

Hardwiring Behaviors That Will Take Your Company to the Top

RESULTS THAT LAST

Q U I N T S T U D E R

This is an excerpt from *Results That Last*.

The booklet you're reading is what's known in the publishing industry as a "blad." Basically, it's an excerpt of a book's content, often created to give the reader a sampling of what the real book is like. Please give it a quick read...we think you'll enjoy its content and will want to learn more.

Results That Last explains in clear, simple terms how to create and sustain quality leadership inside an organization. Once you "hardwire" the book's proven tactics into your company, the dramatic gains will be sustained over time, even as individual leaders come and go. Not only does Quint Studer tell you how to hardwire these behaviors—and make the task seem remarkably "doable"—he explains how you'll know when you've reached this goal.

Besides the book's introduction, this blad includes sections on managing up and reducing leadership variance. Other subjects covered in the complete book include selecting and retaining talent, rounding for outcomes, improving quality, efficiency, and service, and increasing market share, just to name a few.

Action steps make the tactics easy to implement, and colorful examples bring them to life. While the ideas in this book have been proven and refined in health care organizations, they also have been field tested in numerous *non*-health care industries.

If you find the information in this blad interesting and valuable, please feel free to purchase copies of the book for yourself and your leaders. When you start seeing the amazing outcomes that result from Quint's ideas, you'll be glad you did.

Studer Group

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from online retailers (will be released in October 2007).

PRAISE FOR *RESULTS THAT LAST*

“Change is hard for many people. That’s what makes this book so valuable. Quint Studer lays out a formula that tackles one of the daunting tasks a leader must face—changing human behavior in order to improve organizational performance—and makes it feel doable. Reading this book before the next big change initiative at your company will make your job much easier . . . and infinitely more rewarding.”

—Richard Lepsinger, President, OnPoint Consulting, LLC, and coauthor of *Flexible Leadership: Creating Value by Balancing Multiple Challenges and Choices*

“Anyone can be great once—even blind squirrels find a few nuts to store away. Quint Studer shows you how to consistently amaze your customers, connect with your employees, and outperform your competitors. And if that doesn’t interest you, perhaps you are browsing in the wrong section of the bookstore.”

—Randy Pennington, author of *Results Rule! Build a Culture That Blows the Competition Away*

“As companies everywhere break through borders and expand across the globe, achieving strong organizational performance takes on a new urgency. Without an unshakable foundation—one based on proven business principles—you won’t survive growth and change. Quint Studer can help. He explains how standardizing your leadership practices sets you up for the kind of consistent, day-to-day, employee-to-employee, customer-to-customer excellence that ensures global success. Don’t miss this book.”

—Tom Travis, author of *Doing Business Anywhere: The Essential Guide to Going Global*

“Here’s what I like about Quint Studer: He gets that the *employee* experience and the *customer* experience are intertwined and inseparable. Make the former happy and the latter will follow organically. And as Studer rightly points out, it all starts with great leadership. His book overflows with practical, why-didn’t-I-think-of-that tactics for building a culture around service. You’ll want to try these

tactics the minute you read them—and I suspect they'll fit like a tailor-made suit.”

—Scott Deming, international speaker and business consultant, author of *The Brand Who Cried “Wolf”*: *Deliver on Your Company's Promise and Create Customers for Life*

“Not only are the most powerful leaders goal-oriented, disciplined, and passionate, they're connectors. They've mastered the art of human relationships. Quint Studer intuitively knows how to connect with others and persuade them to buy into a vision. If you're charged with leading others, don't just read *Results That Last*; live it. It will change the way you interact with your people, which in turn will change the course of your business for the better.”

—Dennis F. Haley, founder and CEO, Academy Leadership, and coauthor of *The Leader's Compass, 2nd Edition: A Personal Leadership Philosophy Is Your Key to Success*

“Quint Studer's new book, *Results That Last*, is a must-read for anyone who is serious about leadership and the steps that can be taken to help improve morale and productivity in the workplace. He takes the principles he has refined as a distinguished leader in the healthcare industry and applies those to other corporate cultures. Studer bases his commonsense thesis on what he calls evidence-based leadership practices, which he breaks down into three key elements: Aligned Goals, Aligned Behavior, and Aligned Processes. He then weaves all three into a leadership formula that is both practical and attainable and will inspire and motivate anyone wishing to improve their leadership skills. It's what success is all about.”

—Charles S. Lauer, retired publisher, *Modern Healthcare Magazine*

“Quint Studer, the foremost healthcare service consultant, has already taught us how to hardwire excellence. His latest book, *Results That Last*, is sure to be a classic in the annals of business management.”

—Floyd D. Loop, M.D., former CEO (1989–2004), Cleveland Clinic

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INTRODUCTION

Evidence-Based Leadership

What truly creates results that last?

It's not the products and services an organization offers. These can change and, besides, the minute they hit the global marketplace competitors can and do copy them. It's not particular employees. People leave organizations every day. It's not even individual leaders. They, like the employees who serve under them, come and go over time.

What creates results that last is *leadership*—leadership that's consistently excellent from leader to leader, department to department, division to division. Standardize the right leadership practices and you will find that organizational performance improves across the board . . . and *stays* improved.

The strategies and tactics in this book have been “road tested” by Studer Group, an outcomes-based firm devoted to teaching its client organizations how to create and sustain service and operational excellence. We know they work, and work well. Our partner organizations attest to their validity.

Evidence-based leadership (EBL) enables us to create results that last. What is EBL? It's a strategy centered on using the current “best practices” in leadership—practices that are proven to result in the best possible outcomes. The “evidence,” in this context, is the reams of data collected from study after study that aim to determine what people really want and need from their leaders. When

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leaders apply these tried-and-true tactics to every corner of our organizations, we achieve consistent excellence. Our organization's success is no longer dependent on individuals. It's hardwired. No matter who leaves, the excellence remains.

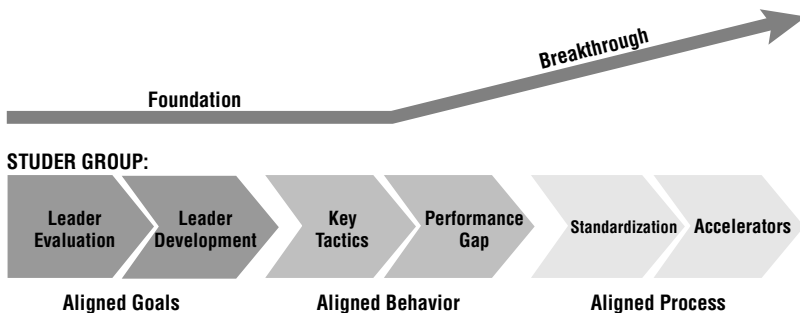
It seems important to mention that evidence-based leadership is a spinoff of *evidence-based medicine*—a philosophy based on using current “best evidence” to make decisions about the care of individual patients. What works for doctors and nurses will also work for CEOs and managers. It just requires a different way of thinking about how we lead.

Ironically, many organizations balk at standardizing their leadership practices. They standardize all sorts of other (less critical) items, from how they display their logos to what time employees arrive at work to how the phone must be answered. And yet the most important aspect of any organization—leadership—is allowed to be inconsistent.

We have all heard employees say things like: *I will work for this boss but not that one*, or *The north-side store is so much better than the other ones*. And we've all heard them ask questions like: *Why do that leader's employees get to interview potential co-workers and we don't?* . . . or *How come employees can get away with behavior with some bosses but not others?* . . . or *Why does this leader get a better evaluation than a higher-performing person who works for another boss or in another division?*

The tools and techniques in this book will stop those comments and questions. They will help virtually any organization get its leadership practices aligned.

At the beginning of each chapter you will see this graphic:



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It illustrates how the components of evidence-based leadership work together to create results that last. A circled area on the graphic will show you where the tactic addressed in that chapter fits into the process.

As you can see, there are three major components to evidence-based leadership: *Aligned Goals*, *Aligned Behavior*, and *Aligned Processes*. The book goes into detail about how to implement the tactics under each component, but here's a brief overview:

- *Aligned Goals*. Organizations must implement an objective evaluation system that tells leaders not only what they're supposed to be doing, but also what their priorities are. In addition, leaders must be thoroughly trained in order to be successful.
- *Aligned Behavior*. There are certain behaviors that an organization must agree to implement at the leadership level to ensure that every employee gets a consistent experience—whether it's the presence of daily rounding or a certain way of showing appreciation. (These aligned behaviors cascade down to employees to create a consistent experience for customers.) Standardizing leader behavior ensures predictable responses from our employees. And aligning behaviors forces us to deal with performance gaps. We must move low performers up or out or eventually our improvement efforts will not be sustained.
- *Aligned Processes*. We must identify certain processes that are consistent throughout the company—how people are hired, for instance. Consistency in process allows people to move more effectively and opens the door to acceleration—the phase in which results start getting better and better.

Let me take a moment to explain how I've categorized the tactics in this book.

Chapters 1 through 3 cover the three most powerful **Key Tactics** a company can adopt: *high, middle, and low conversations*, *rounding for outcomes*, and *managing up*. Even if a leader takes none

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of the other suggestions in this book, he or she usually finds that implementing these three tactics leads to big dividends.

You might think of Chapters 4 through 8 as **The Core**. This section covers the philosophy behind the tactics and explains the intricacies of reducing leadership variance, measuring the important things, aligning behaviors with goals and values, and training leaders. It creates the foundation of an organization so all employees are working toward the same goals and all employees are held accountable.

Chapters 9 through 15 focus on **Employee Tactics**. We'll learn how to determine what employees really want from us—which is the heart of evidence-based leadership—and how to give it to them. We'll also learn how to build individual accountability in people and how to benefit from the wealth of knowledge our employees possess.

Finally, Chapters 16 through 19 reveal critical **Customer Tactics**. We'll discuss various tools and techniques leaders can use to build a culture around service. When an organization understands what “great service” really looks like to its customers, it has a much greater likelihood of consistently providing it. The result is that customers keep coming back and refer us to their friends, family members, and colleagues.

Please understand: You do *not* have to adopt every single tactic in this book to enjoy significant results. Decide which ones make the most sense for your organization and get started on those. However, the foundation described in the Core chapters is necessary if you are to achieve breakthrough.

Likewise, you don't have to follow a particular sequence. You may want to begin with one of the three very powerful tactics we explain right up front—high, middle, and low conversations, rounding for outcomes, and managing up—because we've found they have a tremendous impact on organizational performance.

Figure out what you want to accomplish and dive right in with the tactic that best fits your goals. The sudden improvement you see will boost morale and motivate everyone to strive for even better results. Remember to align these behaviors with all leaders so the results last.

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By the way, don't worry that you're creating a company of lookalike leaders; each person will always bring his or her own personality into the workplace. What you *are* doing is creating consistency based on the foundation of best practices. You're also creating a culture of excellence. A great culture outperforms strategy every time. A great culture, combined with a great strategy, is unbeatable.

And here's the bottom line: Not only will your customers have consistently excellent experiences with your company, your employees will as well. Happy, loyal customers and happy, loyal employees are two sides of the same coin—and that coin is the currency that buys you results that last.

C H A P T E R



3

MANAGE UP TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

Why This Chapter Is Important

IN OUR TRAINING SESSIONS WITH THOUSANDS OF LEADERS, WE ASK THE following question after the first few days of training: “Based on what you know right now, what are your top three takeaways?”

Here is what we almost always hear: “I will deal with low performers, round for outcomes, and manage up to stop the ‘we/they’ communication that’s dividing my company.” (Now you see why those three topics are first in this book!)

A critical task in getting organizations aligned is teaching leaders how to quit playing the “blame game” and start positioning others—individuals, departments, and so forth—in a positive light. That’s managing up. We all need to learn to manage up ourselves as well as managing up our employees, our leaders, and our organizations.

Managing up eliminates the *we/they phenomenon*, which is the primary reason employees and customers lose confidence in the organization. It’s an easy trap to fall into. I know I have played

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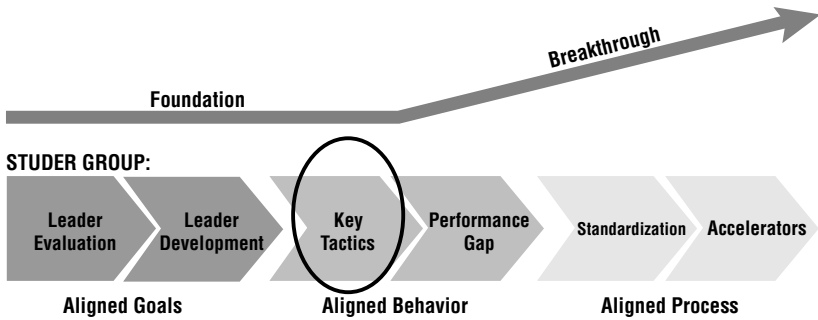


Figure 3.1 Evidence-Based Leadership

the we/they game—and perpetuated the lack of confidence in top leaders and thus the organization—at one time or another in my career.

Often, we/they has been going on inside a company for so long that its leaders don't even recognize it. In this chapter, we show you how to remove this destructive practice from your organization so you can go on to achieve high-performance results that last.

• • •

Few of us were educated to be leaders. Rather, we have leadership thrust upon us. Instead of choosing our first management position, many of us literally fall into it or have it fall on us. Go to a construction site and ask somebody why he's laying brick. Chances are he *won't* say, "Well, I'm just doing brickwork so someday I can be a foreman."

Common sense tells us that most of us start out looking for jobs that involve tasks that we enjoy. (A teacher usually wants to teach. Typically, she *doesn't* go into the field with a burning desire to be a principal.) Then somewhere along the line, we end up in a leadership position. More times than not, it's because our boss quit. The organization needs to fill the position quickly, so we get the call.

This lack of training means many leaders don't know how to explain and carry messages to employees. It's a shortcoming that can be disastrous. Why? Because the way messages are communicated within an organization is critical to that organization's culture.

There are two types of corporate cultures: those divided by blame and finger-pointing, and those united by teamwork and shared responsibility.

THE *WE/THEY* PHENOMENON

Playing the *we/they* card hurts an organization and its leadership. What is the *we/they card*, you ask? Basically, it's making oneself look better at the expense of others. I will give you a hypothetical example:

Let's say I am an untrained (or inadequately trained) leader. The pay raises in my company have been in the 3 percent range because that's what was approved for this year. Oh, I may have had some 3.1 percent and 2.8 percent increases, but most were right at 3 percent.

A member of my staff, Rick, comes up to me and says, "You know, Quint, I'm really upset. I've worked harder this year than ever before, but I got the same pay raise as everyone else. I thought I deserved more."

My response is something like this: "Rick, I can understand how you feel." (After all, I want to show empathy, right?) "If it were up to me it wouldn't have been like that," I continue. "But you know pay raises are really out of my hands. That's something that Human Resources dictates." (Or, same tune different lyrics: "That's something that comes from corporate headquarters.")

See what I've done? I've just made the employee feel better. He may even see me as his friend. Unfortunately, I've done it at the expense of either another department or my boss.

Okay, let's give Hypothetical Untrained Me the benefit of the doubt. I didn't respond this way to Rick because I wanted to put down HR or corporate. I did this because I didn't know how *not* to do it.

I firmly believe leaders want to do a good job. However, most of us don't get the training we need to make it happen. In our two-day coaching and educational seminars, we explain how to stop the *we/they* phenomenon in an organization. In the years that we've

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held these sessions with thousands of people, one of the top three things leaders tell me that they're going to accomplish when they get back to their organization is this: "I'm going to stop creating and enabling the we/they phenomenon."

It's quite possible to play the we/they card subconsciously. We don't *intend* to subtly shift the blame, but we do so anyway, and for the most human of reasons: to make other people like us. Let me give you an example:

Most leaders are likely to say "yes" to an employee immediately if the answer is yes. So when Tricia says, "My son's graduating from eighth grade on Friday. We're having a big party. Would it be okay if I leave just a little early that day?" If the answer is yes, I'm quick to say, "Absolutely, Tricia. I'd be disappointed if you didn't."

Now, if the answer might be *no*, I'll probably say, "Hmmm, you know it's okay with me, but let me run it by Bob (the boss's boss)." Even though the answer might be *yes*, the employee's going to thank me for going to bat for her. If the answer's *no*, she will still thank me for trying and she will understand the boss is "the heavy."

So what stops an organization's flywheel—that self-perpetuating energy-and-enthusiasm cycle that keeps employees striving for excellence—from turning? It's we/they.

Examples of employees shifting the blame are encountered almost every day. Did your meal arrive cold or undercooked? It's not the server's fault; the kitchen is understaffed (or overwhelmed)! Does your new computer refuse to operate properly? It's not a hardware problem; the software's at fault! Are the company's newest employees struggling to do their work properly? Either the training department didn't do its job or the recruiting/employment department hired weak candidates (depending on whom you ask).

Has an unexpected turn in the economy lowered the company's sales? Top management should have seen it coming. Or has a sudden spurt in the economy caught the company's inventory in a shortfall? Again, top management should have seen it coming.

One way to diagnose the we/they phenomenon in your company is to do an employee attitude survey. Believe me, I've seen

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how it works. I was hired as president for Baptist Hospital in Pensacola, FL just after an employee attitude survey was completed. The survey ranked the supervisors a little below average. However, the top administration had an off-the-chart negative rating. And as the results were rolled out, the supervisors I could see had a look in their eye that said, "Phew, we're bad, but my God, look what we're dragging around with us here: this senior administration!"

Now, let me ask you: Where do most employees get their perception of corporate leadership? From their supervisor, of course! And here's a related question: Where do most customers get the perception of the corporation or the manager? From the employees. I am not saying top administration can't do better. The key is providing managers with the training required to drive results. It is about values. A value-driven organization trains its leaders.

When dealing with a disgruntled customer the employee can say, "Gosh, it's not up to me. *They're* the ones that do the pricing, not *me*. I don't know why we don't have that in stock, either. I tell them all the time. . . ." (He continues in this vein, building a nice little rapport with the customer based on finger-pointing and mutual eye-rolling over those dimwits in corporate.)

Here's the rest of the story: The customer thinks, "That's a nice employee, but I'm never coming back here again." Likewise, disgruntled employees might think, "I like my boss but I don't like this company." Ultimately, both lead to people leaving. The customer never comes back and the employee eventually follows him.

Do you see how destructive the we/they phenomenon can be?

When we consult with organizations, they often discover that they are subject to we/they divisiveness. It is really a key finding. It just comes naturally to people. If it didn't, our seminar attendees wouldn't consistently label it the "number-one thing for my organization to stop doing." But they always do . . . and most people don't realize what a severe problem it is.

Ed, president of an organization in Hoffman Estates, Illinois, took the leaders offsite for training. They were all asked to put their arms around

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each others' shoulders to form a circle. Ed said, "Okay, everybody move." It was a mess, with people lurching around in different directions. So right away they realized that they needed some leadership. Then he said, "Everybody move to the left." It still took a few missteps before they got it right. Then he asked one person not to move and the whole flywheel stumbled.

I think that story accurately illustrates the effects of teamwork and what happens in its absence. *We/they* is the *antithesis* of teamwork. It's people working against each other, rather than with each other. Even one person committing this sin can stop your forward progress. *We/they* is the stumbling block that hurts the culture of an organization and holds it back from moving from good to great.

THE ART OF MANAGING UP

So how *do* we prevent *we/they*? How do we keep the flywheel spinning? The answer is that we look for ways to manage up. Essentially, *managing up* is positioning something or someone in a positive light. For example:

When you're talking to your boss, be sure to tell her about an employee who's done a good job. By relaying an employee's positive efforts, the boss can come out and say, "Kathy, I was talking to Mike and I asked him which employees are doing a particularly good job. He specifically mentioned you, Kathy. He mentioned the fact that you had a tight timeline on a project and you turned it around quickly. Kathy, I would just like to thank you for your dedication."

What has happened? Well, by getting Kathy's name from Mike, the boss has reinforced positive behavior—and reinforced and recognized behavior gets repeated. She not only managed up Kathy, but she also managed up Mike in the eyes of Kathy and the rest of the staff. I have done this with thousands of people, in our workshops and when I was in a leadership position, and I guarantee

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you Kathy will say, “Wow, that was really nice of Mike.” And she will thank the boss for passing along the praise.

A big part of managing up is refraining from managing down. Now obviously, few leaders would deliberately manage down a person or an event at their company. Often, we take the “no comment” approach. But human nature being what it is, people often take the liberty of assuming the worst. Leaders need to find ways to position positively, and we need to be proactive about it. Let me give you an example:

When I was president of a division of an organization, the corporation decided to review our 401(k) choices because they thought they might be able to get a better one. Now that impacted all the managers, but it also impacted all the employees who were involved in the 401(k). The CEO said that he wanted to head that committee.

How could I have managed this situation down? Well, I could just say nothing. (And saying nothing would probably be the equivalent of managing down, as many employees would not know the CEO’s role.) Or I could use this as an opportunity to manage up my boss and the corporation.

At the employee meetings, I said, “How many of you have money invested in our 401(k)?” Probably 90 percent of the hands went up. “Let me update you on what’s going on. The corporate people felt that our 401(k) *might* be fine the way it is now, but they want to be certain. So they’ve started an intense look into our 401(k) to ensure the employees are being charged correctly for the service and that we are getting the maximum investment opportunity and return for that money.” The employees nodded their heads. “Now, because our CEO, Mr. Vickery, is so dedicated to this workforce, he is chairing that committee personally because he wants to make sure that you get the very best return on your money.”

Remember, this story represents only one example of the deliberate managing up I did at this company. It was a conscious, ongoing effort. Over the year, employee satisfaction with corporate administration went from being a “minus 8” standard deviation, to a “plus 6.” Corporate didn’t change its behavior; they were fine

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already. The rating changed because how the administration was positioned with the employees was handled entirely differently.

Whether you realize it or not, you see managing up all the time. Take the restaurant industry. When a server waits on you, instead of just pointing to a blackboard with the daily specials, she says, "I tried today's pasta special before my shift and it's fabulous." Or when it is time for dessert, she says, "Gee, I don't know if you know this, but we've got an executive chef who was trained in New Orleans at Commanders Palace. He's creating our desserts today." You walk away from the meal feeling positive about the restaurant, and after giving your server a nice tip. Why? Because the waitress did a good job of managing up and positioning the restaurant, the chef, and the food.

How do you position your product? How do your employees position it? Let me state unequivocally that positioning must be authentic. Ask an employee or a manager to manage up something he doesn't believe in and you will quickly turn him off. You have to say to your employees, "If you don't believe in our product, then please tell us so we can correct it, or so we can educate you." It's this component of managing up that is often overlooked. As leaders, we need to help employees understand and support the product and the corporation.

Certain workplace cultures are themselves roadblocks to managing up. In the health care industry, everyone tends to be critical. Don't get me wrong; being critical certainly has its uses. Health care workers are trained to focus on what's wrong, and for good reason: What's wrong can kill someone. It's not hard to understand why this managing up philosophy has been slow to take hold in health care!

It's always easy to point out what's wrong. Ever notice how often people accentuate the negative? We don't necessarily do it overtly. Usually, we do it by default. How many times have you called your facilities department and told them the temperature in your office is perfect? Or called City Hall to let them know how well timed all the traffic lights are? But if it's 85 degrees in the office in the middle of July, or the traffic lights are changing every five seconds, you can bet that someone's phone will be ringing off the hook!

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A good self-audit is to ask yourself this question: “When I go home, does someone in my family remind me that I’m no longer at work?” If the answer is yes, do you think it’s because you are being so positive? Probably not! Likewise, has anyone in your family ever said, “We don’t work for you”?

According to research, it takes a ratio of three positives to one criticism for one human being in the workplace to feel good about another human being. So we unconsciously operate on a negative cultural foundation, then wonder why we feel bad when we go home. The truth is, managing up—positioning people and products in a positive light—is somewhat countercultural. It may not come naturally, but it is worth the effort. It makes everyone feel better about themselves, their bosses, their co-workers, and the corporation.

Hot Topic is a chain of 650 stores that sell music-related clothing and accessories to teenagers, usually in malls. With annual sales of more than \$720 million, this innovative retailer recently made the list of Fortune’s “100 Best Companies to Work For” by encouraging its youthful employees to manage up the store’s merchandise, as well as the customers who purchase it.

Salespeople are paid to attend local rock concerts and youth events, after which they write up scouting reports about what rock stars and other concertgoers were wearing. Salespeople are also expected to call the company’s buyers with tips on fashion trends and to ask questions about incoming merchandise. Practices like these not only result in highly aware, well-trained salespeople, they also encourage the salespeople to “talk up” new fashions and fads with customers, co-workers, and friends. The employees feel empowered and important—circumstances that are highly unusual among retail sales clerks.

WELL-HANDLED HANDOFFS—AND THEIR PAYOFFS

When you look at customer satisfaction, one fact that always comes through loud and clear is this: If the customer is unhappy, it’s usually due to lack of coordination, weak teamwork, or poor handoffs.

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In health care, many lawsuits can be traced back to a handoff between caregivers or departments characterized by weak communication.

Anytime you hand off a customer, you need to clearly explain what is happening to each party involved. If possible, do the handoff in front of the other person instead of saying, “The guy down there told me this or told me that.” Balls tend to be dropped when customers move from person A to person B, and the reason is that person B doesn’t fully understand the situation.

Just as bad handoffs can lead to lawsuits, great handoffs can lead to delighted customers and jingling cash registers. A friend of mine, Randy Hammer, recently shared this story with me. He had moved to Louisville and found a salon that gave him a great haircut. The next time he needed a trim he dropped in at the same place. He discovered that his stylist wasn’t there, but he was assured that he could still get a great haircut. When he sat down, the new stylist said, “Now from what I’ve read, you like your hair cut like this.” Then, he proceeded to describe the desired style in amazing detail. My friend was absolutely stunned. The salon owner explained that whatever her stylists do for a customer gets entered in the salon’s computer system. Then, when the customer comes back, the stylist is sure to know exactly what he wants.

Now, if my friend’s favorite salon can do it, so can every business in the country. It’s how well we manage those moments of truth—handoffs—that really show that we have good teamwork, good coordination, and most of all, a good organization.

Handoffs are also perfect occasions to manage up your co-workers. Anytime you pass a customer on to another department or another team member, you should view it as an excellent opportunity for managing up. For example:

My daughter’s battery is running out and the car won’t start. I jump the battery and drive the car to Whibbs Automotive. The front-desk person, Bob, listens to my problem and says, “Mr. Studer, we’re sending your car to Bay 7. Steve is our mechanic today. He will check out both

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your battery and your alternator. I want you to know that Steve is a certified mechanic. In fact, when it comes to fixing the alternator, Steve is one of the very best people we have in this entire garage.”

Now, I’m thanking Bob for giving me to Steve, and I’m already genuinely happy that Steve’s fixing my car. See the power of managing up? Obviously, you don’t want to tell a customer something that’s not true. But I find that most of the time we *do* work with talented people who know what they’re talking about—we just don’t think to relay that to customers.

MANAGING UP TO REDUCE ANXIETY

By managing up co-workers every time you get a chance, you reduce the customer’s anxiety. Let me share another one of my experiences with handoffs:

When my wife, Rishy, was in the labor room about to give birth to Mallory, both of us were scared to death. I may have been even more frightened than she was. Childbirth is usually a time when the man looks at the size of the stomach, then looks at the “exit strategy,” and says, “I don’t think this is possible.” You get very dependent on the caregiver, and that’s exactly what happened to us. We bonded, Super-glue style, with our nurse. She was constantly in and out of the room, reading the heartbeat of the child, taking ultrasounds, tracking the progress of dilation, and so on. We were feeling that we got lucky.

And then all of a sudden the nurse came in and said, “I’ll be going home now.” We were stunned. It never occurred to us that labor might go over a shift. My wife looked at me like, “Do something! I don’t want this lady to leave!” In fact, if Rishy had to choose at that moment who should leave the room—the nurse or me—I would be on the other side of the door.

Now, what if that nurse had said, “Mrs. Studer, I’m going home to my family now, but I want to talk to you about the nurse who’s taking my place. I just told her all about you. She’ll be down here in

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a few minutes to meet you. Sue's an excellent nurse. She's been with us a year and I helped train her. We are so lucky that she decided to practice medicine at our hospital. I always hear so many nice compliments from parents whose babies she's delivered. I wanted you to know what good hands you're in." *Bingo!* Anxiety goes down and customer confidence goes up.

So when we talk about managing up, we're really talking about reducing anxiety. When you manage up the company or the boss, you reduce anxiety for the employee, because she wants to believe that she's working for a good place or that her boss is a nice guy. And when you manage up the company, you reduce anxiety for the customer. You help him feel he's in the right place.

CREATING THE CULTURAL SHIFT

At this point you may be feeling a bit discouraged. You may be wondering how you'll ever get your employees and colleagues (and maybe yourself) to reject we/they and embrace managing up. Don't worry. It's definitely doable. You can create a cultural shift in your company that will change everything. Here's how:

1. *Conduct employee attitude surveys.* These management tools give you a good idea of how strong a hold we/they has on your organization. Plus, taking a survey will allow you to set some benchmarks by which you can measure your progress in changing your corporation culture from one of blame to one of shared accountability and teamwork.

