

# LEA Global World Conference

“Things I Wish I Knew About Being a Leader  
Before I Was One”

Thursday, October 26, 2023

8:30 – 9:30am

The Watergate Hotel, Washington, DC



For the last twenty-three years, Allan has been named by *Accounting Today* as one of the Top 100 Most Influential in the accounting profession. For the past six years, he was recognized as one of the 10 Most Influential in the Profession and in 2022 he was voted one of the “Top 3 Most Influential” in the Profession.

For the past twenty-three years, Allan was voted as one of the Most Recommended Consultants by *INSIDE Public Accounting*.

For the past decade, Allan has been named by *CPA Practice Advisor* as one of the Top 25 Thought Leaders in the profession. In 2016, *CPA Practice Advisor* also inducted Allan into the Accounting Hall of Fame.

Allan was one of the first to be inducted into the Accounting Marketing Hall of Fame by the Association for Accounting Marketing.

A nationally recognized speaker, he has appeared on CNN, WGN and FOX TV and has been quoted in the *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, *Financial Times*, *Washington Post*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today* and *New York Post*.

Previously, Allan was the CEO of PDI Global, which was the largest provider of marketing products and services for CPA firms. Allan sold PDI Global to H&R Block in 1998, buying it back in 2008, and then selling it to Thomson Reuters in 2011.

Prior to that, Allan was a partner in the Chicago-based CPA firm of FERS, where he served as leader of the investment banking and law firm services groups, as well as the Executive Committee.

Wayne Berson, CEO of BDO, was quoted as saying the following about Allan, “I liken him to a sports super-agent, such as Scott Boras, whom players seek out. If we want to do a deal, in most cases the firm is working with Allan already.”

Jeffrey Weiner, CEO and Chairman of Marcum, was quoted as saying the following about Allan, “Koltin is the most trusted negotiator or shadchan in the profession.”

Marc Rosenberg, a leading consultant and author to the CPA industry, was also quoted as saying, “If there were an election of the most highly visible, sought-after consultant to CPA firms, Koltin would be the hands-down winner.”

# INCREASE YOUR **MOMENTUM**



Many of the Top 500 CPA firms come to KCG for our depth of knowledge and breadth of services. To learn more about our services, please visit our website at [www.koltin.com](http://www.koltin.com).

- Leadership / Partner Retreats
- Partner Compensation
- Governance & Firm Management
- Leadership Succession
- Firm Profitability
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Talent Representation
- Strategic Planning
- Succession Planning
- Managing Partner Coaching

## **Allan D. Koltin, CPA, CGMA, CEO**

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• Voted "Top 25 Thought Leader" for the past 8 years by CPA Practice Advisor

• Voted "Top 100 Most Influential in Profession" by Accounting Today for 21 straight years and included in the Top 5 Most Influential

• Voted "Top 10 Most Recommended Consultants" by IPA for 19 straight years

• Inducted into both CPA Practice Advisor's Accounting Hall of Fame, as well as AAM's Accounting Marketing Hall of Fame.

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# Things I've Observed in Great Leaders

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The only  
thing that is  
constant is  
change.

– Heraclitus  
*circa 500 B.C.*



*Slide courtesy of AICPA*

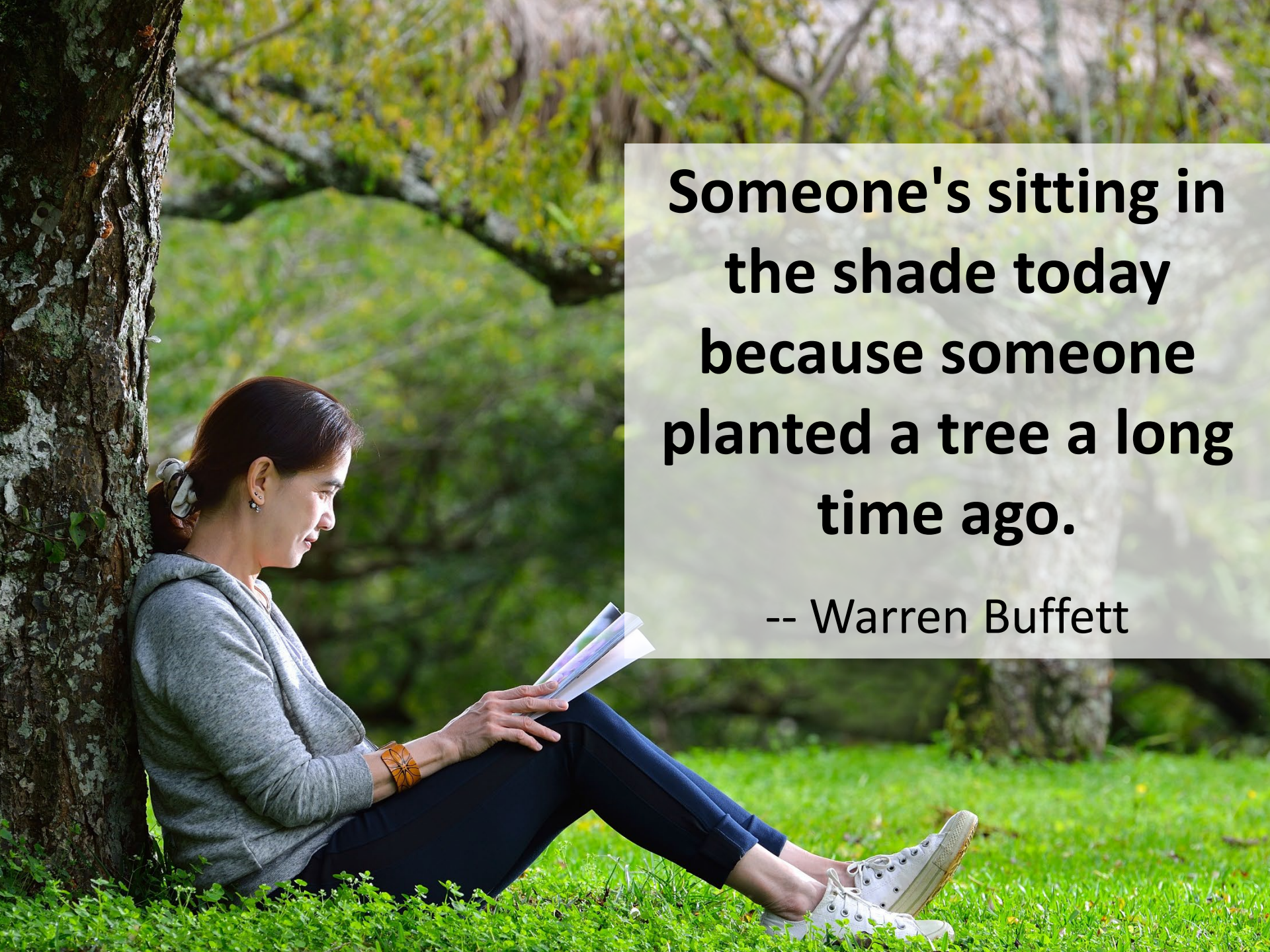
# Bill Gates on the “Speed of Change”



*“We always overestimate the change that will occur in the next two years and underestimate the change that will occur in the next ten. Don’t let yourself be lulled into inaction.”*

