

# THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE FOR BECOMING A BETTER LEADER

FEBRUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER

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*Leadership is Everyone's Business?*

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“ . . . just as with any other art form—whether it's painting, playing music, dancing, acting, or writing—leadership is a means of personal expression. To become a credible leader you have to learn to express yourself in ways that are uniquely your own.”

—From *The Leadership Challenge, Fourth Edition*, by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner

## Welcome to The Leadership Challenge Newsletter February 2008!

This monthly publication shares stories, examples, and information about the impact of The Leadership Challenge in all kinds of organizations. [As always, please let us know how we are doing](#); we may even contact you about featuring your ideas and stories in future editions of this newsletter.

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Join the conversation on our new Leadership Challenge blog: [LeaderTalk](#)

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### Thoughts on the Model

Continuous growth—in influence, effectiveness, and skills—may be a difficult challenge but Master Facilitator Craig Haptonstall shows how The Five Practices offers a practical roadmap to help you on your journey. † [More](#)

### Tips and Techniques

Link employee survey questions and outcomes directly to leadership training and development initiatives with a quick-to-implement exercise from Master Facilitator Valerie Willis. † [More](#)

### Ask an Expert

Move your ideas or proposals through the "good cop vs. bad cop" dynamic with advice from adult communication and storytelling expert Dr. Art Cross. † [More](#)

### Rants and Raves

One and a half million copies and still going strong. [The Leadership Challenge](#) continues to garner praise from the national media in reviews and editorials, including the most recent coverage that shows how the book's key principles can be seen in the winning record of a girls' high school basketball team and in the changing perceptions of Hillary Rodham Clinton in the race for the White House. † [More](#)

## **What We're Watching**

There are leadership lessons everywhere you look. For Beth High, Master Facilitator of The Leadership Challenge® Workshop, she has found inspiration in the funny, creative, and compelling animated video on sustainability entitled The Story of Stuff. Written and presented by Annie Leonard and animated by Ruben Deluna, Beth has returned several times to this entertaining 20-minute piece and, each time, has come away with new links to the leadership issues addressed in The Leadership Challenge. Here she acknowledges the great team of people that came together to create this important promotional message and the leadership story that this production team represents.

### **1. Model the Way**

This writer/animation/production team is clear on the values that drive their point of view. We know from the very start that as Annie narrates the video, she truly holds to the values of a government "of the people, for the people, by the people". She established her authenticity for me early on, which enabled me to be more open to hearing the full story and then drawing my own conclusions.

Annie also affirms shared ideals of fairness and equity as she demonstrates the impact that the U.S. consumer-driven economy has on other countries whose natural and human resources are harmed by our need for more extraction, more production, and more consumption. And she creates an opportunity for each of us to affect positive change to this system in crisis, pointing out a clear path for us to take actions that are aligned with our shared values.

### **2. Inspire a Shared Vision**

Using animation, simple visuals, and the power of imagery to illustrate and communicate these complex issues, this creative team has crafted a compelling vision of how we can address the problem of sustainability and take our planet in a different direction from where it is currently headed. While The Story of Stuff makes a convincing case that our current system-driven by consumption on a planet with finite resources-is in crisis, it also offers a vision that is ennobling-one that will require honesty, generosity, and courage to achieve.

### **3. Challenge the Process**

The storytelling and message of this video is a challenge to the process that currently exists. This creative team calls on each of us to seize the initiatives and ideas presented and to make changes in our own lives in order to affect greater change. They also point to ways that we can generate small wins, individually and as a nation.

### **4. Enable Others to Act**

I found myself not only engaged in the story but trusting the data. Thinking back to the clarity of values that Annie demonstrated right from the beginning, her biases and authenticity were clear. By the end of 20 minutes, I felt armed with the knowledge and confidence to take action.

### **5. Encourage the Heart**

The Story of Stuff recognizes individuals, organizations, and groups from around the world that are already addressing these critical issues-those that have their own compelling visions to share and to engage us in the work of global sustainability. This winning team of creative talent offers a sense of hope and community that is both inspiring and encouraging.

As Beth's own story suggests, there are plenty of opportunities to find The Leadership Challenge message in our everyday life experiences. Give yourself the gift of watching The Story of Stuff. Watch it for the message, for the

opportunity to be moved, for the modeling of exemplary leadership, and, perhaps, just for the fun of it.

Beth High focuses on helping clients establish ongoing development practices to sustain them on their journey through her work as head of High Road Consulting in Chapel Hill, NC. She also is a Master Facilitator of The Leadership Challenge Workshop® and can be reached at [highroadconsulting@mac.com](mailto:highroadconsulting@mac.com)

More about the video: The Story of Stuff, a 20-minute, fact-filled look at the connection between our production and consumption-driven society and the global impact on environmental and social issues, is available online at [www.storyofstuff.com](http://www.storyofstuff.com).

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