2. *Send scouting reports* (Figure 3.2). Employees want to know the boss. It's what we constantly hear from middle managers, "I wish my boss were more visible. The employees would like to meet him." Sending the boss a scouting report makes it more likely that he will visit.

Bosses have several reasons for not visiting branch offices and other departments. First, many are just too swamped. Also, they often figure you're in charge of the area, not them, and they don't want to interfere. Finally, though they might not admit it, bosses

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To: Quint Studer
From: Rachel Azare
Date: 9/30/06, 10:43 a.m.

Subject: Scouting Report: Marketing

Quint:

Next time you're in the Marketing Department, please make note of the following:

- We've reorganized in the department. Bob Mosley is handling all media relations—print, radio, and television. Diana Roberts takes care of all marketing materials—brochures, promotional materials, and newsletters. Joy Beckham manages graphic design and writers. They're proud of how it makes our department more responsive to the rest of the corporation.
- We recently launched an in-house newsletter that is very popular. Joy and Diana worked together on the basic design. I've attached a copy of the latest one.
- Also please recognize Gloria Casio, our new administrative assistant. She has reorganized our marketing library and helped get the individual department reports to complete the in-house newsletter. She is coming up on her one-year anniversary with the company.

A good time to come by would be next Thursday around 9:30 a.m. after our regular staff meeting.

Thanks,
Rachel

Figure 3.2 Scouting Report

usually get slammed by the employees and would rather avoid any confrontations.

The scouting report eases the boss's anxiety, makes his visit much more productive, and generally facilitates managing up in your organization. Instead of telling the boss just what's wrong in your area, give him the good news, too. Consider this experience from my own career:

When I was president of a hospital, I got an e-mail that said "Heads up. Bad day in the operating room. Some angry surgeons down here;

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you might want to come on down.” *I don’t think so*, I told myself. Do you blame me? No one wants to answer a summons that inspires dread and foreboding!

I preferred to receive scouting reports from department heads and supervisors. They can be written or verbal. I would have been much happier if the “angry surgeons” e-mail had included the following scouting report: “Hey, when you come to my area to talk to the surgeons, here’s some equipment that we’ve improved that you might want to mention because the employees are excited to get it. Here are some projects that I’d like you to ask about, because the employees are really feeling good about what they’ve done. Here’s the name of a few employees that I’d like you to recognize and here’s why.”

3. *Send regular notes to the bosses.* Bosses want to know whom to reward and recognize. Don’t be afraid to drop your boss a note. Tell her the name of an employee to whom you would like her to send a note and the specific behavior or accomplishment you would like her to write about. And suggest that she send it to the employee’s home. You’ve just managed up the employee to the boss, who, when she writes the note, will say she got the information from you.

4. *Help employees develop key words.* (See Chapter 19, “Key Words at Key Times,” to learn more.) You want your frontline employees to tell the customer that your product is the best and that the people behind the scenes are doing a great job. Even if it’s uncomfortable at first, you will find that the customer appreciates it.

Meet with your frontline employees and make sure they understand the product and the roles and qualifications of others who help create, service, and deliver it. Teach them how to communicate this to the customer in a way that feels comfortable and natural. For example: “Our luxury bath soaps are the very best. They are milled in Provence, France, using fresh herbs and flowers grown in the French countryside by farm families whose ancestors have done this for centuries. I love our lavender soap; I even keep a bar of it in my dresser drawer.”

Let’s revisit our restaurant example. Good restaurants huddle with their waitstaff before their shift and make sure they understand all the specials. They let them sample entrees and advise

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them on what wines may complement each one. The manager will visit the tables, manage up the server and the chef, and ask for feedback to relay to the staff later on.

5. *Continually emphasize honest, open communication between employees.* Here's a scenario that may seem all too familiar: Gerald is upset that his co-worker, Bob, left him out of a meeting in which he would normally be included. He shares his displeasure with Bob with their leader, who discusses it with the Chief Operating Officer, who discusses it with the president. The COO spends time talking to Gerald, his supervisor, and others involved in the meeting. These conversations take time—time that is, frankly, mostly unproductive. The leader simply could say up front to Gerald, "Have you talked to Bob?"

Things like this happen all the time. We carry messages for people we shouldn't. As leaders, we must teach our people to carry such messages themselves. The reality is we've got to be able to have adult conversations in the workplace. If there is a problem or issue, it is best that the two parties discuss it first between themselves. If they can't reach resolution, *then* it's time to bring in the boss. Otherwise, the problem gets caught up in the organizational chart and never handled.

6. *Develop written department feedback systems.* Large corporations have numerous departments. All are interconnected, but few may know each others' goals and objectives. This lack of communication can lead to many we/they situations. For example:

A weekly newspaper's editorial staff has as its goal to turn in all its stories to production by 3:00 P.M. so that they can begin reviewing the final pages the next morning before the publication is sent to the press. They're upset because the production department doesn't have the page laid out for them when they arrive at 7:30 A.M. What they don't know is production has placed a priority on finishing the ad designs and *their* goal was to complete the editorial pages by noon. They didn't even know the editorial staff was upset. It's the publisher who hears all the complaints.

Written feedback systems help eliminate passive-aggressive behavior between departments. When the two departments have to

evaluate each other on a weekly basis, they are forced to talk out the issues and modify their operational goals. As a department head, I have to write my name on the evaluation. My boss sees it and so do you. Now, if I rank you too high then I can't use you as an excuse to my boss anymore. So I'm probably going to rank you accurately. The first time I give you that 3 when you think you're a 5, we'll have a talk. It may not be pleasant, but it's best to get difficult conversations out of the way early on.

Do you see the value of creating feedback systems? They open up dialogue and help move the organization forward. That's always a good thing.

KEY POINTS FOR HARDWIRING RESULTS

- The we/they phenomenon creates negative images and feelings among employees. Leaders who try to make themselves look good at the expense of others—even unconsciously—contribute to an atmosphere of distrust, blame, and finger-pointing.
- Managing up helps organizations overcome we/they. Basically, it means positioning something or someone—top management, other departments, outside suppliers, and so forth—in a positive light. Managing up leads to better customer service, better leadership, and higher employee satisfaction.
- Make it a point to manage up as you coordinate handoffs from one customer service provider to another. Well-designed recordkeeping—through computer databases, file cards, or any other techniques that capture and retain customer data—can help you do this more effectively. When customers realize that each person in your organization understands their problems and needs, their level of satisfaction skyrockets.
- Employees at all levels of an organization should always look for an opportunity to talk up the company with customers, vendors, suppliers, visitors, and others. By managing up our

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co-workers every time we get a chance, we reduce the customer's anxieties and create an expectation of good service.

- Here are a few tips for creating a cultural shift in your company from blaming to managing up:
 - Conduct employee attitude surveys to set some benchmarks by which you can measure your progress.
 - Send scouting reports to your boss. A scouting report detailing what your people are doing is likely to motivate the boss to visit more often and become more visible.
 - Also, send regular notes to your boss identifying employees who deserve reward and recognition. Doing so helps her send thank-you notes, which are an important component of managing up.
 - Help employees to develop key words for managing up.
 - Emphasize honest, open communication between your employees.
 - Finally, develop written departmental feedback systems so all employees can know each other's departmental goals and objectives. (See sample on studergroup.com, search departmental feedback.)
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C H A P T E R



REDUCE LEADERSHIP VARIANCE

Why This Chapter Is Important

MOST ORGANIZATIONS HAVE STRICT RULES ON HOW TO USE THEIR LOGO and its tag line. We call it corporate identity. Break the rules, and the logo police are in your office. Why is this so? Because it's important to convey a consistent visual message about your company.