**Bill Gates**





**Someone's sitting in  
the shade today  
because someone  
planted a tree a long  
time ago.**

**-- Warren Buffett**



**The easiest thing is to  
react. The second  
easiest is to respond.  
But the hardest is to  
initiate.**

**Seth Godin**

*Author and Agent of Change*

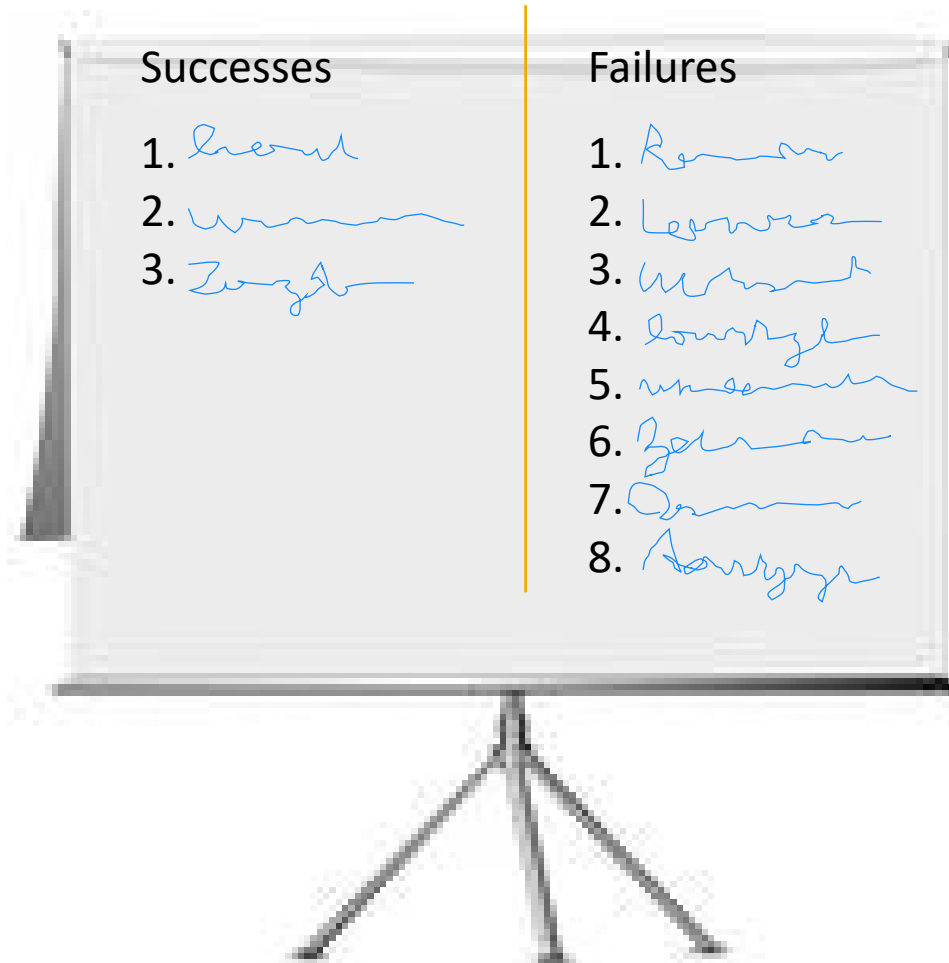




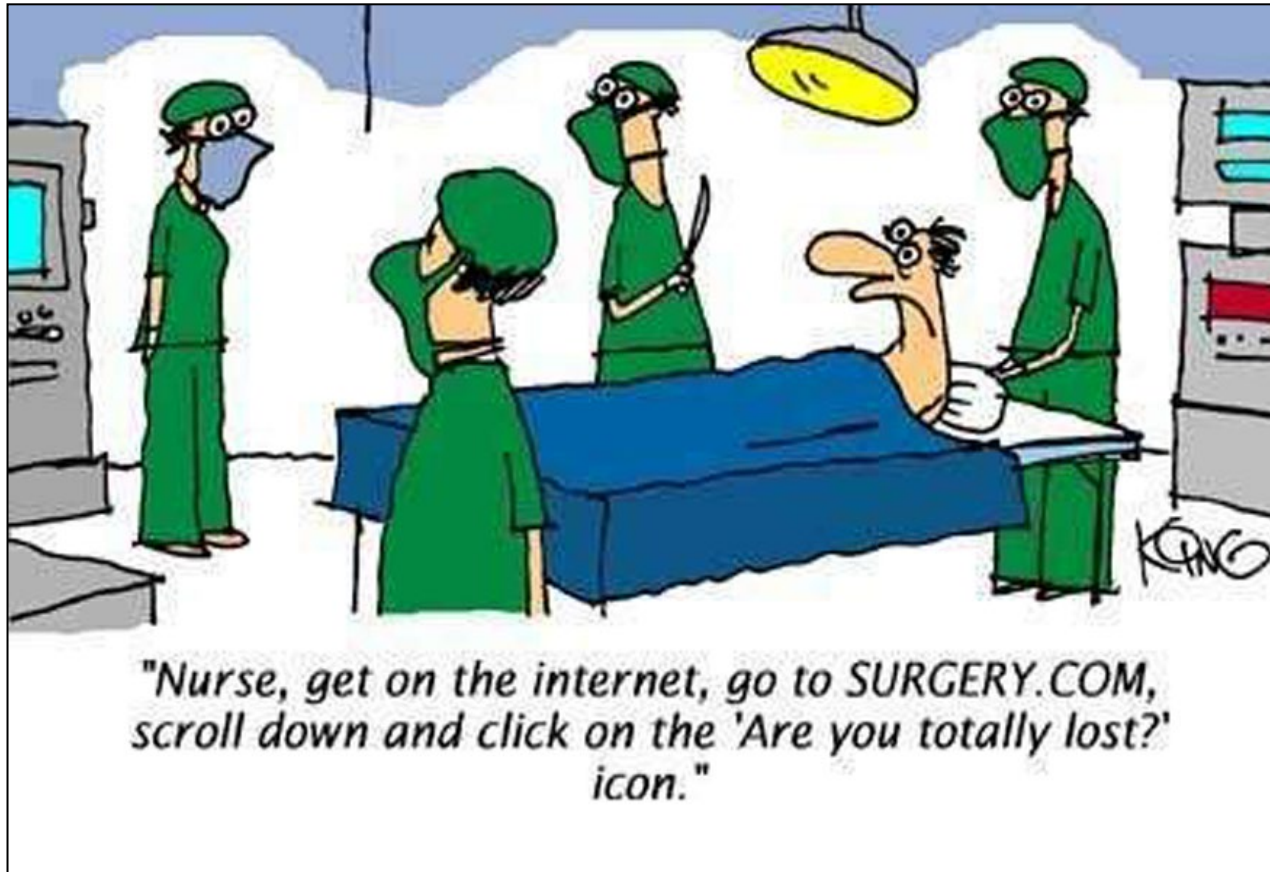
Sometimes even the best strategies can miss by a long shot!



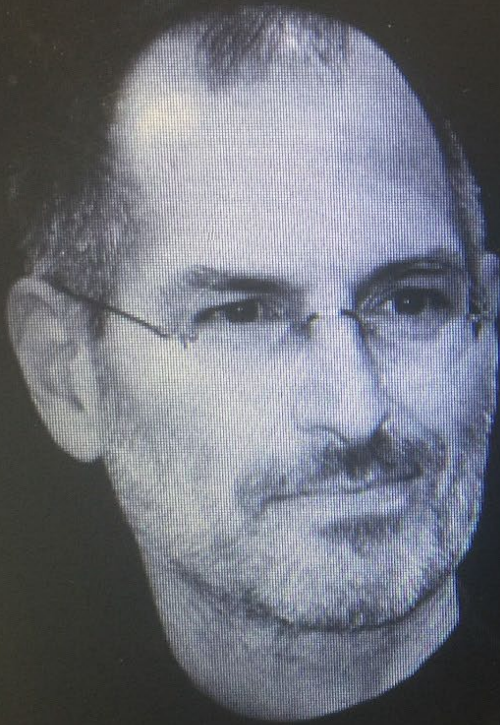
# Did You Ever Wonder What the Most Successful CPA Firms Have in Common?!



I think we're all searching for the "playbook" on how to be a leader.







**"It doesn't make sense to hire smart people and then tell them what to do; we hire smart people so they can tell us what to do."**

**- Steve Jobs**

co-founder of Apple computer, co-creator of iTunes and the iPhone.

*fb/david avocado wolfe*

# COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP EARNS TRUST

## Ted Lasso – Lessons in Leadership

Having **uncomfortable conversations** is not a strength of Coach Lasso, which is to be expected from a man who is always so darn friendly.

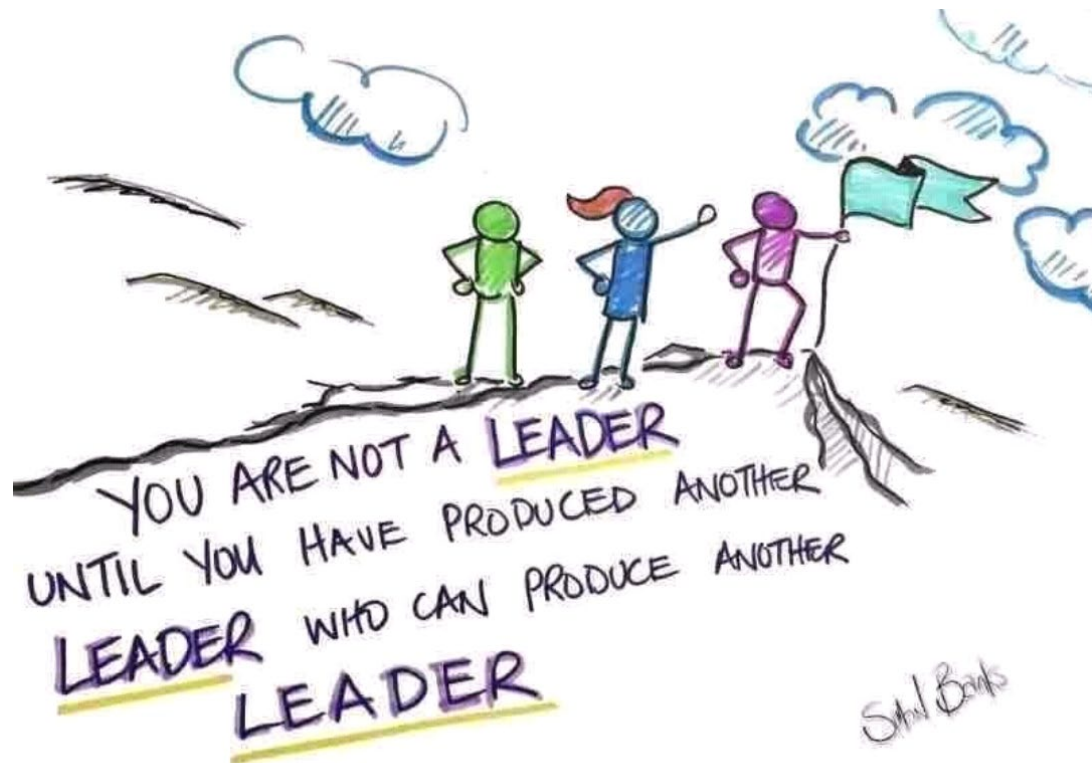
Despite his discomfort, he still finds the **courage to have the crucial conversations** anyway, because he knows it will improve the individual, and serve the culture of the team.

He also makes some **massively courageous decisions in the face of ridicule**, that earns the respect and trust of the people that matter the most.





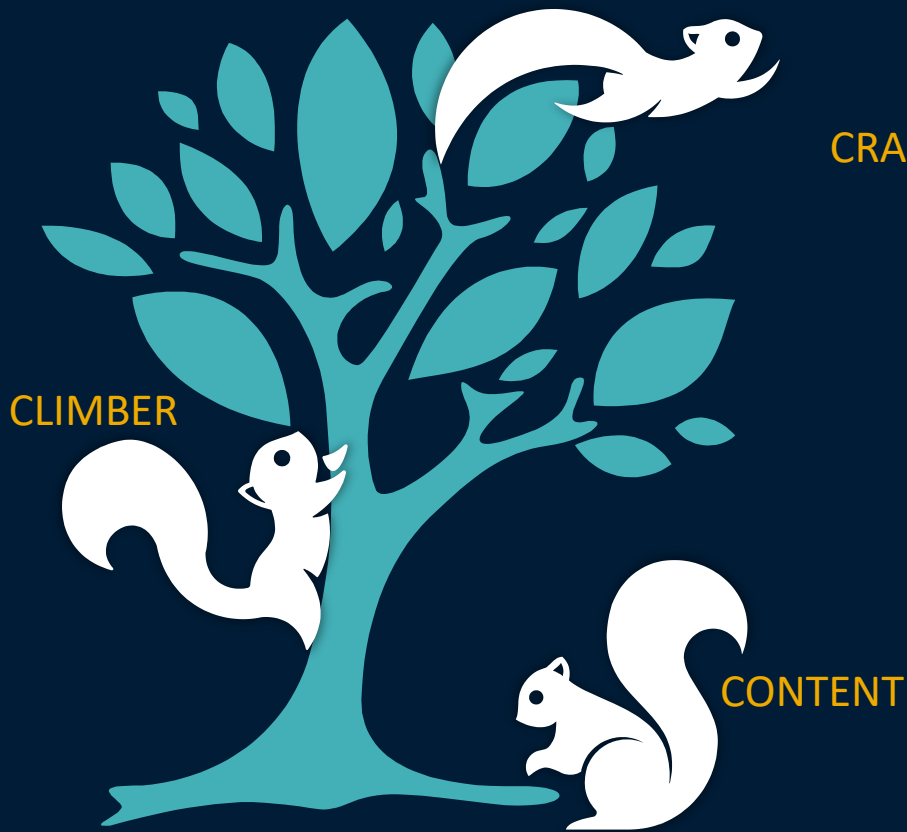
# The Legacy that Best in Class Leaders Leave Behind





# Talent - The **Three Levels** of Performance

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# Let's Begin By Assessing Your Leadership Quotient (please rate yourself on a score of 1 – 100)

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Rating</u>
1) Excited & Enthusiastic about future vision	_____
2) Helps team/others grow & develop	_____
3) Establishes clear, consistent authority	_____
4) Is fair & consistent when dealing with others	_____
5) Is a good role model	_____
6) Keeps team/others informed	_____
7) Expresses thoughts clearly & forcefully	_____
8) Publicizes firm-wide others' successes	_____
9) Sets clear goals & plans for projects	_____
10) Exhibits & shares technical competence	_____

# Let's Begin By Assessing Your Leadership Quotient (please rate yourself on a score of 1 – 100)

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Rating</u>
11) Is a good teacher/coach	_____
12) Explains/monitors performance	_____
13) Provides direction/priorities on new projects	_____
14) Actively listens to fully understand others	_____
15) Inspires others to hear what you have to say	_____
16) Gets others to assume ownership of projects	_____
17) Makes the time to be accessible to others	_____
18) Seeks ways to improve what firm does	_____
19) Encourages communication from others	_____
20) Treats others with respect	_____



# Let's Begin By Assessing Your Leadership Quotient (please rate yourself on a score of 1 – 100)

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Rating</u>
21) Is sensitive to others' wants & needs	_____
22) Proactive on future needs & solutions	_____
23) Creates a climate of pride, teamwork & trust	_____
24) Is open to new ideas	_____
25) Seeks out challenging opportunities for us	_____
26) Shares vision of future for us to build together	_____
27) Gives recognition for contributions & efforts	_____
28) Stays current on Firm and area of expertise	_____
29) Breaks down projects into workable pieces	_____
30) Communicates a positive outlook for Firm	_____

