McCombs Career Webinar

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How to be a Leader BEFORE You Become the CEO

by Donna Fox, MBA ’95
You asked about…

- Handling office politics
- Managing your boss
- Building and leading teams
- Implementing strategy
- Managing change
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These all call for the practice of LEADERSHIP!
Leadership is…

- A set of principles. An “operating system” that guides you every day.
- How the *real work* gets done in any organization.
- Critically important to the development of you and your career.
Step 1: Shift your perspective

- Make a decision to cross the bridge from “employee with rights” to “Level 5 leader with responsibilities.”
  - Personal humility + integrity of ambition (Collins)
  - You accept a new reality: you will do both your “assigned work” AND you will lead within the organization
  - You will suddenly notice you can differentiate between the employees and leaders around you

**Warning:** the bridge dissolves behind you as you cross!
Step 2: Ask the right questions

- Schedule meetings (1:1’s, coffees, lunches) with leaders and employees
  - Formal Goals
  - Change Agendas
  - Development Paths
- Keep careful/confidential notes
- YOU choose who you meet with. Meet with C-level execs, if you can.

You are onboarding as a leader!
Step 3: Align

- Consciously furthering the goals, change agendas, and development paths of others
- Align only where a L5 leader would (integrity of ambition)
- What if you find yourself out of alignment with company goals/agenda?

Notice how many new people, resources, ideas come YOUR way via alignment.
Step 4: Your own Change Agenda

- Coalesces from your “team,” the leaders and employees you speak with regularly about positive change. This process is known as “enrollment.”
- Must align with your manager’s goals, and with several executive’s goals / change agendas.

Scan the horizon for opportunities to put your agenda into action!
Step 5: Lead a change project

- Comes from the real work – this is not an artificial project
- Leverages skills of your “team,” aligns with their goals and development paths
- Enables significant goals to be achieved – company/division level
- Enables several of your key supporters to further their change agendas
- Must have at least one exec. sponsor
- Must have support of your manager
What can hold you back?

- Natural detractors: enroll or neutralize
- Unwillingness to delegate
- Poor/incomplete delegation
- Incomplete skill set on change project. Start with your “team” and augment as needed.
- Poor choice of executive sponsor(s)
- Poor communication during project
- No outside/objective mentors
- Attributing results to one’s own genius!
What do you get?

- Informal power: sometimes greater than people several steps above you on the formal org chart
- Reputation for being able to get things done
- Resources you can use for good, when you need them
- Opportunity to learn the principles of leadership
- Personal/professional development
For any follow up questions…

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Thank You!

- The recording of today’s presentation, along with the PowerPoint slides, will be available on our Career Programming Web page by next week:
  
  http://www.mccombs.utexas.edu/alumni/careers/programming/

- Save the date for our February Third Thursday Career Webinar: "Increasing Your Efficiency: 5 Advanced Tips for Using Outlook"