

THE LEADING EDGE
Leaders Worth Following
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Earl Creps' Monthly Leadership Newsletter
ecreps@agts.edu

Director of the AGTS D.Min. Program in Pentecostal Leadership
<http://www.agts.edu/dmin/index.html>

Leading Edge blog edition
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Impact Player: Lori O'Dea

Lori O'Dea (Cohort 3), Program Coordinator for the D.Min. Team has contributed extensively to *Unlimited*, a series of Bible studies, sponsored by the national Women's Ministries Department. Book 4, *A Woman's Impact on Her World*, is available now. Check out Lori's online audio, "Let Go of the Problem, Hang on to God," at: http://www.agts.edu/resources/sermons.html#lori4_14_04

New: Earl's Online Audio "Changing Your Plans to God's Purposes"

<http://www.hopechurch.net/>

New: DVD Resources from AGTS

Seven new resources are available from AGTS in DVD format:

- "What Does It Mean To Be Trinitarian" (Dr. Stanley Grenz)
- "Models of Multi-Site Ministry: New Dimensions in Church Development" (Dr. Larry Osborn, Dr. Joe Fuiten, and Brad Liebe)
- "An Incarnational Model for Ministry" (Drs. Sherwood and Judith Lingenfelter)
- "The Works of J.R.R. Tolkien" (Dr. David Thomas and Jessica Dorn)
- "Communicating the Gospel to Post-Christian American" (Drs. Leonard Sweet, Byron Klaus, and Earl Creps)
- "The Church on the Edge: The Mission to Post-Christian American" (Drs. Stanley Grenz, Joe Castleberry, and Earl Creps)
- "Symposium on Apostolic Ministry" (Drs. Vinson Synan, William Menzies, and Gary McGee)

Check out these video seminars at:

http://www.agts.edu/continuing_education/ministry_resources/order.html

D.Min. Cohort Begins

Beginning with the February 6-10, 2006 cohort, the AGTS Doctor of Ministry program will feature concentrations in Missional Leadership, Biblical Preaching, and Military Chaplaincy. Following three Core courses, participants will be able to choose the concentration that is optimal for their ministry setting. For more information contact the D.Min. office (lodea@agts.edu).

FasTrak: From MA to D.Min. Eligibility in Half the Time!

Thinking about a D.Min. but not sure how to get there? Our new pre-doctoral program can take a qualified MA holder in full-time ministry to academic eligibility for the D.Min. (M.Div. Equivalency) in half the time using a specially designed course format available in many locations around the country. Check it out on the web at: <http://www.agts.edu/fastrak/index.html>.

Internet Resources:

- **Best Business Books of 2005:** Strategy+Business has compiled an excellent list of the 32 best books in 8 categories ranging from "The Future" to "Leadership." Excellent for focusing your reading plan. <http://www.strategy-business.com/press/article/05409>
To get Fast Company's take see:
<http://www.fastcompany.com/slideshow/slideshow.cgi?list=bizreads05&refresh=8>
 - **Stanford University on iTunes:** Glen Davis, Chi Alpha campus missionary to Stanford University sent along this unique link to Stanford content (lectures and much, much more) on iTunes. Definitely deserves a listen. <http://itunes.stanford.edu/>
Visit with Glen and Stanford Chi Alpha at: <http://xastanford.org/> where you will also find a downloadable mp3 of a talk I gave recently to his group on campus.
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Statistics: Urbanization

"The number of urban dwellers will equal the number of rural dwellers in the world by 2007." But by 2030, urban population will be 60% of the world total, up from 47% in 2000 and 30% in 1950."
--United Nations, *World Urbanization Prospects*

Read This Book: When Jesus Came to Harvard: Making Moral Choices Today

Harvey Cox's book, *When Jesus Came to Harvard* reflects on his experience teaching a course on morality based on the life of Jesus. Harvard created this class, in part, as a response to so many of their graduates (and others) living amorally. A fascinating look at what Jesus has to say in the heart of a post-Christian university. Highly recommended. Check it out at:
http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0618067442/qid=1134484760/sr=8-1/ref=pd_bbs_1/102-6492415-8528108?n=507846&s=books&v=glance

Quotable: Scenarios

"Many years of practice have shown overwhelmingly how scenarios can produce process gain, Scenarios offer a powerful way to harness organizational insights, development awareness of impediments to success, and help people to think their way out of a problem."
--Kees van der Heijden, et al in *The Sixth Sense: Accelerating Organizational Learning with Scenarios*.