# Let's Begin By Assessing Your Leadership Quotient (please rate yourself on a score of 1 – 100)

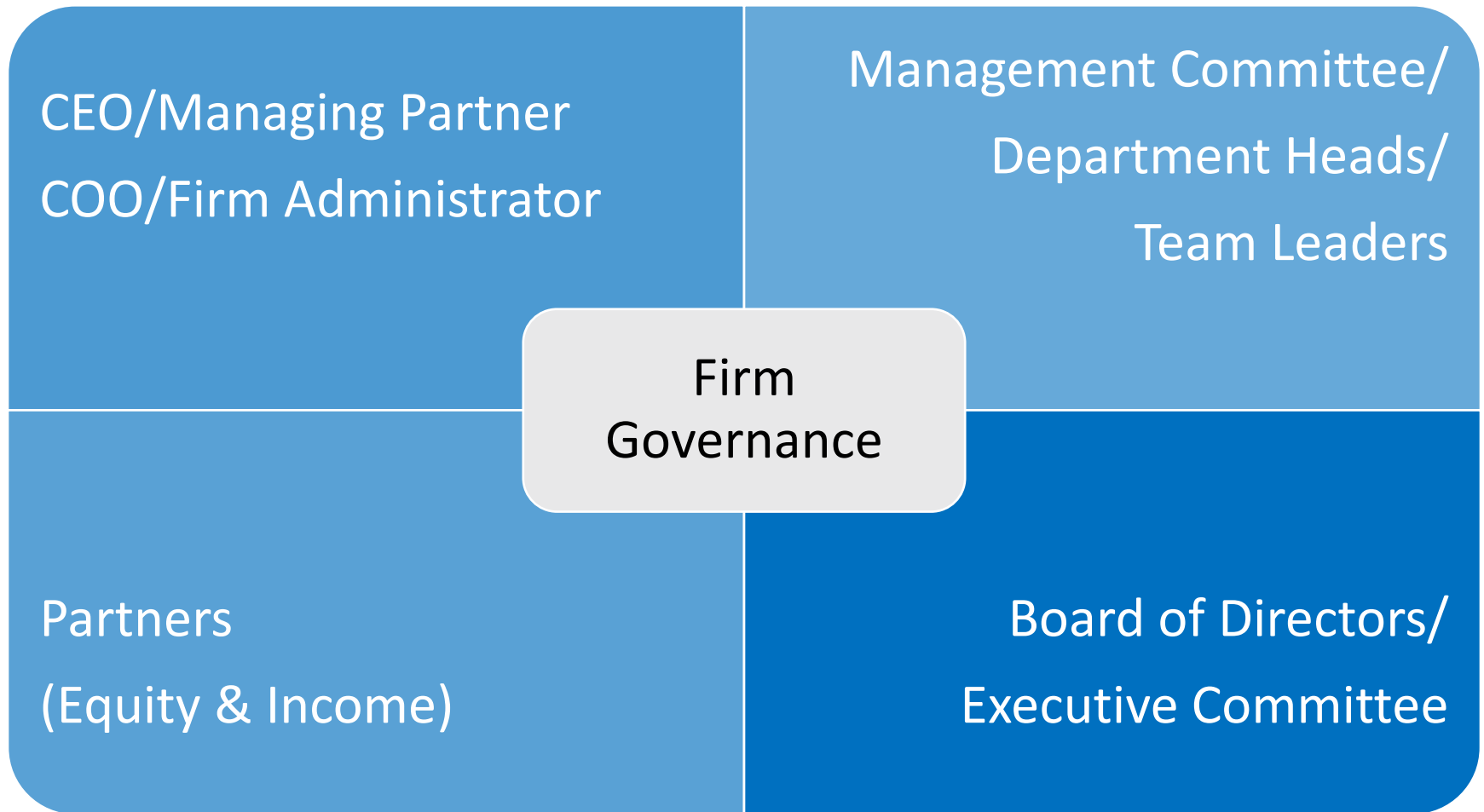
<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Rating</u>
31) Spends time setting & monitoring values	_____
32) Gives praise freely for a job well done	_____
33) Uses authority with firmness and sensitivity	_____
34) Allows people to make their own decisions	_____
35) Follows through to solution of problems	_____
36) Develops cooperative relationships w/ others	_____
37) Asks, "What can we learn?" from mistakes	_____
38) Is clear about leadership style & philosophy	_____

# Self-Assessments are Great, But What Others Think Matters the Most!

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Self Score</b>	<b>Partner Avg</b>	<b>Indiv. Avg</b>	<b>Var. 1 v. 3</b>
Excited & enthusiastic about future vision				
Is a good role model				
Publicizes firm-wide other's successes				
Is a good teacher/coach				
Provides direction/priorities on new projects				
Actively listens to fully understand others	92	78	46	(46)

# Decision Making – “Built for Speed”

## The Four Corners of Firm Governance





# Who Will Be Your Firm's Future MP (leader)?

- 1) What professional characteristics would you want to see in the next MP?
- 2) What personal characteristics would you want to see in the next MP?
- 3) As you reflect on the biggest challenges facing the firm over the next 5 years, what are they?
- 4) How should the MP's performance be measured?
- 5) Do you envision the structure of the MP position potentially changing in any way?
- 6) Would this person be interested, have the backing of the other partners and give up their workload to make this position successful?

