

Business May Be Your Life – But – Life Is *Your* Business

Part X: Inspirational Leadership®

Inspire: Self – Others – the World: Part 2^{A,B,C}



James A. Cusumano, PhD

“Wealth, like happiness, is never attained when sought after directly. It comes as a by-product of providing a useful service.”

Henry Ford

KEY CONCEPTS:

- **Organizational leadership is rapidly evolving to a new way of thinking and being in order to manage the global challenges and opportunities of an increasingly complex and interconnected society.**
- **Created and popularized by Dr. Lance Secretan, Inspirational Leadership® succinctly embraces and addresses this transition.**
- **Inspirational Leadership® is based on the CASTLE Principles, an acronym for *Courage, Authenticity, Service, Truthfulness, Love, and Effectiveness*. When internalized and practiced proficiently, these principles form the basis for creating an organization that is personally rewarding, commercially advantageous and socially responsible^{A)}.**

CASTLE PRINCIPLES

In Part 1 of this article, I presented the concept of the CASTLE Principles. The word CASTLE is an acronym developed by Dr. Lance Secretan for *Courage, Authenticity, Service, Truthfulness, Love, and Effectiveness*, the key elements that underpin all Inspirational Leadership®. We explored the role and power of Courage and Authenticity in leadership and how they are an integral part of the foundation of Inspirational Leadership®. In Part 2, we now describe the importance of *Service*, and *Truthfulness*. The last two attributes – *Love* and *Effectiveness* – are presented in the next and final article on Inspirational Leadership®.

SERVICE

Albert Einstein was an avowed atheist – and yet, a spiritualist, as well. How could this be? He was an atheist, because he did not believe in God as defined by organized religions. He was a spiritualist because he did believe in an unknown and as yet, undefined “Force” or entity – perhaps a “First Force” – that permeates the cosmos and is responsible for, and hopefully could explain, all physical and non-physical phenomena². He spent the largest part of his professional life at the Institute for Advanced Study in

Princeton, New Jersey, trying to unify his theory of relativity with quantum physics in hopes that he just might get a sense for this entity. Today, some of the most renowned physicists are still looking to discover this “First Force.” They call their quest, the search for the “Theory of Everything.”

Although Einstein was one of the founding fathers of quantum physics, he felt it was an incomplete theory with “hidden variables” as yet undiscovered by science, and which, once uncovered, would explain all of the apparently “mystical” quantum phenomena that permeate our universe. This is what he meant when he said, “I want to know the mind of God; the rest are just details.”

If you dig further into Einstein’s philosophy and science, it is no surprise to find that he felt the fundamental purpose of life is service – “*Only a life lived for others, is a life worthwhile.*” In a similar way, John William Gardner, author of “*On Leadership*,” Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare under U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson, President of the Carnegie Corporation and founder of *Common Cause* and *Independent Sector*, also noted that “When people are serving, life is no longer meaningless.” And as the quote at the beginning of this article succinctly demonstrates, even successful corporate titans such as Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Company, recognized the power and potential of service (Figure 1).

Why is it that wise thinkers such as Einstein, Gardener, Ford and many others all came to this common conclusion – Life is all about service? There is strong evidence that they ultimately concluded that all people, and in fact all things in the universe, are to varying degrees, connected³. Service recognizes that this interconnectedness or oneness provides a powerful synergy, and the possibility of a great return to all stakeholders. I will use my current experience with Chateau Mcely as an example.

Chateau Mcely (pronounced “meh-selly”), located an hour’s drive from the center of Prague in the midst of the St. George Forest, is a five-star, castle-hotel, executive retreat and spa. It is the former rural manor of the famous Thurn-Taxis aristocratic family, whose fortune came by founding the postal system in Europe during the Middle Ages. The chateau is a member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World and was voted by *Dolce Vita Magazine* as the “Best Boutique Hotel in the Czech Republic.” In 2006, the year that total renovation was completed and Chateau Mcely opened for business, it won first place in the “Best of Realty” for sensitive restoration as a heritage property.

The Chateau Mcely team, led by Managing Director, Vlastimil Plch and his management team, embraces and summarizes its professional sense of purpose as follows:

WHO WE ARE

Our Vision:

To make a difference in the world by making a difference in the lives of our guests & fellow teammates

Our Mission:

To support our guests and teammates towards their highest personal potential with an environment that balances body, mind, and spirit

Our Promise:

To provide our guests with the highest level of service and comfort

Our Picture:

A cozy, relaxed, friendly atmosphere with the service of a leading five star hotel

Our Dream:

To continuously re-create Chateau Mcely to honor, serve and touch the hearts and souls of our guests and fellow teammates, providing them with a sense of personal satisfaction, hope, and excitement for the future

Our Values:

1. We continuously surprise our guests.
2. We practice integrity and mutual respect in all that we do.
3. We seek and appreciate feedback from our teammates and our guests.
4. We seek the Joy of Life for our guests, our teammates and ourselves.
5. We solve problems together.
6. We are a learning organization.
7. We focus on the Triple Bottom Line – People, Planet, Profit.
8. We work as a family.

