



## HBA 2008 WOTY Comments

### Would You Work For You?

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**2008 HBA Woman of the Year**

WOW!!!!

Matt: Thank you so much!

Never in all my years of volunteer work for the HBA did I imagine I would be standing here. Words are insufficient to thank everyone who made this possible. Colleagues, friends, my bosses, past and current. And special thanks go to Bridget Cleff, Brian Cain, Denise Tenerelli, and Joel Bradus.

The theme of this year's event is "Responsibilities of Leadership." This is especially meaningful to me in my new job as head of Leadership Development/Talent Management at Shire. It's been a passion of mine for years and now I get to live my passion. It's also meaningful to me because, for a long time, I didn't think of myself as a leader. I didn't even think of myself as a "boss"; instead, I thought of myself as a good manager. A leader seemed like a whole different thing entirely.

About 20 years ago, as I was just about to start my first real management job as department head, I was celebrating with two long-time friends. One is a very senior executive – not in our industry – and her counsel was to be tough and demanding. If I wanted, for example, three-inch margins (back when we worried about margins!!), then I should demand them. "But what if three-inch margins don't make sense?" "No matter," said this exec; "demand them because you're the boss." I remember walking home with my other friend, who was then the highest-ranking woman in her company, and saying that I didn't think I was going to be very successful, because this was the type of corporate hierarchical "stuff" that I had heard my father complain about and which had turned me off business when I was growing up. Her counsel was: "Be yourself; do what's right for the company and for you."

Over the years, I've learned what makes me want to get out of bed in the morning and get to work, and I know what makes me want to get my résumé together and find another job. I want to do something of value, something that makes a difference during the day at work. And I want to feel appreciated for what I do. And I assume that other smart, responsible adults react the same way.

Which brings me to today – to a question I want to ask all of you: Would you want to be **your** boss? Would you **really** want to work for you?

I posed that very question to a close friend who laughed and said, "Now, yes! 15 years ago: No way!" So what made the difference? She said that "Part of it is having kids; they keep you grounded and

real. And poor!” But part of it is also putting yourself in the other person’s shoes, and asking: how would I feel if that were said to me or done to me?

I love what the poet Maya Angelou said: “I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

There’s a great movie starring Michael Caine called “Shock to the System.” Caine plays the head of Market Research at an advertising agency in the ‘70s; his new boss is much younger, much more technologically-oriented, convinced that computer modeling will eliminate the need for actually asking people about their needs and preferences. (Being a former market researcher, you can imagine how little this idea appealed to me!) Michael Caine decides he literally can’t live with this situation, so he kills his boss. Caine is interviewed by the police chief, who asks him, “Was he your superior?” And Michael Caine answers, “No, he was just my boss!”

I always tried to think in terms of being a **servant/leader**, not a superior. We don’t always have to be out in front as leaders. Think of stage managers; you never see them on stage, but the play can’t go on without them. Sometimes, we need to be alongside people, encouraging them; and sometimes, behind them, pushing them. Abraham Lincoln said: “There go my people; I must follow them, for **I** am their leader.”

So ask yourself: What is my legacy? How do I want to be remembered?

One of my early bosses was a legend in the industry as being very tough; she told me that I wanted too much to be liked. She was right! But I was troubled by this, because it seemed like it was going to be a career-limiting factor, so I kept trying to figure out what the alternative was. To be hated? Do any of us really want to be hated? To be feared? People will perform under fear, but they’ll usually try to get away as soon as they can. To be respected? Yes, absolutely! So I decided I was content with being liked and respected and, if that didn’t work, well then, OK, I told myself. I would just always take pride in my work and, particularly, in my team, try to make a difference and have some fun.

That’s what has helped keep me grounded as an employee, a manager and a leader -- and helps me to remember how I got here -- and leads me an acronym I’d like to share with you: **PRIDE: Persistence, Resilience, Integrity, Do Good Work and Energy.**

**First: Persistence** Persistence is not giving up -- it’s also the ability to see another way, another path. Persistence is having the self-confidence and fortitude to persevere when the going is rough. At one point, I had seven bosses in three and a half years – two of them twice! One of these bosses often didn’t even remember that my group reported to him, but we kept at it. My last boss acknowledged that --despite no promotion for me or my direct reports, despite headcount reductions and freezes, despite budget cuts – we had indeed added a great deal of value to the company. Persistence does pay off.

**Resilience** Many leadership gurus think that resilience is the most important quality for a leader to have. Resilience is the ability to bounce back, roll with the punches, not get crushed. We hear every day about the changes the industry is experiencing – and that means more change for you. And let’s face it: Change is fine if you’re the changer, but not so much fun if you’re the changee!

I’ve been through a lot of change: I’ve been hired and I’ve been fired; I’ve been upsized, and downsized and right sized; I’ve been promoted, I’ve been demoted; I’ve been the merger and the mergee; I’ve been the acquirer and the acquiree. Throughout all of this, I tried to keep a sense of balance and a sense of humor.

Remember that inertia is one of the strongest forces in the universe, and it's our tendency to think that the good times will never end -- and conversely, that the bad times will never end. But they do. And to get through the tough times, we need to use every tool we can -- family, music, sports, community work, exercise, gardening, religion -- whatever it takes. By the way, this is when volunteering can truly be a life-saver -- it was for me! It gave me something real and substantive to do; I got validation from what I did; it gave me perspective, and the networking was terrific. So volunteer! If not for the HBA, then for something else.

My resilience was really tested about 11 years ago, when I was fired. They made it a performance issue. As my boss read me the list of my failings, I thought I was, as they say at Wharton, GUMBA: G-U-M-B-A : Genetically Unable to Master Basic Activities, like putting in my contact lenses and finding my way to the office. And they made it personal; they did not allow any of my staff to take me to lunch or even breakfast (although one person smuggled in a box of donuts!); they admonished the night guard not to let me back in the office after hours or on the weekends; and they blocked access to email so I couldn't send a farewell note to close colleagues. Deep in my heart, I knew that they had done me a favor, but it still hurt. And for someone who wants to be liked, it really hurt. It's times like these when you find out who your friends are; some people shunned me because I was "tainted goods." People I would not have expected walked alongside me, and that made all the difference.

One person in particular who reached out to me was Dick Fordyce. Dick was the first Vice President of Market Research in the pharma industry and a mentor to many people; some of you in this room had the pleasure of working for him. I recall so vividly having lunch in a restaurant in Somerville, NJ with Dick, as we were both being pushed out of our companies. We talked about how it happened that we were both pretty well known in the industry, both pretty well liked and respected by our staffs and our peers, and yet, clearly unacceptable to our managements. We talked about the possibility that our careers were over -- we were, after all, not 30 any more -- or even 40! What meant so much to me was that we could connect and talk about how we would get through this.

The tragedy is that he didn't get a chance -- he died of a brain hemorrhage a few months later. And that was a major wake-up call for me. Every time I felt discouraged, I'd think of Dick and tell myself that I would get through it, that things would get better. And they did. But it wasn't always easy.

I tried to keep focused on what is really important: health, family, friends, good music ... chocolate.... And with the help and support of my wonderful husband of 20 years, Leif Magnusson, our families, my friends and colleagues -- many of whom are here today I did get through it.

Matt Emmens wrote a very cool book called *Zenobia, The Curious Book of Business*, about a young woman's interview at a company that is, and I quote, "a former industry giant bedeviled by paralyzing hierarchies, grossly inadequate communications and distrust.". She has to find Room 133A for the interview. Along the way, she meets a series of "Yes-Men, Cynics, Hedgers, and Other Corporate Killjoys."

Resilience is being able to deal with all these kinds of people, and still keep focused on what needs to be done, while not losing track of who you are as a person. Which brings me to...

**Integrity** One of my favorite movies is Akira Kurosawa's "Seven Samurai." Rent it if you can. It's about a poor village in the 16<sup>th</sup> century that is beset by brigands; they convince a samurai to help them and he interviews and enlists six others. One is an old friend whom he has not seen for a long time. Before the leader even has a chance to describe the quest, his friend says, "I'm in; I'm with you all the way." The leader says, "But you don't even know what the project is yet!" And his friend says, essentially, that it doesn't matter: "You're leading it -- that's enough for me, and that means it's a quest that is important and honorable."

Are there people that **you** would follow because of their integrity? Because you know that they would be looking out for you and not just for themselves? There is a great concept called the “Shadow of a Leader.” Those of you who are parents know that kids are more likely to copy the behaviors they see, rather than listen to the words that we say. The author James Baldwin said, “Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.”

So think about the shadow that you cast at home and at work. People are always listening and watching, and you never know the impact you have on someone. This is a small industry, and your reputation precedes you.

I remember my first summer in the corporate world of Wall Street and seeing senior management as Gods on Olympus (and they were all Gods then – no Goddesses!): wise, powerful, unapproachable. Until I met the President of U.S. Trust Company, who insisted that everyone call him Charlie, not “Mr. Buek.” That made such an impression on me and I vowed that if I were ever in a senior position, I would do the same, so I wouldn’t intimidate junior people.

A good friend told me years ago that she always had to put on her corporate face in the morning before she went to work. I remember being puzzled and confused, thinking, “I only have one face” and “Wouldn’t that take a lot of energy to be a different person at home and at work?” It **does** take a lot of energy. Oscar Wilde said: “Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.”

There’s another thing about integrity: it’s the courage to speak up when things are going awry and the willingness to admit when you’ve made a mistake. Years ago I read a book called *Corporation Man* by Sir Anthony Jay, then head of the BBC and the creator of the wonderful series “Yes, Minister.” He was watching a special on April First– on the BBC, of course – called “The Great Spaghetti Harvest.” It depicted, and I quote, “smiling Italian peasant girls gathering strands of spaghetti from trees into baskets.” A UK colleague of mine at Shire said he remembers seeing the program and hearing about the “Spaghetti Trees.” Sir Anthony thought it was so interesting and informative that he wrote a memo the next day to the producer, praising the team, and saying that they should air more programs like that. Now, imagine the producer’s reaction. He summoned up his courage to tell Sir Anthony that it was a spoof – it was, after all, April Fool’s Day. Sir Anthony reports that he found it hilarious and said he hoped that everyone at the BBC would use this as an example to speak up when they saw something going off the rails and admit when they were responsible

By the way: Sir Anthony was not the only one taken in; many people wrote in to the BBC asking where they could buy a “Spaghetti Tree.”

**D is Do Good Work** My parents always told me always do the very best I could. Someone will notice. And if they don’t – well, I’ll know it. And finally,

**Energy** There’s no doubt that a high level of energy is needed today. But make time for the important things outside your job. These things energize us and help us bring a different perspective to our jobs. Many of you know that I frequently say, “Life is short; this is not a dress rehearsal.” So tell that person you love him or her, take that trip, buy that whatever, because no one ever said on their deathbed: “I wish I had spent more time in meetings!”

E is also for **Environment**: We all thrive in an environment of trust and appreciation. If we assume innocence and competence – it usually reframes the entire situation. I’m grateful to be in an industry full of really smart and competent people who are making a difference. And in a company like Shire, where we appreciate others and where we’ve added “nice” to the mixture.

So take **PRIDE** in what you do, in what you say, and in how you make people feel, so you really can be the person you want to work for.

Thank you again for this incredible honor!

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