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“Make idea gathering part of your daily, weekly, monthly schedule. Devote at least 25% of every weekly staff meeting to listening to outside ideas. Keep your antenna up. You can never tell where or when you might find new ideas.”

—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](#), we may even contact you about featuring your ideas and stories in future editions of this newsletter.

Find more insight and inspiration every month at [The Leadership Challenge LeaderTalk](#)—voted a Human Capital Institute (HCI) 50 Best Blog - Leadership 2011!

Thoughts on the Model

Certified Master Steve Coats of International Leadership Associates offers his take on the Magnificent Methodology of leadership development called The Leadership Challenge, and other valuable lessons learned during Forum 2011 in Chicago. [» More](#)

Tips and Techniques

For the price of a quarter, leadership expert Edith Katz of Brooks Health System provides this active learning *Cash Flow* exercise which she used to engage Forum 2011 attendees in Challenging the Process and helping participants see how goal setting can inspire a team to improve productivity. [» More](#)

Ask an Expert

What is the future of leadership development? Everyone at Forum 2011 was challenged to envision what that might look like, with Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner adding a few final thoughts on technology and the next generation of leaders. [» More](#)

Rants and Raves

Tweets, blogs, online video streams, book industry sources—even CNN—have been jam-packed with news, reviews, and praise for everything TLC. [» More](#)

What We're Reading

The 8 Dimensions of Leadership

Written with exceptional clarity in an easy-to-follow, handbook-like format, [The 8 Dimensions of Leadership](#) by Jeffrey Sugerman, Mark Scullard, and Emma Wilhelm is the self-discovery reference guide that every aspiring leader should have in his or her back pocket. The basic premise is simple: different personalities yield different leadership styles. It seems obvious enough, but this refreshing perspective stands out among the sea of leadership guides that present a singular representation of what a good leader must look like.

Introducing eight different leadership styles based on the well-established DiSC (Dominance,

influence, Steadiness Conscientiousness) theory of personality, *The 8 Dimensions* guides readers through a structured process of self-discovery and development that begins with taking an online assessment to identify an individual's "default" Leadership Dimension.

There are plenty of entertaining, yet flimsily supported, "What _____ are YOU?" tests out there these days. And at first glance the cynical viewer may fear that *The 8 Dimensions* assessment is akin to these. But after taking the assessment myself, I can confidently say that not only is the test grounded in years of rigorous research, but simply taking the assessment is an extremely valuable exercise in itself. Instead of glazing over the pages and picking a Leadership Dimension you'd like to think describes yourself, taking the time to complete the assessment requires you to reflect on the behaviors you engage in on a day-to-day basis and what these behaviors indicate about the kind of leader you are. It encourages you to interact with the material in an honest and deep way—an experience that makes the entire rest of the book more personal, more engaging, and more useful. For example, my assessment results eerily matched my habits for the most part. (I am an "Affirming" leader through and through.) Returning to the book, I found an insightful explanation of both the strengths and "blind spots" of an Affirming leadership style, and another chapter offered step-by-step, concrete strategies for how to take action to address these potential weaknesses.

Identifying your own Leadership Dimension is just the first step. Using the 8 Dimensions framework, readers also receive customized suggestions on how to adopt the skills of another style when the circumstances call for it. With this emphasis on expanding skills to become a more versatile and well-rounded leader, this book manages to exploit the pedagogical benefits of its profiling system without letting the profile define or limit the person—a subtle but critical achievement which is, in my experience, the book's greatest success.

While *The Leadership Challenge* offers an essential education on the more universal practices of exemplary leadership, *The 8 Dimensions of Leadership* provides complementary insight into many of the same themes by exploring how leadership practices are manifested in different Leadership Dimensions. Encourage the Heart, for example, is a practice that all exemplary leaders engage in but may 'look' different depending on the personality of the individual leader. *The 8 Dimensions* suggests that an Affirming leader is likely to express pride in seeing someone else come up with a good idea, whereas a Commanding leader maintains stability and enjoys helping other people with certain problems. Both qualities Encourage the Heart in their own ways. Together, *The Leadership Challenge* and *The 8 Dimensions of Leadership* offer a comprehensive view of what exemplary leadership might look like for you.

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