We also standardize what we buy, from whom we buy it, and how we buy it. We measure variances in the financials all the time. And when one variance falls outside a certain range, we fix it.

But there is one thing most companies struggle to standardize, and ironically, it's the most important part of our efforts to gain and sustain results. It is *leadership*. If a company has 500 leaders, it may have 500 different ways to interview prospective employees, 500 different answers to the same questions, and 500 different ways to deal with a given situation.

Companies that standardize leadership best practices create a map showing the way to high performance—a map that all leaders can share.

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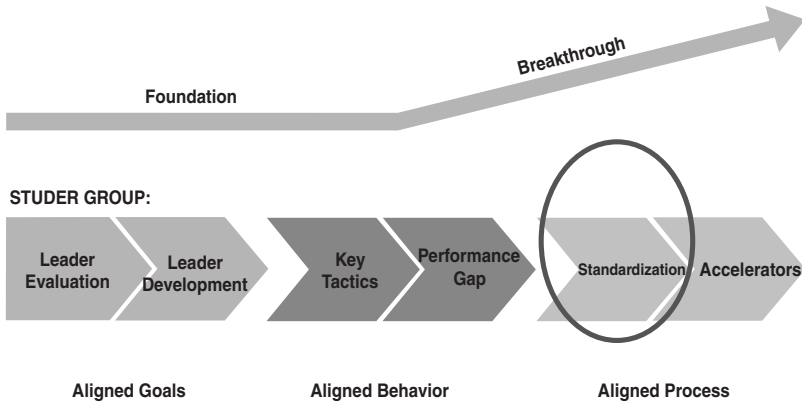


Figure 5.1 Evidence-Based Leadership

This chapter explores the reasons why leadership variance is such a common problem and why, therefore, so many organizations fail to achieve their desired results. It builds a strong case for adopting a system that enables your company to utilize best leader practices consistently so that everyone is working together to create results that last.

• • •

When we fly, we're grateful that the pilot has a checklist that he follows when he lands the plane. We want every landing to be the same—smooth, safe, and uneventful. No one on the plane wants the pilot to experiment with some new technique that just hit him while the passengers were watching the in-flight movie.

The same is true when we dine out. Our favorite franchise food tastes the same whether we order it in Phoenix, Arizona, or Opp, Alabama. We count on our burgers and fries being cooked and seasoned to the same specifications in all cities. If for some odd reason the food isn't identical, our confidence in that franchise is weakened.

With our medical care, we have the same sorts of expectations. Doctors have spent long hours perfecting their treatments and procedures. Many surgeons perform the same operation several times in a week. Although individual cases may require more skill than

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others, the basic core procedures that are followed are the same. We don't want our cardiovascular surgeon to suddenly use his left hand instead of his right because he was bored and wanted to shake things up.

Pilots, restaurant owners, and doctors seek standardization and wish to reduce variances from one landing, meal, or patient to another. They strive for consistent outcomes. We can learn from this principle as we move our organizations toward achieving lasting results.

TAKE A CUE FROM YOUR FINANCE LEADERS

Finance departments have focused on accounting variations for decades. Financial managers watch each and every expense variation like hawks to contain costs and preserve the quality of care.

At our "Taking You and Your Organization to the Next Level" seminars, we often ask a financial officer in the audience, "If one of your managers has exceeded his or her expense budget for the month, how long will it be before you ask for an action plan to bring expenses back into line?" They inevitably answer, "About five minutes," a joke that's not far off the mark. The bottom line is that variances in managing expenses are not going to be tolerated.

If we don't tolerate variances in expenses, then why do we tolerate variances in other aspects of leadership and management? When we ask leaders about variances in other areas (such as Service, People, Quality, and Growth), their action plans and accountability are often sketchy. They say that correcting those types of variances may take weeks or months—or that it may never actually happen.

This is the case because the nonfinancial areas, at first glance, appear more difficult to measure objectively than sales, overtime, or other such items. But making the effort is definitely worth it.

Setting measurable goals for areas other than finance leads to improved outcomes. When leaders track and trend results,

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variances can be monitored. For instance, when all leaders set a goal to reduce turnover to 10 percent, the organization can find high-performing areas for others to use as benchmarks. It allows an organization to respond at the beginning of a negative trend and create action plans immediately.

The fact is that most organizations would be better off if leaders ran their operations like financial managers, because they focus a great deal on measurement metrics and reducing variances. Sometimes these financial managers are so focused on reports and metrics that other people in the organization suspect that the Finance Department is more concerned about numbers than about people.

We believe financial managers *are* concerned about people. However, they understand that consistency and standardization in operations come first. If we can't ensure operational excellence, we can't build a great place for employees to work, leaders to lead, and customers to receive excellent service.

It may *involve* numbers, but it isn't *about* numbers. It's about people!

CONSISTENCY EQUALS SUSTAINABLE RESULTS

An example from my work with one hospital may serve to illustrate this point. Leaders at this hospital wanted to reduce the number of people who left the Emergency Department (ED) without being seen. These "lost patients" equal lost revenue. Typically, people who leave are those who have other options for care and are more likely to be able to afford it. Also, people who leave without being seen are a liability to the hospital.

Let's say Susan brings her young daughter into the Emergency Department on a Saturday morning. The child is exhibiting a fever, chills, and vomiting. Susan suspects her daughter has the flu but is seeking assurance that it's nothing more. After waiting two hours without any update from ED staff, Susan gets frustrated and decides to leave. After all, it is most likely the flu, right? But what if it *isn't*?

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If it turns out Susan's young daughter actually has meningitis, for instance, the hospital is liable.

To reduce the number of people leaving without being seen, the ED charge nurse or triage nurse was asked to round on patients and families in the waiting area of the Emergency Department. The rounding needed to happen consistently, so the nurse was asked to round every hour on the hour using specific key words (see sidebar). The timing and wording were based on a study by the *Alliance for Health Care Research (AHCR)*. The study showed that using consistent rounding and key words was effective at reducing the likelihood that people would leave the ED without being seen. (Access the full study at www.studergroup.com.)

Key Words for Patients and Families in the Emergency Department Reception Area

SCRIPT: IN RECEPTION/LOBBY

Julie: Good afternoon. I am the ED Charge Nurse (or Triage Nurse) today in the ER. There is about a 45-minute wait to go to the treatment area right now. Please let me or the greeter, Leigh, know if your condition worsens, and I will keep you informed every hour. Dr. Pablo knows you are here. He is the ED doctor today and he is an excellent physician.

Julie: *Documents the round on the rounding log.*

This standardized process resulted in an *additional* 4 percent improvement in preventing patients from leaving without treatment. Now 4 percent may not sound like a lot, but in a busy Emergency Department it adds up to a lot of patients. The improvement netted the hospital *an additional \$432,000 per year!*

This is just one example of how reducing the variance in the way a process is administered can result in bottom-line improvements. (See the sidebar for other improvements based on reducing variance by standardizing behaviors.) We should also note that the

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other improvement here, besides the \$432,000 savings, was the increase in the perception among patients that the hospital’s staff was genuinely interested in them.

Reducing Variance = Return on Investment

We believe that any organization in any industry—not just health care—can improve the quality of performance and enhance both customer satisfaction and employee performance by eliminating variances. (See Figure 5.2.)

