



view from the **EDGE**

NOVEMBER 2008



Jim Shapiro



Shannon Barnes

Rejuvenation for Weary Leaders

In a recent seminar, I reiterated my belief that “inspiration” is one of the bedrock principles for “high-impact” leadership – leadership that inspires staff, board, and volunteer teams to accomplish more than they believe is possible and to scale mountains they don’t think they can climb. But where do you, the leader, find inspiration? How do you refuel so that you can handle your responsibilities with energy and optimism?

Here are a few ideas:

1. *Revisit inspiring books, lectures, movies, etc.* – Collect all those materials together - books, songs, movies, or something else that gets you passionate and excited - and keep them easily accessible for those “need some inspiration now” moments.
2. *Start with a blank sheet of paper* – For most leaders, the task of visioning/planning gets their juices flowing again. Get out of the office and take a few minutes to plan for the future. Start with a blank sheet of paper; it will help you be most creative.
3. *Laugh* – It really is the best medicine. Look for jokes and humor to lift your spirits (and think about spreading it around to the rest of your team.)
4. *Walk* – A brief walk can do wonders if you’re overwhelmed. Take a moment to stretch your legs, take a deep breath, and refocus.
5. *Ask for encouragement* – Don’t be ashamed. If you’re in a slump, let your team know how much a nice comment would mean to you. (Make an extra effort to collect positive client stories too.)
6. *Collect other viewpoints* – Find stories from people and organizations that made it through tough times...and lived to tell about it! Surround yourself with their testimonies as a reminder that you will too.

These are just a few ideas. Do what it takes to keep your emotional fuel-tank full and ready to unleash healthy doses of inspiration on your team members. Our positive outlook is a key attribute to releasing the innovative and mission-focused energies critical to the organization’s success. SDB



November EDGE Events

Webinar 1:

Monster Missions – Unleashing the Power of Mission in Your Organization

November 12, 1:30 p.m.

Webinar 2:

How to Survive & Thrive in 2009 – Strategic Thinking for a New Financial Market

November 19, 1:30 p.m.

Get information and register for these free webinars at www.theEDGEgroup.org/webinar.htm

The 3-Minute EDGE

Straight to your computer or mp3 player, this weekly podcast is packed with tips to help you lead and fund your organization. Sign-up at today at www.theEDGEgroup.org.

Website information

Our website has resources for your benefit. Check it out at www.theEDGEgroup.org.

Book Recommendation

The Leadership Challenge by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. This leadership book was written for a business audience, but is excellent and inspiring – two things to pick up any leader during this challenging time.

Contact Information

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Survive and Thrive During Tough Economic Times

The biblical book of Ecclesiastes clearly communicates concepts about timing. There is a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck what is planted; a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to breakdown, and a time to build up.

The concept of timing is an important one as you evaluate your organizations ability to survive the current economic client ad as you strive to find new ways to grow and expand your mission.

Consider these three thoughts.

1. Now is the time to reduce expenses, to adjust budgets, and to carefully manage cash-flow. Unless you're in a very unique position, it is most likely not the time to make major capital investments, acquiring debt, or hiring additional staff.
2. Now is the time to retain the clients and donors your currently have through improved customer service and appreciation communication. It is not the time to cut marketing budgets, skimp on donor appreciation opportunities or reduce donor acquisition methods.
3. Now is the time to prepare for the future harvest by creating mission focused strategies that can be implemented during improved financial times. It is not the time to sit back and wait for economic improvements before you think and plan for strategic growth.

Your organization can survive this current economic crisis. Your organization can also be the first in line to benefit when the economy improves. It's all just a matter of time and forward strategic thinking. js

Need Money? Start with Mission.

I recently sat with an organization's leadership as they discussed how to raise additional money for their services. I was amazed to hear ideas ranging from the paltry to the prolific – bake sales on one hand and projects rivaling moon launch on the other. The ideas had only one thing in common – none of them related to the organization's mission.

Instead of trying to determine a creative way to fund your mission from cookie sales, spend your time and energies working to effectively communicate your mission and purpose to donor-investors. You'll be much more likely to get the funding you need, and they'll get something far tastier than chocolate chips – impact! SDB



Inspire

Whatever the circumstances, when leaders breathe life into peoples' dreams and aspirations, those people are much more willing to enlist in the movement.

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner