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Across the Board

New Beginnings

By **Malika Malika**

Greetings! It is a new beginning!

This year's beginning of spring is special in astronomical history. Not only was spring's equinox on March 20th, but THREE astronomical phenomena took place on this day, the vernal equinox, the super-moon, and a total solar eclipse. According to astrologers, this confluence of events can provide profound transformational energy when focused on new beginnings.



Malika Malika

In this spirit, I am honored to introduce you our 2015-2016 Board of Directors. This amazing Board has a balanced mix of professional experience, previous organizational board experience, as well as culture and gender diversity.

The 2015-2016 Board is excited to provide excellent service to our chapter members and our other stakeholders. We are well positioned to do this, based largely on the strong structural foundation already in place, thanks to the hard work of our previous Board members.

We aim to lead and inspire our operational staff, with a focus on building and demonstrating a healthy leadership culture. We want to work with you (members) to assure we're providing the services that are meaningful to you, and we'll be looking for every opportunity to connect with you and hear how we're doing.

The newly elected Board of Directors begins its journey with you on April 1st, but before we do, we want to extend a warm and hearty Thank You to:

- All the chapter members for electing this new Board
- The nominations committee for their work of finding very talented and experienced Board candidates.
- The 2014-2015 Board of Directors for their work of setting a strong foundation and mitigating organizational risks.

- Our Operations team for keeping all the balls rolling during our transition period.

We would also like to wish the best of luck and express our gratitude to our outgoing President, Summer Graham, and Treasurer, Man Singh.

It is with our best wishes and intentions that we begin this journey with you! We look forward to keeping you posted on our progress, as well as receiving your feedback along the way.

[Please don't hesitate to reach out to the board at bod@pmi-sfbac.org]

Let's make this a memorable year!

Sincerely,

Malika Malika PMP, CSM, CPC, SPC

President, PMI-SFBAC Board of Directors

Scholarship Available to PMI – SFBAC Members

Commemorates the Chapter's 40 Year Milestone

The Project Management Institute Educational Foundation (PMIEF) is administering up to \$3,500 in scholarship monies to honor the PMI San Francisco Chapter's 40 Year Milestone. As you may know, PMIEF is a non-profit, non-political, public charitable organization that advances project management knowledge as well as the application of project management concepts and theory. Founded by PMI in 1990, PMIEF brings the benefits and power of project management to local communities and to the farthest reaches of the world for social good through its development and administration of scholarships, grants, programs and educational resources.

Through the generosity of PMI, the PMI San Francisco Chapter is eligible to receive US \$3,500 to award professional development scholarships to a chapter members and/or individuals in your community who demonstrate an outstanding commitment to project management and wish to enhance their professional capabilities through relevant coursework.

The scholarship application period will commence **May 1 and conclude July 31, 2015** and will be online.

You should also know:

- Each chapter's total scholarship funds will be expended until exhausted, thus the two application periods. We will alert chapters how many, if any, dollars remain after the first application period closes.
- Each chapter's total scholarship funds will be awarded either whole or in part to either one or more individuals.
- An external panel of volunteer judges (who are project managers) will review applications to determine scholarship recipients.
- Scholarship recipients will receive reimbursement for their course once they provide proof of course registration and receipt of payment. They may submit this information via either mail/courier or e-mail.
- Both classroom and online courses are eligible for reimbursement.
- Reimbursements will only be issued for the cost of the course. Neither textbook nor examination fees will be reimbursed.

You will find further information and application processes for the PMI-SFBAC scholarship [here](#).

Tales of a Third Grade Project Manager

By Marie Spark, PMP

My 9-year-old daughter Celeste surprised me the other day with her very first project schedule – for a playdate. Now, before you accuse me of being a “helicopter parent,” this was entirely her own initiative, along with best friend Jackie.

However, having a plan certainly fit their project needs. The two girls had been waiting a long time for a playdate – they knew they only had a few hours and many, many favorite activities to squeeze in. You will note that along with Littlest Pet Shop, Pokemon, and the Harry Potter Lego Wii game, Celeste wanted to include in a house tour and harassing her dad (I was out of town).



Marie Spark

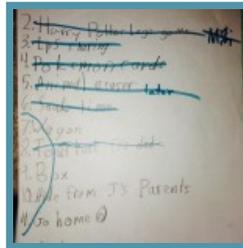
I am attaching a photo of the schedule. Several best practices can be noted – they checked off each task that they completed, and wrote at the bottom: “No Change.” Celeste explained to me that this meant they were not allowed to change the schedule – yes, their first change control system!

