



The Role of the CEO in the New Millennium

BY GARRETT J. SULLIVAN

Perhaps more so than any other work in history, Adam Smith's 1776 "Wealth of Nations" has depicted the rise of the corporation and the ability to lead the corporation by the CEO. However, over time, the ability to triumph over the corporation as it became a bureaucracy has become the hallmark of the greatest CEOs of the most admired companies. We now live in an age when long-established companies such as Bear Sterns and Lehman Brothers can quickly dissolve and companies such as Google and Twitter can appear overnight.

This being said, contractors need to take notice of this rapid change and adjust accordingly. The successful CEO (and traditional contractor) of the 21st century will be required to become more of a coach rather than a leader. Furthermore, every company must recognize the need to constantly improve the effectiveness of its people, processes, strategies and tactics of execution in order to advance the organization's mission.

This has proved to be most consistently accomplished through enlightened approaches to the three different, but critically integrated skills of leadership, management and coaching of the team.

First, let me define these important skills.

- **Leadership:** The ability to generate and articulate an inspirational future that others see their future in.
- **Management:** The design and execution of an effective roadmap to realize a desired outcome which utilizes people, processes and procedures.
- **Coaching:** The guiding and supporting of individuals to pass the barriers to help them practice effective leadership and management. Coaching is helping people get from where they are to where they want to be in the future.

So, how do leadership, management and coaching work together? These three skills have the ability to synergistically work together in establishing a successful company. You, as the CEO, must lead by example in utilizing them and mastering them. This will allow the rest of your company to follow suit.

How do you know when to practice each of them? Let's assume you have an estimator who is tasked with estimating a minimum of \$10 million worth of work per month.

In the situation where the estimator falls below the requirement of \$10M per month and you are talking with him or her on a regular basis as to the actual situation and why it is happening: You are managing the employee.

When the estimator is doing what is expected and estimating \$10M-plus each month and your discussions are related to strategy and pricing: You are leading.

When you and the estimator are discussing his or her role in the future of the company and his place in it: You are coaching.

The old contractor model of the past will no longer be successful if used by the CEO in the 21st century. The 21st century contractor model is already experiencing dramatic changes such as panelization, modularization, robotics and 3D. The reality is, the industry is rapidly changing and is looking more and more different with each passing month.

The new millennium CEO will need to be flexible, agile and adaptable and able to undergo market developments and be ruthless in reallocating resources to new opportunities.

Now is the time for you to acquire the appropriate coaching skills and be a successful 21st century CEO. **BI**

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