each fundamental requires a “balance” of two opposing forces that, if achieved, can result in effective leadership by an individual.

The 7 Fundamentals

Peter presented the model at a breakfast event for over 60 people this spring, and it was very rewarding to hear him articulate the fundamentals and the corresponding skills that produce balance. The group was equally engaged in the usefulness of the model and the overall message of being coachable — that being the idea of soliciting and then using feedback to evaluate the impact of one’s leadership and adapting it where necessary.

This book is a ‘one-stop shop’ in terms of providing a lot of critical research on leadership and, more importantly, examples and tutorials for developing leadership skills and how to put them into practice. It is also interactive in nature to allow for the reader to evaluate their current leadership skills through the use of quizzes, quotations, case studies and anecdotes. The book will help both executives and high-performing individuals who can utilize it as a ‘coach’ to continually learn, and then implement, new skills to better their effectiveness. I know from my work on the project that I have learned a tremendous amount about the attainment and balance of critical leadership skills for success.
Cultivating Leadership (Continued)

Q: Calculated Risk?

Betof: Career risk. What would be the worst thing that would happen? The worst thing that would happen would be I fail. And, it never occurred to me that I wouldn’t be able to either one - do it or two - get another job.

Q: As a female leader, what factors in your personal life hindered or aided your successful career track?

Betof: There were a number of things that hindered. Many times, I would be the only senior woman sitting at the table, and when you really are the only one, it does limit you. Also, there was an assumption that women would go into the support areas, instead of main stream, hard line kind of positions, which ultimately I was able to do, but it didn’t happen early in my career.

The other thing was when I was having children, it was at a time when there weren’t a lot of women who were working and having children. There was a feeling that, she won’t come back after she has the baby. And, I not only came back once, I came back twice! There was this subtle, yet not so subtle, attitude of ‘why should we invest in a woman when she’ll go off, have children, and then leave the workforce?’ There was a lot of bias against women in those days. I’m glad to see that’s not the case anymore.

In addition, I did get help as a woman too. I got some mentoring from some senior men who took an interest in my career, because I was a good worker and they saw that I was interested and serious about the work. The other help I had was really a lot of family support, which allowed me to go back to work so quickly. That is a gift I can never repay.

Q: So, how did all of these experiences lead you to The Leader’s Edge?

Betof: Well, there were a couple things. I really liked the idea of executive coaching and working with people to help them advance in their own career. It offered a sense of mission that we could do this as women, helping women, at a time when there weren’t a lot of companies that were focused on women.

In the 11 years we’ve been in business, the world has changed a lot.

Another thing was that I really trusted Molly. I had known Molly off and on for a long time, and I think we have very complimentary skills.

Q: What are the top leadership qualities that you value in yourself and in other leaders?

Betof: I think one of the qualities that I value in myself is that I am generally sincere about what I say and pretty genuine about it. The other thing is that I am pretty straightforward, which hasn’t always made me the most popular person in the world. I also really care about the women whom we work with, and the quality of the work we do has always been important to me.

There are two qualities that I really value in others. One is the building of relationships, in the sense that people always want to be around you. The other quality that I have come to respect is really thinking through strategically building your network and building your profile—I didn’t always realize how important this is, but it is essential in today’s world.

Q: One last question: Would you do anything differently in your career?

Betof: I wish I had been more of a leader in some points in my career, but in terms of really having a different background, or having done major things differently in my career, I don’t think so. I got a really good, broad base on my career. I was fortunate in that I put some of the things that really interested me together, especially at The Leader’s Edge/Leaders By Design.
Calling All Executives!
Increase Your Learning Potential by Engaging Your Full Brain

by Peter J. Dean, Ph.D., Founder and President, Leaders By Design & Monica Warner

Learning is both vital to a progressive society and to the attainment of an individual’s full potential – especially as it pertains to leadership. We, as individuals, develop our capacity to learn during our school years, and this phase often sets the tone and pace for how we will learn when we enter the workforce. However, school curricula tends to emphasize left-brain functioning – that is performing mental manipulations within a set of given facts. But the acquisition and the manipulation of facts is not sufficient for the full potential or development of an individual’s brain.

Attaining one’s full potential as a leader must involve factors stemming from the activity of both hemispheres of the brain – an area that I’ve studied for some time now. In my research, I’ve determined that men and women use different parts of the brain when reacting to the exact same sequence of activities. To be more precise, the men in the study had an abundance of electrical activity in the left hemisphere—again, this area is usually associated with a logical, linear analysis that is focused on the task at hand—while the women in the study had an abundance of electrical activity in both their left and right hemispheres that included the right-hemisphere attributes of creativity, inventiveness, empathy and a strategic approach to the task at hand. In today’s parlance, we could say the left-hemisphere is about the IQ of a person and the right-hemisphere reflects the emotional intelligence, or EQ of a person.