In terms of project success, given that my husband texted me periodically about being “attacked by pink ninjas,” I believe the “Jackie and Celeste Playdate Project” was a definite win for most stakeholders (maybe not for my husband).

Here is a transcript (including misspellings) of the schedule:

Schedule for Playdate

1. Tour
2. Harry Potter Lego game
3. LPS sharing (Littlest Pet Shop)
4. Pokemon cards
5. Animal eraser
6. Snak time
7. Wagon
8. Tourture C's Dad
9. Box
10. Hide from J's parents
11. Go home



Third Grade project list

Marie Spark, MBA, PMP
Professional Instructor
Project Manager

Did You Know...?

You can apply for the PMI San Francisco Chapter Milestone Scholarship to advance your professional skills and knowledge starting on May 1, 2015?

And did you also know

The Chapter's total scholarship fund (\$3,500) will be awarded either whole or in part to either one or more individuals and that the total scholarship funds will be expended until exhausted?

Other than the May 1 starting date, what are you waiting for?

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What is Leadership?

By James Manktelow

The word “leadership” can bring to mind a variety of images. For example:

- A political leader, pursuing a passionate, personal cause
- An explorer, cutting a path through the jungle for the rest of his group to follow
- An executive, developing her company's strategy to beat the competition



James Manktelow

Leaders help themselves and others to do the right things. They set direction, build an inspiring vision, and create something new. Leadership is about mapping out where you need to go to “win” as a team or an organization; and it is dynamic, exciting, and inspiring.

Yet, while leaders set the direction, they must also use management skills to guide their people to the right destination, in a smooth and efficient way.

In this article, we'll focus on the process of leadership. In particular, we'll discuss the “transformational leadership” model, first proposed by James MacGregor Burns and then developed by Bernard Bass. This model highlights visionary thinking and bringing about change, instead of management processes that are designed to maintain and steadily improve current performance.

Note:

Leadership means different things to different people around the world, and different things in different situations. For example, it could relate to community leadership, religious leadership, political leadership, and leadership of campaigning groups. This article focuses on the Western model of individual leadership, and discusses leadership in the workplace rather than in other areas.

Leadership: A Definition

According to the idea of transformational leadership, an effective leader is a person who does the following:

- Creates an inspiring vision of the future.
- Motivates and inspires people to engage with that vision.
- Manages delivery of the vision.
- Coaches and builds a team, so that it is more effective at achieving the vision.

Leadership brings together the skills needed to do these things. We'll look at each element in more detail.

1. Creating an Inspiring Vision of the Future

In business, a vision is a realistic, convincing and attractive depiction of where you want to be in the future. Vision provides direction, sets priorities, and provides a marker, so that you can tell that you've achieved what you wanted to achieve.

To create a vision, leaders focus on an organization's strengths by using tools such as Porter's Five Forces, PEST Analysis, USP Analysis, Core Competence Analysis and SWOT Analysis to analyze their current situation. They think about how their industry is likely to evolve, and how their competitors are likely to behave. They look at how they can innovate successfully, and shape their businesses and their strategies to succeed in future marketplaces. And they test their visions with appropriate market research, and by assessing key risks using techniques such as Scenario Analysis.

Therefore, leadership is proactive – problem solving, looking ahead, and not being satisfied with things as they are.

Once they have developed their visions, leaders must make them compelling and convincing. A compelling vision is one that people can see, feel, understand, and embrace. Effective leaders provide a rich picture of what the future will look like when their visions have been realized. They tell inspiring stories, and explain their visions in ways that everyone can relate to.

Here, leadership combines the analytical side of vision creation with the passion of shared values, creating something really meaningful to the people being led.

2. Motivating and Inspiring People

A compelling vision provides the foundation for leadership. But its leaders' ability to motivate

and inspire people that helps them deliver that vision. For example, when you start a new project, you will probably have lots of enthusiasm for it, so it's often easy to win support for the project at the beginning. However, it can be difficult to find ways to keep your vision inspiring after the initial enthusiasm fades, especially if the team or organization needs to make significant changes in the way that they do things.

Leaders recognize this, and they work hard throughout the project to connect their vision with people's individual needs, goals, and aspirations. One of the key ways they do this is through Expectancy Theory.

Effective leaders link together two different expectations:

- The expectation that hard work leads to good results.
- The expectation that good results lead to attractive rewards or incentives.