Only our vision and mission were developed by the executive management team. Our promise, our picture, our dream, and especially our values, were developed by our employees. They are reviewed every year by the employees and have remained the same since we opened Chateau Mcely.

^{A)} **EDITOR’S NOTE** – This is Part X in a series of articles based on the author’s experience as an entrepreneur, having founded several successful businesses, including *Catalytica Pharmaceuticals, Inc.*, a billion-dollar public company. His business experience base spans “5 lives” – A multimillion record sales recording artist; R&D Director for Exxon; Chairman & founder of 2 public companies; CEO, founder and Executive Producer for Chateau Wally Films; Chairman & Owner of Chateau Mcely, an international award-winning luxury hotel & SPA. This article is extracted from his latest book, presently in preparation and entitled, “*My Little Book of Business – Tales of Purpose, Passion & Enterprise.*” Parts I–V of this series deal with “*Creating A Fulfilling Life.*” Part VI addresses “*Building A Successful Business,*” and the current series focuses on *Conscious Capitalism and Conscious & Inspirational Leadership* as a means to lasting fulfillment in life and success in business.

^{B)} The author may be reached at Jim@ChateauMcely.Com.

^{C)} Part 1 of this article appears in the previous issue of *LEADERS Magazine*. Part 3, the final part, appears in the next issue of *LEADERS Magazine*.



Figure 1: Henry Ford, founder of America's most successful automobile Company found that service was a fundamental factor to his success



Once you have digested this summary of "Who We Are," there is no doubt that if the members of the Chateau Mcely team truly believe in and follow the above vision, mission and values, then they are unquestionably committed to serve all stakeholders. Perhaps, this is why a visit to the discriminating on-line travel guide, TripAdvisor website at www.TripAdvisor.Com shows at this moment in time, 74 reviews, 70 are Excellent and 4 are Very Good. These reviews are unprecedented for most luxury hotels, which is why you will see the following guest quotes among them – "An absolutely wonderful experience!" – "The most relaxing and carefree weekend I've ever had!" – "A great place to relax with an amazing staff!" – "Chateau Mcely – The best five star hotel I've stayed in!" – "Exquisitely conscious and comfortable on all levels!"

These accolades and awards do not happen by accident. They also do not result from Chateau Mcely employing the most talented staff in the Czech Republic – although to be sure they are intelligent, capable and personable. This outcome is based on conscientious hard work and a total commitment to service throughout the organization. Vlastimil Plch and his management team work with each of the team members from the moment of their employment and thereafter. Employees build their commitment to service by Chateau Mcely providing them with the most effective tools to do their job well, and an environment that fosters their personal and professional growth. This enables them to most effectively serve our guests, their fellow team members, our community, and in fact all of the stakeholders connected to the Chateau Mcely adventure.

We do this by minimizing all forms of internal competition, which we see as the antithesis of service. We support a culture where team members listen to understand and not just to hear each other. Most business partnerships and even marriages fall apart when there is no longer a focus on listening with understanding and compassion.

At Chateau Mcely, there is no fear of retribution for mistakes, and this component of our environment is reinforced by Vlasta, who has no hesitation to admit to his own mistakes or to change course, when one of his decisions is found to be ineffective. There is a sense of compassion, family and sharing. We build on this sense of service by demonstrating trust. We disclose to all employees our financial goals and progress and at the end of the year we share with them a significant fraction of our profit.

All of this is not to say that Chateau Mcely is without its personnel challenges. We have had our share of them. Although we work intensely to try to hire the right person for the right job at the right time, we sometimes make mistakes. We try to minimize these challenges by an extensive

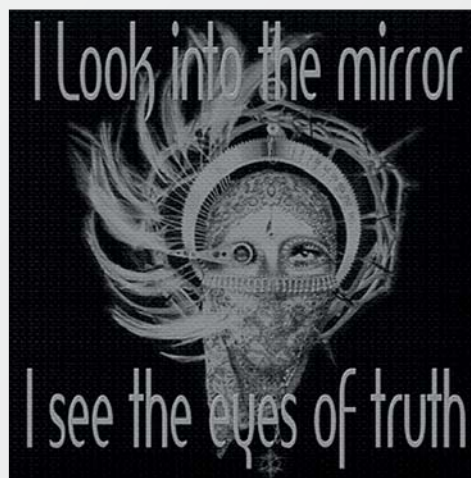
interview process and testing by an outside human resource firm. It's in the best interest of Chateau Mcely and the interviewing candidate. When we do make a mistake, the person hired usually feels uncomfortable in our environment and leaves of his or her own accord. Or, the employee feels pressure from other members of the team, and decides to leave. If neither of these mechanisms occurs, we counsel the employee in a most compassionate manner to find another employer.