How this finding plays out for leaders in today’s workforce is of most interest to us. Intrinsically, men tend to think in a more focused way, give their attention to one thing at a time, and tune out external stimuli in making business decisions. Women, on the other hand, are able to concentrate on a single task while simultaneously absorbing the larger context around them using both hemispheres. In analyzing information and decision making, women consider all factors influencing a course of action, while men bring into focus fewer considerations but reach decisions faster. Both aspects are important skills to possess as a leader. Therefore, full brain engagement and full leader potential in the workplace comes about when both hemispheres can be used by both genders.

There are significant advantages to utilizing both sides of the brain for leaders.

These benefits include:

- Avoiding being compartmentalized by one’s own thinking
- Using both management (doing things right) and leadership (doing the right things)
- Getting business results by practicing empathy
- Getting things done with/through people with collaboration, not coercion
- Effectively using power of one’s position in balance with interpersonal power
- Correcting detrimental anti-team behavior immediately

Techniques to activate both sides of the brain are not complex. Here are some of my suggestions on how the concept of full brain engagement can practically play out in the workplace:

1. Focusing too much on a task blocks out other input and limits the mental activity to the left side of the brain. Ask for others’ opinion, listen, and digest what is being said. This solicitation automatically engages collaboration and integration in the right brain.
2. Use visual elements such as a flip chart, smart board, or dry erase board to enhance brainstorming or strategy sessions with direct reports or team members. This way, people are visually stimulated as well as audibly engaging right brain activity.
3. Use empathy to help individuals consider issues and challenges from multiple points of view—not just their own. Viewing quandaries from various vantage points allows for more holistic problem solving.
4. Activate the right brain by giving full attention to those you are leading through active listening and engagement. This requires putting one’s own perspective, ego and needs aside to be open minded and attentive to others.

Overall, full brain engagement brings about a workplace where executives are leading at their potential. It is not a masculine workplace, nor a feminine workplace but rather a ‘third-way’ workplace where the best of both hemispheres are used. In my newest book, The Coachable Leader, I describe a full brain engagement workplace containing both: left-brain management capturing the values of information, logic, quantitative analysis, tactical and logistical input to improve the performance in operations and right-brain leadership that helps leaders be more adaptive, relational, collaborative, participative, qualitative, inclusive, and non-coercive.

Leading with full brain engagement will create an environment where there are many ways to learn, engage direct reports, and ultimately improve the impact of one’s leadership.
Kudos to Friends & Colleagues of The Leader’s Edge/Leaders By Design!

- Judy Baldissard is now VP Divisional CFO for Laurelton Diamonds at Tiffany and Co.
- Laura Barrow is now Senior Vice President, Clinical Operations at Synergy Pharmaceuticals.
- Congrats to Cindy Bertrand, Executive Director and Head of Audit, AstraZeneca, who was recently awarded the Jefferson Award for public service!
- Virginia Bowden is now Partner, Market Leader - Philadelphia Region at Aon Hewitt.
- Jennifer Flasher has been promoted to Global HR Program Management Director at Shire Pharmaceuticals.
- Edie Fraser is now CEO at STEMconnector.org.
- Debbie Higgins was recently elected President of The Willow Tree, Org. Board of Directors, a not for profit drug and alcohol clinic located in Northern New Jersey.
- Carla Howard has been promoted to SVP at Energy Future Holdings.
- Kim Kuryea has been promoted to Vice President and Controller of General Dynamics.
- Lisa Martin, CEO, LeapFrog Solutions Inc., was recently featured in the Washington Business Journal as part of an expose on entrepreneurial success.
- Alice Milligan of American Express has been promoted to Senior Vice President.
- Deirdre O’Conner was promoted to Managing Director at Goldman Sachs.
- Heather Paquette has been named Detroit office Managing Partner for KPMG.
- Eva Reda was promoted to Senior Vice President, American Express.
- Winnie Tam was promoted to managing director at Goldman Sachs.
- Cathy Sohn, a 2012 Women On Board graduate and former SVP, GlaxoSmithKline, has accepted a position on the board of directors for both Ariel Pharma and the Dohmen Company.
- Sherri Stump has been promoted to Senior Director of Marketing for Pediatric ADHD at Shire Pharmaceuticals.
- Elizabeth Walker was promoted to Vice President, Global Talent Management at Campbell’s Soup.
- Cathy Wotring was promoted to Vice President at Sallie Mae.
- Peter Dean’s book, The Coachable Leader, came out in April and is available at Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble!
- Molly Shepard has received the 2012 Brava! Women Business Achievement Award from SmartCEO Magazine!