LeaderLife: 10 Most Enduring Secrets

The magazine *Strategy+Business* just published its list of "Our Ten Most Enduring Ideas," selected by reader survey. The purpose of the list is to highlight what they call their "conceptual breakthroughs" in the last 10 years. You will find an article about the list online at:
<http://www.strategy-business.com/press/ewsarticle/ews121205>

The top ideas listed in rank order include the following:

1. Execution – the ability to implement choices
2. Learning Organizations – thinking, talking organizations perform better
3. Corporate Values – companies with ethics and meaning rise above those just making money
4. Customer Relationship Management – consumers are invited into the “family”
5. Disruptive Technology – new technologies radically alter the rules of the game
6. Leadership Development – everyone can become a better leader
7. Organizational DNA – companies can be structured to achieve high performance
8. Strategy-Based Transformation – retooling the organization using its basic goals
9. Complexity – markets and organizations cannot be controlled mechanically
10. Lean Thinking – eliminating waste and pumping up productivity

The really interesting thing about these ideas, most of which are commonplace at this point, is the question of *why* they have achieved such influence in a field inundated by a new theory almost every day. S+B surmises that a good business idea has five key qualities:

1. Timeliness – it addresses an issue of concern right now
2. Explanatory Power – it clarifies the dynamics of the issue in a way other ideas cannot
3. Pragmatic Value – it helps achieve practical, replicable outcomes on this issue
4. Empirical Foundation – it is based on reliable, measurable information
5. Natural Constituency – influential people are ready to listen to it

But with all these wonderful ideas, why did both of the major corporate strategies of the last ten years (reengineering and merger/acquisition) fail to produce the desired results about 75% of the time? Why are American automobile manufacturers on the brink of disaster despite years of SUV-driven profits in the nineties? I could cite other examples, but the point is made: translating an idea into an outcome is tough for reasons that are so unexpressed they constitute closely guarded *secrets* in most organizations.

So, using some worst-case cynicism to make a point, here are my “10 Most Enduring Secrets:”

1. The average secretary knows the organization better than the average executive
2. Change is like moving--it turns out to be five times more work than you thought
3. Leadership is not everything, it's just one of the things
4. There is much less interest in “followership” (109,000 Google hits) than in “leadership” (475,000,000 Google hits).
5. Mission statements can provide a lovely framed item to decorate the lobby
6. Doing more work for the same amount of money is called “productivity”
7. Doing more work in the same time for the same pay is called “productivity”
8. The major attraction of a workplace is the other people who work there
9. Every small group of people is called a “team,” but almost none really are
10. Power is a form of blindness

I believe that my 10 disconcerting ideas (and others like them) are the main reasons why those touted by S+B (all of which I subscribe to, by the way) are so maddeningly difficult to implement. We do not live in a world of ideas alone, but in a world of people, complicated, grumpy, wonderful, irritating people. They are our organizations. Not the mission statement, not the flow chart, not the values, not the bottom line—it's the people.

The Holy Spirit lives only in people, not in methods. A Christian organization is a place where that same Spirit lives *among* us as well as *in* us. It is this interaction of people and Spirit that makes an organization Christian, rather than being just Christians organized (also important). The

organizational structures we manage must be designed to facilitate the moving of the Spirit *among* us, just as we develop spiritual disciplines to cultivate the moving of the Spirit *within* us.

So our beginning point is not the question of *what* should we do—although that question has to have a great deal of attention. The beginning point is the issue of whether our structures facilitate or inhibit the operation of the Spirit, an issue that we usually think of only in individual terms must be projected on the whole organization. That’s what Christian leaders do—develop spiritual disciplines for their organizations which will create the maximum opportunity for the Spirit to reveal Christ through us.

The first step could be to bring some of these enduring secrets out into the open.

Be a leader worth following,

Earl

ecreps@agts.edu

D.Min. program mission: transforming leaders to transform their organizations

D.Min. program vision: leaders worth following

D.Min. program values:

- **the extra mile**—others before ourselves
 - **the personal touch**—everyone counts
 - **the cutting edge**—we get there first
 - **the real deal**—authenticity in everything
 - **the better way**—listen to improve
 - **the positive word**—choose to encourage
 - **the unique person**—enjoy diversity
 - **the X factor**—synergy through trust and truth
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D.Min. Team:

<http://www.agts.edu/dmin/index.html>

Earl Creps—Program Director

ecreps@agts.edu

Tracy Harrington—Office Assistant

tharrington@agts.edu

Stephen Lim—Project Coordinator

slim@agts.edu

Lori O’Dea—Program Coordinator

lodea@agts.edu

Cheryl Taylor—Program Advisor

ctaylor@agts.edu

Leading Edge Blog Edition:

<http://www.xanga.com/LeadingEdge>

Leading Edge Archive:

Past issues are archived at: http://agts.edu/dmin/leading_edge/index.html

Talk to us:

Phone: 1-800-467-AGTS

Fax: (417) 268-1047

Mail: aGts, 1435 N. Glenstone Ave., Springfield, MO 65802 USA

Web: <http://www.agts.edu/dmin/index.html>