

If you know a company — customer, supplier, friend, or your own — that could benefit from improved operations, let us know.

Your best interest is our best interest.

The Finish Strong® monthly e-newsletter is for business leaders who recognize Operations as a strategic function that creates competitive advantage, profitability and brand loyalty in the marketplace.

These brief articles, list of events, and amended quote will make you think. Go ahead: test us

ONE IS NOT ENOUGH

An effective CEO is a good leader. He ensures a clear vision with priorities effectively communicated. His active and visible support of major initiatives is important. But he can't be the only one. Any organization with more than a handful of people needs more than one leader.

If the CEO has provided the clear vision and priorities, resources to support, and doesn't interfere with initiatives, why can't managers lead others in executing change?

- Excessive deference to peers: not wanting to step on the toes of others is a nice thought, but is frequently just an excuse to not work out challenges together.
- Fear of making a mistake: anyone worth having will make them. It's important not to make major ones, but an unwillingness to make mistakes creates inertia.
- Fear of leading the charge: Any manager that says "I just do what I'm told" should be replaced with someone who can think and is willing to do so.
- Tactical focus: A manager must ensure that the work gets done, but is also responsible for ensuring the work gets improved. Tactical thinkers often stay mired in today's emergency.

You may not be the CEO, but that's no excuse for not providing leadership. It may be lonely at the top, but the top shouldn't be abandoned from below.

NOW YOU'VE REALLY MADE ME MAD

The land-line phones in my neighborhood quit working on Friday. As I write this they are still out. I have cable internet access, and continue to utilize the internet without problem.

One of my neighbors, however, reeking of exasperation, recounted that as he waits on hold (via cell, of course) with "the phone company" the repeating message encourages him to save time by checking their website.

Unfortunately, his internet access is through a DSL line, which is of course affected by the same outage he is calling to discuss.

FINISH STRONG®

The Starting Pistol
Max DePree:

"The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality."

The Tape
Rebecca Morgan:

"Every one of your employees should understand the current competitive and financial position, and what you have to achieve as a team and by when. Otherwise there is little chance of success"

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