

# FOCUSING ON WHAT MATTERS

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## Key Insights You Can Execute On April, 2013

- Results come from:
  - The leader
  - Strategy, plans, execution (having a great culture is a strategy!)
  - The leadership team
  - Monitoring results
- Purpose of strategy:
  - Win customer preference
  - Create a sustainable competitive advantage
  - Leave enough money on the table for shareholders (Ram Charan, Larry Bossidy)



## **The Six Steps of Leadership (Plus Courage)**

G. J. Hart, Executive Chairman, CEO and President, California Pizza Kitchen; interview, NY Times

- Courage – Leadership is about stepping out and having the courage to be different
- Step 1 – Be the very best you can be.
- Step 2 – Dream and dream big.
- Step 3 – Lead from your heart first.
- Step 4 – Trust the people you lead.
- Step 5 – Do the right thing, always.
- Step 6 – Serve the people you lead. It's about putting the cause before yourself.

## **Strategic Leadership, The Essential Skills**

By Paul Shoemaker, Steve Krupp, Samantha Howard; HBR January-February 2103

- Anticipate – constantly vigilant, honing their ability to anticipate by scanning the environment for signals of change
- Challenge – challenge their own and others assumptions and encourage divergent points of view- only after careful reflection and examination of a problem do they take decisive

action. This requires patience, courage and an open mind.

- Interpret – synthesize all data
- Decide – insist on multiple options, don't get locked in to simple go/no go choices
- Align – find common ground and achieve buy in among stakeholders who have disparate views and agendas
- Learn – promote a culture of inquiry and search for lessons in both successes and failures in an open, constructive way



### **BUILT FOR BRILLIANCE**

Geoff Colvin, Fortune, March 18, 2013  
Excerpt from an analysis of 30 years of Fortune's rankings, who has remained on top and why?

Products, services and strategies must be managed for change, faster all the time.

Brand and culture must be managed for continuity.

Three old timers on today's list: Coke, IBM, Disney

- possess arguably the strongest brands on earth
- all have titanium strength cultures

### ***INSIDE MARS***

One of the 100 best companies to work for; By David A. Kaplan; Fortune, February 4, 2013

The five principles of Mars "set us apart from others, requiring that we think and act differently towards our associates, our brands and our businesses."

- quality
- responsibility
- mutuality
- efficiency
- freedom



### **Playing To Win: How Strategy Really Works**

By A. G. Laffley and Roger L. Martin

This is a terrific how to book co-authored by the past chairman of Proctor and Gamble. None of us are Proctor and Gamble, but his methodology and approach can be utilized by businesses of all sizes.

Strategy is about making specific choices to win in the marketplace. A firm creates a sustainable competitive advantage over its rivals by deliberately choosing a different set of activities to deliver unique and superior value – choices - to do some things and to not do others.

Winning should be at the heart of any strategy and is the result of answering the following 5 questions:

1. Have you defined winning, and are you crystal clear about your winning aspiration?
2. Have you decided where to play (and just as decisively where you will not play)?
3. Have you determined how, specifically, you will win where you choose to play?
4. Have you pinpointed and built your core capabilities in such a way that they enable your where-to-play and how-to-win choices?
5. Do your management systems and key measures support your other four strategic choices?



### **Three Rules For Making A Company Truly Great**

By Michael E. Raynor and Muntaz Ahmed; HBR, April 2013

In this HBR article, the authors undertook a study of thousands of

companies and identified several hundred that have done well for a long enough period of time to qualify as truly exceptional. The many and diverse choices that made certain companies great were consistent with three seemingly elementary rules:

- Rule 1 - Better than cheaper – compete on differentiators other than price
- Rule 2 - Revenue before cost – prioritize increasing revenue over reducing costs
- Rule 3 - There are no other rules – so change anything you must to follow Rules 1 and 2



### **The Power of Imagination**

By Jay Walker, founder of Priceline.com; WSJ.com, February 25, 2013

On encouraging imagination: people talk about wanting more innovation. Innovation is a process result. Imagination is the fuel. You're not going to get innovation if you don't have imagination. Most organizations do not value imagination, do not encourage it, do not reward it. But if you're not thinking about imagination, you're not going to have meaningful innovation.

On why imagination is crucial for business: Imagination drives good

problem formation because imagination thinks about customers.

What might they want tomorrow?  
What might my customers want in six months, a year, two years that they don't want today? That's imagination and that's hard work. There's no right or wrong answer and there's nobody there to say, "You did it perfectly."



## **PROCESS**

Is what allows our organizations and people to get sustainable results. What are your core processes? What are your most important capabilities that allow you to act on your differentiators? Are they simplified, documented and people trained in them? Some possibilities:

- innovation
- strategy
- quality
- hiring
- sales
- talent and human capital
- strategic planning
- employee engagement
- customer service

### **Brand Promises and Differentiators**

Why don't you and your key leaders independently articulate these on a piece of paper and then compare. Not consistent? I wonder how your organization is then delivering on them.

### **A Powerful Question and Tool!**

Ask, anonymously or not, what your people would do if they were you, the leader of the organization, immediately and over the next 3 years. Then do something with the results!

### **Leadership Advisory Services assists leaders in:**

- Capturing opportunities
- Executing well
- Effecting sustainable change
- Solving problems

See what our clients think at [www.leadershipadvisory.net](http://www.leadershipadvisory.net).

**I greatly appreciate introductions to leaders who are serious about getting results and would value my counsel. Thank you!**



**Tony Chivinski**