



HBA 2008 WOTY Comments

***Putting People First* Introducing the HBA's 2008 Honorable Mentor: Len Kanavy**

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When we think about leaders, there are many qualities that come to mind: Adaptable, flexible, visionary, likeable, charismatic ... so many more. What we may not often think about is the philosophy that leaders choose to operate within. One type of leader most of us admire is that person who puts the interests of others ahead of their own and sees business people as *people first* – yes, people who just happen to be in business. This year's Honorable Mentor, Len Kanavy, does just that. He consistently puts the success of his reports, men and women alike, ahead of his own.

Len Kanavy joined Genentech in 2006 as VP, Commercial Operations. He is a man of natural modesty who strives to bring out the best in people by helping them determine how to bring out the best in themselves.

One of his team, Elizabeth Jeffords, told us that she has felt privileged to work for him and be on his team; she emphasized that she has personally thrived under his guidance and has celebrated many personal successes as part of Len's team. Carol Wells, another team member, wrote about the importance Len places on personal accountability: "He backs you every step of the way," she says, "and sets a great example of accountability."

As a young man in the grocery business as General Manager of an IGA store, Len came to realize that he had somewhat of a limited career in the grocery business. He had been exposed to the pharmaceutical business through family members who were sales representatives. He decided to join the industry and became a sales rep for Sandoz -- Len really loved combining business with science. He progressed to the position of VP, Business Analysis then VP, Commercial Operations as Sandoz

evolved into Novartis. He enjoyed talking with physicians about the fit his products may have with their patients and convincing them to consider trying a new therapy from his company. He then moved to Genentech, where today he leads a team -- largely of women leaders -- that manages the day to day operational support functions for the company

Len is acknowledged by his team as a true mentor, constantly inquiring about their own areas of developmental curiosity and encouraging them to pursue them. He motivates his team by asking them what they want to do about a situation in order to better the business. Especially riveting is the comment we received from his team that, after joining Genentech, in a relatively short period of time, he earned their trust early on by trusting them *and* has continued to earn it as they work together. He also is a great coach and rallies his group to overcome hurdles like budgeting or people churn. And he always takes time to listen. He is, however, also credited by the team with using way too many Penn State football analogies, but, hey, no one is perfect, right!

Len has been a long time supporter of the HBA and our mission to advance and develop women leaders in the healthcare industry. And he is devoted to helping his leaders achieve whatever they are capable of. He has this special ability to connect with people through their hot buttons – what makes them tick – and this makes him a truly inspiring leader.

Ladies and gentlemen, the HBA's 2008 Honorable Mentor, Mr. Len Kanavy.

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