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FEBRUARY 2009 NEWSLETTER

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“Sometimes one’s values are tested, and that’s when leaders have to make sure they demonstrate through personal example what it means to be passionately committed.”

—from *The Leadership Challenge*, 4th Edition by Jim Kouzes & Barry Posner

Welcome to The Leadership Challenge Newsletter!

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 by emailing leadershipchallenge@wiley.com; we may even contact you about featuring your ideas and stories in future editions of this newsletter.

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

Early Bird Registration is Open for [The Leadership Challenge Forum 2009](#)

Thoughts on the Model

E-learning expert Jane Bozarth offers a sneak preview of a joint-project with Jim and Barry, The Challenge Continues, in which she maps the Five Practices to other popular models—here with Covey’s Seven Habits—to expand our view of the tools available to develop leadership excellence. [▶ More](#)

Tips and Techniques

Engage workshop participants in exploring how our values are innate to everything we do and to the choices we make with this easy-to-use activity that promotes the key practice of Model the Way. [▶ More](#)

Ask an Expert

Who makes a better leader: women or men? Barry Posner weighs in on this ongoing debate with valuable research and insights into what really matters in developing effective leaders—regardless of gender. [▶ More](#)

Rants and Raves

Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner bring a unique perspective to the discussion of what it takes to develop transforming leaders, in the January issue of the *Harvard Business Review*: the best way to lead people into the future is to connect with them deeply in the present. [▶ More](#)

What We're Reading

Part I of III

As we head into the 'era of Obama,' it is appropriate to take stock of the world he will be leading us into. Economic and political dynamics have changed in fundamental ways and the landscape we are entering is entirely different from what it was even a few years ago. Three recent books put some of these changes into perspective in ways that will be useful in framing our work as trainers and mentors with the leaders of the next generation.

[Hot, Flat and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution and How It Can Renew America](#) by Thomas Friedman

[Falling Off the Edge: Travels Through the Dark Heart of Globalization](#) by Alex Perry

[The Green Collar Economy: How One Solution Can Fix Our Two Biggest Problems](#) by Van Jones

Together, these three books provide a valuable road map for the realities and hopes of the next few years.

In *Hot, Flat and Crowded*, New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman frames a future (actually, the present) dominated by three factors that, together, present the most compelling challenges ever faced by the human ability to adapt: climate change, effects of technology, and massive demographic shifts.

It is now abundantly clear that climate change is real and pervasive and will dominate more of our discourse and policy decisions in the years ahead. We must act now to limit the effects of higher temperatures. Yet even if we do everything in our power, we are still likely to face unprecedented disruptions in many of the natural systems we take for granted. Meeting this challenge will require redefining the very understanding we have of our place in the world.

Friedman documents how the leveling effects of technology (the "flattening" of the world referred to in the title) means that more people are connected all the time—to news and politics, to work and to each other. Phenomenal shifts have already occurred as more people enter the digital age and the global playing field is leveled. The implications for the economy of every nation mark truly uncharted territory.

Crowded refers to rapidly expanding populations, especially in the third world, and their huge unmet needs for development in all its forms. Providing a middle class lifestyle to billions of newly affluent people will have incalculable implications on resources, planning, immigration, and other factors. It also, of course, presents giant opportunities to those companies and countries that seize upon them.

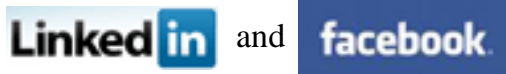
Friedman asserts that America's big problems of a souring economy and declining world leadership can be met, in part, by developing our own green industry and exporting this expertise to the rest of the world. If we don't lead here, we'll be out-competed as potentially massive markets go to those with the vision to identify opportunities and the ability to mobilize people to seize them.

Stay tuned for Part II in March.

Dan Schwab is Director of Training and Organizational Development for the Trust for Public Land, one of America's most effective environmental charities. Dan's association with The Leadership Challenge began as a ropes course instructor with Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner in the 1980s. A certified facilitator of The Leadership Challenge® Workshop, Dan delivers workshops to clients in the non profit, governmental and corporate sectors and can be reached at dan.schwab@tpl.org.

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