This motivates people to work hard to achieve success, because they expect to enjoy rewards – both intrinsic and extrinsic – as a result.

Other approaches include restating the vision in terms of the benefits it will bring to the team's customers, and taking frequent opportunities to communicate the vision in an attractive and engaging way. What's particularly helpful here is where leaders have expert power. People admire and believe in these leaders because they are expert in what they do. They have credibility, and they've earned the right to ask people to listen to them and follow them.

This makes it much easier for these leaders to motivate and inspire the people they lead. Leaders can also motivate and influence people through their natural charisma and appeal, and through other sources of power, such as the power to pay bonuses or assign tasks to people. However, good leaders don't rely too much on these types of power to motivate and inspire others.

3. Managing Delivery of the Vision

This is the area of leadership that relates to management. According to the Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Model, there is a time to tell, a time to sell, a time to participate, and a time to delegate. Knowing which approach you need to use, and when you need it, is key to effective leadership. Leaders must ensure that the work needed to deliver the vision is properly managed – either by themselves, or by a dedicated manager or team of managers to whom the leader delegates this responsibility – and they need to ensure that their vision is delivered successfully.

To do this, team members need performance goals that are linked to the team's overall vision. Our article on Performance Management and KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) explains one way of doing this, and our Project Management section explains another. And, for day-to-day management of delivering the vision, the Management by Wandering around (MBWA) approach helps to ensure that what should happen, really happens.

Leaders also need to make sure they manage change effectively. This helps to ensure that the changes needed to deliver the vision are implemented smoothly and thoroughly, with the support and backing of the people affected.

4. Coaching and Building a Team to Achieve the Vision

Individual and team development are important activities carried out by transformational leaders. To develop a team, leaders must first understand team dynamics. Several well-established and popular models describe this, such as Belbin's Team Roles approach, and Bruce Tuckman's Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing theory.

A leader will then ensure that team members have the necessary skills and abilities to do their job and achieve the vision. They do this by giving and receiving feedback regularly, and by training and coaching people to improve individual and team performance.

Leadership also includes looking for leadership potential in others. By developing leadership skills within your team, you create an environment where you can continue success in the long term. And that's a true measure of great leadership.

Note:

The words "leader" and "leadership" are often used incorrectly to describe people who are actually managing. These individuals may be highly skilled, good at their jobs, and valuable to their organizations – but that just makes them excellent managers, not leaders.

So, be careful how you use the terms, and don't assume that people with "leader" in their job titles, people who describe themselves as "leaders," or even groups called "leadership teams," are actually creating and delivering transformational change.

A particular danger in these situations is that people or organizations that are being managed by such an individual or group think they're being led; but they're not. There may actually be no leadership at all, with no one setting a vision and no one being inspired. This can cause serious problems in the long term.

*© 2015 James Manktelow and the Mind Tools Team. James works at MindTools.com, he attended London Business School. He completed his MBA in 2000, specializing in Entrepreneurship, Finance and Strategy.
http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_41.htm?utm_source=nl&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=24Feb15#np*

Optimism: The Hidden Asset

By Bruna Martinuzzi

Among the topics that young people study before they enter the workforce is calculus, the mathematics of change and motion. While training in calculus is undoubtedly valuable, I believe that training in optimism is also important.



Bruna Martinuzzi

Just as it is good discipline to solve problems like the velocity of a car at a certain moment in time, it is also crucial to figure out what drives people to give us the very best that they have to offer. Ironically, Leibniz, one of the inventors of calculus, is also known for his philosophy of optimism. He was considered to be an inveterate optimist, asserting that we live "in the best of all possible worlds". Optimism is an emotional competence that can help boost productivity, enhance employee morale, overcome conflict and have a positive impact on the bottom line.

In writing about optimism, you face the danger of being seen as advocating a "Pollyanna" or quixotic approach. The truth is, however, optimism has been proven to be a powerful tool that will pay dividends for your personal life and give you a competitive advantage professionally in your career. There is a lot to be gained, indeed, in cultivating an optimistic outlook.

Take leadership, for example. Nowhere is optimism more important than in leading organizations. Highly effective leaders have a transforming effect on their constituents: they have the gift of being able to convince others that they have the ability to achieve levels of performance beyond those they thought possible. They are able to paint an optimistic and attainable view of the future for their followers: They move others from being stuck with "how things are done around here" and help them see "how things could be done better".