# Allan Koltin's Top 10 Observations on Change

***I have been urging partners to change for years. You might think I would get discouraged. Well, sometimes I do. That doesn't mean I will quit reminding, urging and even nagging you about this important topic.***

- 1) Sometimes partners don't want to change, but will say they do.
- 2) Sometimes partners don't want to change, and won't change!
- 3) Sometimes partners want to change, but can't.
- 4) Sometimes partners want to change, but don't know how to change.
- 5) Sometimes partners can't change due to conflicting goals/demands.
- 6) Sometimes partners will change just enough to get you off their back!
- 7) Sometimes partners will change, but only if another partner also changes.
- 8) Sometimes partners will initially change, but are only doing it to ultimately prove you wrong.
- 9) Sometimes partners won't change, so don't waste your time trying to change them.
- 10) Sometimes partners will support the change, as long as they don't actually have to change.

# “Best in Class” Leaders/Managers Coach/ Mentor on the Following

- New business
- Billable time
- Realization
- WIP/AR
- Client satisfaction
- Recruiting, retention & staff development
- High impact ideas
- M&A candidates
- Managed book of business
- Succession planning
- Partner peer ratings
- Professional growth
- Administrative compliance
- Technical quality
- Team & department leadership
- Community involvement



# Missing Persons Report – Does this Person Actually Exist in a CPA Firm?\*

## Department Leader – Job Description

- 1) Empowered with overall responsibility to manage growth, profitability and overall resources of the Department.
- 2) Recruitment of new talent to the firm.
- 3) Mentoring and development of existing staff and partners.
- 4) Responsible for leading new product/service department ideas for the Department.
- 5) Oversight of training and technical issues as they relate to members of the Department.
- 6) Oversight of utilization scheduling and realization of Department members.
- 7) Establishment of members' billing rates, as well as helping establish fees on larger engagements.
- 8) Meets monthly (or quarterly) with partners and managers to coach and counsel them on individual performance.
- 9) Responsible for overall client satisfaction (both internal and external clients of the firm).
- 10) Helps promote the cross selling of services firm-wide, and also promotes cross selling of all services within the Department.

***\*This would apply to any service line or industry team leader!***

# “Best in Class” Leadership Traits & Characteristics

- High degree of trust
- High degree of respect (business savvy)
- It’s all about the firm, not me.
- They believe leadership is valued (from a compensation standpoint) as highly (or preferably higher) than new business origination, billable time and book of business.
- They have the ability to make (and sell) really tough decisions.
- They are built for speed when it comes to decisions.
- They have quite a few arrows in their back.
- They have the available time to lead.

# Size of Firm Impacts How Much Time You Spend in These Areas

	Leadership	Management	Administration
<b>CEO/ COO</b>	\$\$\$	\$\$	\$
<b>Executive Committee</b>	\$\$\$	\$\$	\$
<b>Dept. Heads/PICs</b>	\$\$\$	\$\$	\$

- ❖ What value do you place on each of these areas?
- ❖ How hard do you want to “push the gas pedal?”
- ❖ What kind of management talent do you really have?



# What Makes Great Leaders?\*



The 10 “C’s” of Great Leaders  
(How would you score on a 1 – 10 scale?)

- |       |                                   |       |                              |
|-------|-----------------------------------|-------|------------------------------|
| _____ | <b>Competitive Spirit</b>         | _____ | <b>Crystal-clear vision</b>  |
| _____ | <b>Clutter</b>                    | _____ | <b>Curiosity</b>             |
| _____ | <b>Cohesiveness</b>               | _____ | <b>Contagious enthusiasm</b> |
| _____ | <b>Constructive confrontation</b> | _____ | <b>Change agent</b>          |
| _____ | <b>Caring &amp; Compassionate</b> | _____ | <b>Crazy!</b>                |

Published by Allan Koltin in the June 2013 issue of  
*The Journal of Accountancy*

# How to Identify the Right Champion to Lead the Practice



## What is your leadership quotient?

On a scale of one to ten (with 10 being the highest) how would you rate yourself:

- A risk taker (and I don't mean on audits) \_\_\_\_\_
- One who dares to be different \_\_\_\_\_
- Ability to make tough decisions \_\_\_\_\_
- Strategic thinker and visionary \_\_\_\_\_
- Mind reader, motivator and great communicator \_\_\_\_\_
- Gets results through others \_\_\_\_\_
- Can balance innovation and profitability \_\_\_\_\_
- Would rather work "on" the business versus "in" the business \_\_\_\_\_
- Trusted by others in the firm \_\_\_\_\_
- Respected by others in the firm \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_



Thank You!

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