ROI—ED		
ISSUE	RETURN ON INVESTMENT	Estimated Value*
Left-Not-Seen Rate	A 4% improvement in left-without-treatment yields an additional 1440 patients x \$300.	\$432,000/yr
Volume Growth Patient Sat	An additional 1% increase in volume from improved word of mouth yields 360 patients/year x \$300.	\$108,000/yr
Registration	An improvement of 5% collections from accurate registration information yields revenue from an additional 1800 patients/year x \$300.	\$540,000/yr
Litigation	A reduction of door-to-doc time from 60 minutes to under 30 minutes decreases potential litigation claims from 4.16 to .9 (0–30 minutes = .9, 30–60 minutes = 2.74, >60 minutes = 4.16)	\$300,000/yr
RN Turnover	A reduction in turnover of 4% equals savings of \$60K per RN retained. *4% x 100 RNs x 60k/year	\$240,000/yr
Turnaround Time	A reduction in average turnaround time of 60 minutes per patient creates room to see an additional 30 patients per day—virtual beds. If only 1/4 of those 30 patients (7) were realized x \$300 per patient x 356 days per year it would increase revenue.	\$757,000/yr

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*Based on an ED seeing 36,000 pts/yr with average patient revenue \$300



Figure 5.2 Return on Investment—Emergency Department

WHY LEADERS DON'T STANDARDIZE BEHAVIORS

Perhaps the reason why many leaders within an organization shy away from tracking and eliminating variances is that we're not sure what that actually means in real-life terms. (We don't all have a background in statistics!)

The term *variance* does indeed have several technical meanings. In statistics it refers to the square of the standard deviation. In chemistry it refers to thermodynamic variables necessary to specify a state of equilibrium of a system. In law it refers to the permission to engage in an act contrary to a rule or regulation.

For our purposes, the definition of a variance is simply the difference between what the results can be and what actually occurs. It might refer to an expense that exceeds plan or it might refer to high employee turnover. It could reflect an unacceptable customer service outcome or it could refer to a poor employee interview process.

Leaders may desire standardization for others, but want autonomy for themselves. (We want to provide leadership for our particular work area, *our way*.) We're all for leaders having their own individual style, but we still need to standardize certain procedures. The question for those who fight leadership standardization is this: Is personal autonomy more important than achieving the organization's desired results? And since organizational goals cascade from the organization's mission, is a single leader's autonomy more important than the organization's mission?

For many organizations, the prospect for achieving lasting results through standardized leadership behaviors remains little more than a dim, distant vision. The challenge of transforming an organization's culture is no small undertaking—somewhat like turning a battleship around on a river. It can be done, but not all at once.

It's up to our organization to figure out why our leaders aren't speaking in a unified voice. Here are some possibilities:

- Leaders don't have the training they need to be successful.
- There's no objective accountability system.

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- The “dots are not connected” for employees regarding purpose, worthwhile work, and making a difference.
- We’re not utilizing a sequenced approach.
- There’s no process for managing high and middle performers.
- There’s no system for addressing low performers.

Every organization must determine what could be holding it back from standardizing best practices. Which factors may be

What We Permit, We Promote

I first heard the phrase “What you permit, you promote” from Liz Jazwick, a presenter and respected colleague I’ve known for the past 10 years. I have found that it’s very true.

When I became president of a hospital in 1996, 23 percent of employees had late evaluations.

This issue came to my attention when (in response to my questioning) an employee said, “If we are so respected, why is my evaluation late?” So I did a bit of digging and found that some of that 23 percent had been waiting for weeks, others for months. The problem was that no consequences befell the leader who did not complete employee evaluations by the deadline.

I guaranteed all staff that in 60 days there would be no late evaluations. Systems were put in place and consequences outlined, positive recognition went to leaders with no late evaluations, and dots were connected as to why an on-time evaluation is crucial to show respect and retain employees. Sixty days later, there were no late evaluations, nor were there any throughout my entire tenure. I believe the hospital’s system of on-time evaluations and results is still strong.

In our travels, we find that many organizations are not fully aware of what they are permitting, and thus promoting. Here are some examples:

Reduce Leadership Variance

- When a leader who consistently fails to meet customer satisfaction goals is not dealt with—or worse, still gets a good review—we are promoting poor performance.
- When a vice president does not share information that others are sharing, we are promoting inconsistent communication.
- When a leader keeps blaming the data for results, we are promoting excuses.
- When a person types on his or her BlackBerry during a meeting, we are promoting a lack of attention and a lack of respect.

Ask yourself: “What am I permitting, and thus promoting?” At your next senior leader meeting, put on the agenda “What are we permitting, and thus promoting?” At the next department head meeting, take some time to ask leaders what they feel the senior leaders are permitting, and thus promoting. At your next staff meeting, ask staff what is being permitted, and thus promoted.

Yes, you may be disappointed in what you hear. But you will *not* be disappointed in the opportunities to improve the organization that will result from these efforts. And you certainly won’t be disappointed in the outcomes that will be achieved. Even if you decide leaders need more training, you’ll discover it’s well worth the investment. Consistency in what gets promoted is a priceless attribute!

keeping the organization from going to the next level? There are ways to address that question. When thinking about the leadership within our organizations, leaders must consider:

- How many different interview systems does our organization use?

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- When our leadership team exits a departmental meeting, how confident are we that the message we have given the supervisors to take back to their departments is actually delivered?
- When employees ask leaders tough questions, how confident are we that the leader will provide the answers senior leaders prefer?
- Do we notice that some leaders in our organization perform well while others do not, although they all work in the same environment?
- Does our leader evaluation process embrace a balanced approach that aligns each individual's accountability with organizational goals?

SIX WAYS TO REDUCE LEADERSHIP VARIANCE

Financial managers, by virtue of their professional training and experience, are uniquely qualified to help other managers reduce their leader variance by modeling standardization and consistency in their own leadership behaviors. Here are my top six suggestions for a strong start:

1. Use a common agenda. While we recommend that agendas are organized by the Five Pillars (People, Service, Quality, Finance, and Growth), the most important thing is that there is a standardized meeting agenda used by all leaders throughout the organization. First, this approach aligns all staff to the same organizationwide goals, thereby connecting to the vision and mission of the organization. Second, it provides a single mechanism to cascade communication to staff so all employees understand the critical success factors both in the organization and in their individual work areas.
2. Align the evaluation process to the pillars or the organization's critical success factors. Goals must be objective, measurable, meaningful, aligned, and focused on results.

Reduce Leadership Variance

3. Ensure that each leader leaves every department meeting with a packet of information he or she can share with staff so that every employee hears the same information. (Many organizations use “Flip ‘n Tell,” a tool widely available at office supply stores.)
4. Choose a single common selection method for hiring new staff. All applicants should be asked at least two or three of the same behavioral-based questions regardless of the job for which they are interviewing. Choose questions that are geared toward values and ownership.
5. Collect from leaders the tough questions they hear from staff. Work with leaders to develop ways they can respond uniformly across the organization when they receive these questions. If there are 100 leaders in an organization, there may be a multitude of different answers given to the same question, depending on the leader. This exercise provides leaders with skills to address these questions, which builds confidence and also provides evidence of the organization’s desire that all leaders have the information they need to respond to staff questions.
6. Make sure leaders and supervisors have been trained in basic competencies to use the above five tactics. The most successful organizations annually provide significant hours of training in specific leadership competencies.