In *The Leadership Advantage*, an essay from the Drucker Foundation's *Leader to Leader Guide*, Warren Bennis tells us that optimism is one of the key things people need from their leaders in order to achieve positive results. Every "exemplary leader that I have met," writes Bennis, "has what seems to be an unwarranted degree of optimism – and that helps generate the energy and commitment necessary to achieve results."

Consider, as well, the reverse: the effect that pessimistic individuals can have on an organization's creativity and innovation. To be innovative, you need to be open to new ideas, wide open to seeing possibilities, willing to take risks and encourage others to take risks – willing to challenge the process in order to create new solutions or products or improve processes. In short, you need to have a sense of adventure and an expectation of success. Those who have a pessimistic outlook typically approach changes to the status quo with the familiar: "We tried this before", "It won't work", or "It will never fly". Such individuals often label themselves as "devil's advocate". How can someone who has a pessimistic outlook embrace change over the safety of the known?

There are other areas which are impacted positively by optimism. Take sales, for example: A study shows that new sales personnel at Metropolitan Life who scored high on a test on

optimism sold 37 percent more life insurance in their first two years than pessimists (Seligman, 1990). In another study involving debt collectors in a large collection agency, the most successful collectors had significantly higher scores in the area of self-actualization, independence and optimism. (Bachman et al, 2000, cited by Cary Cherniss.)

Perhaps more significant are the countless studies that have shown that people with an optimistic outlook have healthier relationships, enjoy better mental and physical health and live longer. In *The Wisdom of the Ego*, Dr George E Vaillant, Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, writes about individuals who have “both the capacity to be bent without breaking and the capacity, once bent, to spring back”. Vaillant mentions that, in addition to external sources of resilience (such as good health or social supports), these individuals have important internal sources which include a healthy self-esteem and optimism.

These coping mechanisms are fully explored in Dr Vaillant’s subsequent book: *Aging Well: Surprising Guideposts to a Happier Life*, a truly fascinating study that will be particularly interesting to fellow boomers. This is a compendium of three studies involving over 800 individuals, men and women, rich and poor, who were followed for more than 50 years, from adolescence to old age. In it, we discover that one of the most powerful predictors of successful aging is habitually using mature coping mechanisms or defenses, what Vaillant calls the ability to “make lemonade out of life’s lemons.”

Vaillant’s study discovered five of these coping mechanisms: Altruism (doing for others what they need, not what we want to do for them); Sublimation (diverting energy to more constructive pursuits such as creativity, art, sports); Suppression (postponement of stressors, not repression); Humor and Anticipation. Anticipation is realistic, hopeful planning for the future. This means not operating in a pessimistic crisis mode but preparing and adapting for whatever life brings.

So how do you recognize an optimist? Alan Loy McGinnis, author of *The Power of Optimism*, studied the biographies of over 1000 famous people, and isolated 12 characteristics of the optimistic personality. Among these is: “Optimists look for partial solutions”, that is, freed from the tyranny of perfectionism and from paralysis by analysis, they are open to taking small steps towards achieving success.

Another characteristic of those who have an optimistic nature is: “Optimists use their imagination to rehearse success”, in other words, they play positive mental videos of preferred outcomes, much like sports figures do. Michael Jordan, for example, once stated that he never plays a game that he hasn’t first visualized. Another trait is that “Optimists think that they have great capacity for stretching” – they believe that their personal best is yet to come.

Dr Martin E Seligman, the modern scholar most often associated with studying the traits of optimists, and former president of the American Psychological Association and Professor of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, has devoted decades to studying optimistic people and reports three traits that they have in common:

They view adversity in their lives as temporary, specific and external, that is, not entirely their fault, as opposed to pessimists who view adversity as unchangeable, pervasive, and more personal. In the face of setbacks, challenges or difficult jobs, pessimists are more likely to do worse than predicted and even give up, while optimists will persevere.

Optimism, therefore, is also an important component of achievement, and is especially important in times of chaos, change and turbulence. Those who have an optimistic outlook will roll with the punches, will be more proactive and persistent and will not abandon hope.

So, where does optimism come from? Is it something we are born with or is it learned? For some lucky individuals, being optimistic comes naturally. The good news is that, for those who don’t have it naturally, optimism is an attitude that can be learned and practiced. Here are some strategies you can consider in your journey to becoming more optimistic or in helping someone else who suffers from pessimism:

Avoid negative environments: If this is not realistic, make every effort to seek the company of positive individuals in your organization. Sometimes this may mean fraternizing with peers in other departments. Stay away from the professional complainer.

