

## Women In Leadership Highlights April 4, 2009



**“Leadership through the Lens of Spirituality”** - featuring Gary Strack former Pres. / CEO - Boca Raton Community Hospital; Ph.D. in Health Admin. and Leadership and recipient of numerous career achievement awards including “Alumnus of the Year” and “Distinguished Preceptor Award” (U. of FL). A gifted communicator, Gary was invited four times as keynote speaker at the American College of Healthcare Executives Annual Congress. In 2002 he researched and co-authored a paper on leadership and spirituality and is a life-long supporter of women’s leadership. Also a proud husband, father and grandfather, he lives at Lake Oconee - combining work, play, mentoring, and continued learning. Favorite quote: “Any woman who sets her sights after a man sets her sights too low.”

### Key Points:

- Studs Turkel’s book: *Working* – results of comprehensive survey conducted with people working in many different fields. Question: “What do you do for a living?” Found most were not happy in their chosen field.
- Because we spend as 80,000 to 110,000+ hrs. working, working is actually “how we spend our lives” therefore...Leaders / each of us need to make the time spent on the job meaningful.
- Leadership definition: how to influence people to achieve meaningful results. Leadership is about WHO YOU ARE.
- Change: All change is not necessarily improvement but all improvement requires change. A Leader is an “improvement artist.”
- As a leader, Gary has learned from his “personal metamorphosis” and “significant emotional experiences (SEES) as well as “inner-ocular traumatic eyetests (i.e., being hit between the eyes with reality!) (NOTES: some of these expressions are examples of what is referred to as “Strackisms.”)
- Extensive research, reading and studying in the area of QUALITY including the works of some of the gurus in the field, e.g., Crosby, Deming and others. The question they raise is: How do you unleash the potential in each person and get total engagement??? Deming says “we’re all very spiritual people” therefore engagement needs to address our spiritual nature.
- Other recommended works: John Gardner’s *Self Renewal*. Led to Gary’s taking two 90 day sabbaticals during his career as a CEO. A sabbatical to learn, to refresh, to enrich his life personally and professionally and return as a stronger, more effective leader.
- Believes “life is about progress.”
- Talking does not build a relationship; listening on the other hand does help to build relationships.
- Influenced by Warren Bennis’s work: he said that “a lack of spiritual foundation is the root of all organizational dysfunction.”
- Dimensions of Spirituality (Beazley, 1997): Honesty, humility and service to others need to be embraced.
- Humility doesn’t mean you think less of yourself, but rather that you think of yourself less. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote that everyone he met was superior to

him in some manner. Socrates said “know thyself.” Aristotle said “control self.” Jesus said “give yourself.”

- Kouzes & Posner’s definition of leadership: The art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations.
- Also from Kouzes & Posner’s *Leadership Challenge*: 5000 people surveyed. Results were five practices of effective leadership: 1) Challenge the process; 2) Inspire a shared vision; 3) Enable others to act; 4) Model the way; and 5) Encourage the heart.
- Recommended reading: Tom Morris from Notre Dame wrote *If Aristotle Ran General Motors*
- Four quadrants of Spirituality: Internal, External, Culture and Systems of Performance (Wilbur, 1996)
- Four spiritual needs of the individual: 1) to be unique; 2) to be in union (with others or things bigger than oneself; 3) to be useful; and 4) to be understood. (Morris, 1997)
- Greatest way to kill the human spirit: to ask to do menial work.
- Listening feeds the spiritual need.
- **Strack’s doctoral research demonstrated the Linkages between Effective Leadership and Spirituality.** Found that the 5 effective leadership practices correlate with the 4 spiritual dimensions!