Great performers in any field do not tire of repetition; they thrive on it. As we become better at a learned skill, we become more efficient, and then get even better. The implementation of just a few of these tactics can reduce leadership variance in an organization. The rewards will be better and more lasting results, improved operational efficiencies, and greater innovation.

A PROCESS FOR TRANSFORMATION

How do we get that battleship turning on the river? A comprehensive, structured approach is the best way to move leaders from

RESULTS THAT LAST

mediocrity or limited success to true excellence. The goal is to create a self-sustaining culture that has the energy and vision to achieve excellence for many, many years.

Over the next few chapters of this book, I will discuss the specific strategies for building lasting results through improved employee and customer satisfaction.

The table provides a detailed look at the overall direction our process requires:

Studer Group Process for Achieving Organizational Excellence					
Leadership Evaluation → Development		Key Tactics → Performance Gap		Standardization → Accelerators	
Align Goals		Align Behavior		Align Processes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement an organizationwide leadership evaluation system to hardwire objective accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a process to assist leaders in developing skills and leadership competencies necessary to attain desired results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviors all leaders should follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key words at key times • Re-recruit high and middle performers • Move low performers up or out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardwire key goals and techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Idea innovation • Technology • Process improvement

- *A method for evaluating and developing leaders.* Excellence starts when an organization’s leaders commit to guiding their employees along the necessary path.
- *The application of key behaviors.* Leaders learn how to tap employee self-motivation to help their people attain higher performance levels.
- *The development of standardized processes for hardwiring excellence.* Cement the organization’s alignment with the Five Pillars of Excellence.

When all leaders are “singing from the same choir book,” the company’s journey to results that last will progress much more quickly, smoothly, and effectively. In Chapter 6 you will learn more about the next important step: measurement.

KEY POINTS FOR HARDWIRING RESULTS

- Variances in how managers practice leadership across an organization can produce inconsistencies that make it harder to achieve excellence. Variances in practices within a single department can also reduce productivity and lower profitability. Align the practices of your managers and you can improve the quality of performance as well as enhance customer and employee satisfaction.
- Many leaders find it hard to standardize the behaviors of their managers. Leadership behavior can be difficult to quantify, and some managers fear intruding on another manager's autonomy. But, since organizational goals cascade from the organization's mission, any single leader's autonomy is less important than the organization's mission.
- A number of barriers can get in the way of standardizing leader behavior. They include lack of critical mass, lack of a balanced approach, untrained leaders, absence of objective accountability, dots not connected, no process for managing high and middle performers or for addressing low performers, and an inability to standardize best practices across the organization.
- Leaders should understand which organizational practices could be inconsistent and fragmented across their organization. They should consider factors such as variances in employee interview systems, inconsistent messages to employees, uneven leader responses to employee questions, varying leadership performance, and ineffective leadership evaluations.
- To reduce leadership variances, consider the following suggestions:
 - Use a common agenda format at all meetings.
 - Align the evaluation process to the Five Pillars.

ABOUT STUDER GROUP

Studer Group is an outcomes-based firm devoted to teaching evidence-based tools and processes that organizations can immediately use to gain and sustain operational excellence. Organizations see clear results in the areas of higher employee retention, greater customer satisfaction, healthy financials, growing market share, and improvements in various other quality indicators. Studer Group has worked with hundreds of organizations in health care and other industries since the firm's inception in 1998.

CEO Quint Studer and Studer Group's coaches teach, train, and speak to thousands of leaders at organizations worldwide each week, through both on-site coaching sessions and frequent speaking engagements. This ongoing in-the-trenches dialogue provides ample opportunity to spot best practices in action from first-mover innovators at many organizations. These best practices are then harvested and tested in other organizations, refined, and shared via peer-reviewed articles, Studer Group publications, and products designed to accelerate change.

Because we find that reducing leadership variance lies at the very heart of creating a consistent culture of excellence, Studer

A B O U T S T U D E R G R O U P

Group helps organizations to hardwire great leadership. The firm harvests effective tools and techniques and then shares best practices for development of Leadership Development Institutes that efficiently turn training into results.

To learn more about Studer Group, please visit www.studergroup.com.

OTHER LEADERSHIP BOOKS
BY QUINT STUDER
AND STUDER GROUP

If you enjoyed *Results That Last*, you may also appreciate some earlier titles by the author and others affiliated with his company. Although they are aimed primarily at a health care audience, these books are filled with insights and principles that transcend industry—for instance, creating a culture of excellence, engaging employees, and finding meaning in and passion for one’s work.

Hardwiring Excellence: Purpose, Worthwhile Work, Making a Difference, by Quint Studer (Fire Starter Publishing, 2003, perfect-bound ISBN: 0-9749986-0-5, case-bound ISBN: 0-9749986-1-3). In this best-selling book, Studer helps individuals and organizations to rekindle the flame and offers a road map to creating and sustaining a Culture of Service and Operational Excellence that drives bottom-line results. His tools, tips, and techniques help readers hardwire key behaviors to increase employee, physician, and patient satisfaction; lower employee turnover; improve quality; grow market share; and increase revenue while reducing costs.

101 Answers to Questions Leaders Ask, by Quint Studer (Fire Starter Publishing, 2005, ISBN: 0-9749986-2-1). Informed by best practices in a national learning lab of health care organizations, Studer shares his insights on how to deliver excellent patient care, engage employees, and improve physician relations for access, growth, and strong financial performance. In short, his answers

accelerate the leadership learning curve. Questions are organized by topic, making the book valuable as a reference point for specific issues or on-the-spot problem solving.

What's Right in Health Care: 365 Stories of Purpose, Worthwhile Work, and Making a Difference (Fire Starter Publishing, 2007, ISBN-13: 978-0-9749986-4-0, ISBN-10: 0-9749986-4-8). This book, compiled by Studer Group, shares an inspirational story a day for an entire year. The stories, submitted primarily by health care professionals, movingly illustrate what happens when people view their work as not just a job but as a calling.

To learn more about these and other Studer Group books, please visit www.studergroup.com or www.firestarterpublishing.com. Bulk pricing is available.

PRAISE FOR

RESULTS THAT LAST

"Quint Studer is a superb communicator with a deep belief in the power of relationships. His informal tone, sense of humor, and real-world stories bring his business principles to life. *Results That Last* has a vital, optimistic quality that will keep readers re-reading long after other leadership books have been relegated to a dark corner of the shelf."

—Nido Qubein, author of *How to Get Anything You Want*; President, High Point University; Chairman, Great Harvest Bread Company; and founder, National Speakers Association Foundation

"*Results That Last* is long overdue and fills a big gap in effective business management. There are legions of books that show us the way to achieve successful results in business, but very few that teach us how to institutionalize success. In reality, achieving success is the easy part. The real challenge is to achieve results that last. Quint Studer not only proves it is possible to hardwire a culture for lasting results, but lays out a simple, logical, and effective way to do so. Anyone who wants to make success a habit needs to read this book."

—Bob MacDonald, former CEO, Allianz Life of North America and author of *Beat the System: 11 Secrets to Building an Entrepreneurial Culture in a Bureaucratic World*

"I have always been fascinated by how the various parts of an organization work together to achieve strategic objectives. In *Results That Last*, Quint Studer explores the complex subject of performance improvement in a fresh, readable, and easy-to-grasp way. By standardizing certain business practices and leader behaviors, any company in any field can create an environment that allows it to achieve and sustain long-term results."

—David F. Giannetto, coauthor of *The Performance Power Grid: The Proven Method to Create and Sustain Superior Organizational Performance*



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