Celebrate your strengths: The key to high achievement and happiness is to play out your strengths, not correct your weaknesses. Focus on what you do well. (If you are not sure what your signature strengths are, consider reading *Now Discover Your Strengths*, which includes a web-based questionnaire that helps you discover your own top-five inborn talents.)

Take care of your spiritual and emotional well-being by reading inspirational material on a daily basis: This may be different for each person. Some may be inspired by daily quotations, others by reading biographies of successful people in their field and yet others may derive inspiration from reading about all the innovations that we are graced with. A useful website for this is the World Future Society, which keeps up with new inventions.

Manage or ignore what you cannot change: When faced with setbacks, identify what you can change and proactively try to find ways to do something about it. We have often heard this advice – it bears repeating. Be inspired by Benjamin Franklin's words: "While we may not be able to control all that happens to us, we can control what happens inside us."

Learn to reframe: This involved deliberately shifting perspective and looking for the hidden positive in a negative situation: the proverbial silver lining. Look for the gift in the adversity. If you are serious about developing greater optimism, there is no better book than *Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life* by Dr Martin E Seligman. Learn Dr Seligman's ABCDE model for disputing pessimistic thoughts. This is a very useful and powerful tool to help you change the way you explain events that trouble you from optimistic to pessimistic. Click here for our Book Insight on Learned Optimism.

Adapt your language and outlook: Consider how a simple shift in the language you use can make a difference in your outlook: Do you frequently say: "yes, but..." in response to your constituents' suggestions? The "but" automatically negates anything you have said in the beginning part of the sentence. A simple shift to "yes, and..." might make a positive difference. Check the emails you have sent recently. Count the proportion of negative to positive words. It could be enlightening.

Become aware of your stance in business meetings: Are you known as the "devil's advocate", the one who is quick to shoot down others' ideas? Jumping in too quickly to negate an idea can derail the creative process. Often valuable ideas are the result of an initial "crazy" thought. At meetings, even when we don't have the floor, we are under a magnifying glass. Practice being more upbeat, practice speaking last, and see what happens.

Focus outside yourself, on important people in your life, on pursuits and projects that fire you up. Bertrand Russell once said that the quickest way to make ourselves miserable is to continually focus on ourselves. It was his love of mathematics that kept him going. Nurture a culture of optimism when you are in charge of other people at work. Expect people to succeed. Even when they occasionally fail to achieve what they set out to do, encourage them so that they can tackle the next challenge. A simple: "I know you'll do better the next time" can have very positive effects.

Cultivate spontaneity: Consider putting aside all your plans once in a while to take a walk with your kids, play a game or catch a show. Getting out of your comfort zone by being spontaneous helps to develop your optimistic muscle, as spontaneity essentially involves an expectation of having a pleasurable experience.

Consider the health benefits: If you need an extra motivation for practicing optimism, consider the statistics linking optimism to greater health. As Dr Seligman explains, there is evidence to believe that immune systems among optimistic people are stronger than among pessimists.

This paper would not be balanced if we did not address the benefits of pessimism. Pessimists, as Seligman explains, may be more realistic and accurate about dangers and risks. At times, when there is a risk of serious negative consequences, a cautious, risk-avoiding evaluation is appropriate and desirable. But the positive effects of being optimistic – fighting depression, aiding in professional, academic and sports achievement, and boosting mental and physical health – outweigh the benefits of being a career pessimist. The answer then is, as Seligman explains, "flexible optimism", i.e. having the wisdom to assess situations and identify those that require a pessimistic inquisition, and those that call for

optimism, for having a “can do” attitude” and taking a chance. Winston Churchill had a reason for saying: “A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.” Practice seeing the opportunity.

© 2015 Bruna Martinuzzi. Bruna attended University of British Columbia and lives in North Vancouver. She is the president of Clarion Enterprises Ltd., and fluent in six languages and experienced in training and coaching leaders and teams in North America, Europe, China and the Middle East.

Her specialty areas include: leadership, emotional intelligence, and communication and presentation skills.

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Scopemasters — Develop your Communications Skills

By Chuck Siu

Toastmasters is not just a forum for better speaking skills, it's also a great venue for discussing, practicing, and perfecting communication techniques for all types of situations, from meeting facilitation to professional networking. The Scopemasters chapter adds a project management focus to the mix, and the result is a valuable, PDU earning, meeting that can pay big dividends for the time invested. If you are interested in finding out more about Scopemasters please send an email to scopemasters@pmi-sfbac.org and include your contact information. We'll get back to you with more details about how to be a part of this exciting organization.

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