Commitment to service has an incredibly powerful outcome. Employees are fostered and enlightened into a creative stance that enables them to solve challenging problems, work extremely efficiently, and develop an increasing commitment to all corporate stakeholders. Service is one of the strongest indicators of highly effective and accomplished enterprise.

TRUTHFULNESS

It's difficult, and often disappointing or embarrassing to **always** tell the truth. Ultimately, however, telling the truth imbues in the teller an unparalleled power of persuasion and strength, and in the listener, unwavering commitment to the teller. This is because, deep down, we all seek unconditional trust and truth and it's not easy to find. Just read the political news or turn on the television.

Figure 2: Surveys show that on average people tell 13 lies per week (Reference 3)



My wife, Inez and I were recently invited by movie producer friends to the Los Angeles World Premiere of a much anticipated film by a new director. In my truthful opinion, after viewing the film, I felt it was "okay," at best. We attended the premier party afterwards, and I was dreading the moment when someone might ask me what I thought of the film. How do you tell the truth without hurting those involved in making the film? The answer, of course, is that you can't. But not telling the truth often hurts them more.

Then it happened. One of the producers approached me and asked, "Well Jim, what did you think?" I nearly froze with my words, but knew that I had to respond, and I wanted to do so truthfully. "Look," I said, "I was in the film business for a brief stint of my professional journey, but I was blessed with incredible people around me to have the good fortune that occurred with *"What Matters Most,"* my first and only feature film. So, I'm really not a good judge of the quality of the film." I rapidly scanned my memory for those aspects of the film that I honestly felt were quite good, and the continued, "I think the acting and the camera work were very good. The subject matter is of limited interest to me, so in total, I was not overly impressed. But, I'm probably in the minority; perhaps others will find it to be a fine film."

My producer friend made it abundantly clear that I truly was in the minority and that everyone he spoke with "loved

the film." But, as I found out later by speaking with others at the party, this was not the case; most people simply did not want to hurt his feelings. But, that's how our modern world moves. I doubt that we will ever be invited to another premier by my producer friend! As a postscript, and certainly not based on my critique, the film did poorly in the theaters.

In writing his book, *"ONE—The Art and Practice of Conscious Leadership,"* Lance Secretan found that research shows that people tell on average 13 lies per week, and that lying occurs in nearly two-thirds of our interpersonal conversations (Figure 2). Furthermore, about 75 percent of professionals "pump up" their resumes, and between 20 and 30 percent of business managers have written fraudulent internal reports⁴. But that's not how great organizations work, those led by Inspirational Leaders.

Inspirational Leaders, regardless of whether it's challenging or not to tell the truth, are intimately aware that the single most reliable predictor of employee productivity and satisfaction is *TRUST!* It is a definite competitive advantage in business. Inspirational Leaders understand the four ways to cultivate trust in their organization.

1. Excite all of their stakeholders with their vision and mission for the company.
2. Employees must understand, and to some degree, participate in developing the company's strategy – at least that part which applies to successful accomplishment of their efforts.
3. Employees must intimately understand how their role can contribute to achieving the company's goals.
4. Share with employees, the company's progress and how their team is doing relative to their team goals, as well as to the company goals, and do so with impeccable truth.

Inspirational Leaders create highly effective, competitive organizations and a stimulating creative environment in which to work. As a result, employees see themselves as "bigger than life," and they work that way. They also make our world a better place.

James A. Cusumano, PhD ■

¹ Much of the substantive content of this article is based on the *CASTLE PRINCIPLES*, which have been developed by Dr. Lance H. K. Secretan. See for example, *"ONE – The Art and Practice of Conscious Leadership,"* The Secretan Center, 2006.

² "First Force" is just a place holder referring to something that about 13.7 billion years ago gave birth to everything. It is likely not a force as we know it from classical physics.

³ James A. Cusumano, "Cosmic Consciousness – A Journey to Well-being, Happiness and Success," Fortuna Libri, 2011.

⁴ Op. cit., Reference 1, p. 125.

About the Author: James A. Cusumano is Chairman and Owner of Chateau Mcely (www.ChateauMcely.Com), chosen in 2007 by the European Union as the only "Green" 5-star luxury hotel in Central and Eastern Europe and in 2008 by the World Travel Awards as the Leading Green Hotel in the World. He is a former Research Director for Exxon, and subsequently founded two public companies in Silicon Valley, one in clean power generation, the other in pharmaceuticals manufacture via environmentally-benign, low-cost, catalytic technologies. While he was Chairman and CEO, the latter – Catalytica Pharmaceuticals, Inc. – grew in less than 5 years, to a \$1 billion enterprise with 2,000 employees. He is co-author of "Freedom from Mid-East Oil," recently released by World Business Academy Press (www.WorldBusiness.Org) and the author of "Cosmic Consciousness – A Journey to Well-being, Happiness and Success," published in English and Czech by Fortuna Libri, 2011.