

Remarkable Ideas. Remarkable People.

The Entire 2015 Series of Strategic Insights from Leaders, Thinkers and Celebrities Who've Done Great Things



By **Carl Francis**
CEO, EnvisianStrategic



EVERY FRIDAY MORNING, I DELIVER AN IDEA, A STORY OR A PRINCIPLE FROM SOMEONE REMARKABLE — along with a comment or two — by email.

I try to make each one quick and to the point, usually with a strategic idea you can use.



When I began, the idea was simply to combine two things I love: remarkable people and great ideas and somehow make it valuable and a bit unique. The idea has grown and now it's fun to see that hundreds of people read them within minutes of arriving: friends, clients, family and lots of my MBA students, past and present.

MY HOPE IS YOU'LL NOT ONLY ENJOY READING THEM, but occasionally use one in your work. The themes relate to leadership, business or strategy... but not always.

In case you missed any, here is the entire 2015 series of 25 emails in one place — easy to download, read and forward on to colleagues and friends if you like, which lots of people do.

Thanks to all who email or call me with feedback and suggestions. I love hearing from you!

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PS If someone you know would like to be added to my distribution list, just email me at CFrancis@Envisian.com or call me at 610.640.4600 x1. Free and secure.

Jim Collins
Becoming Great

Madonna
On Being A Bitch

C K Prahalad
Unlearning and Forgetting

John Maxwell
When to Quit

Marissa Mayer
Being A Little Not Ready

Zig Ziglar
How You Really Build A Business

Jack Welch
Competitive Advantage

Katherine Hepburn
On Having Regrets

Peter Drucker
Planning and Work

Donald Trump
When Enough is Enough

Charles Bukowski
The Problem With the World

Louis Kahn
Having All The Answers

Eleanor Roosevelt
Doing What Scares You

Gen. Eric Shinseki
If You Don't Like Change

Ram Charan
No Matter How Successful

Tom Peters
If You're A Jerk As A Leader

Henry Ford
On Making Money

Satchel Paige
What A Few No Hitters Will Do

Jim Kilts
Never Hire A Prick

Rosabeth Moss Cantor
Small Wins. Huge Difference.

John Wanamaker
Nothing Comes Merely By...

Akio Morita
Carefully Watch How People Live

Mary Kay Ash
Throw Out These Words

Charles Bolton
We'll Take It From There

Robin Williams
Small Spark of Madness



Greatness is not a function of circumstance.

Greatness, it turns out, is largely a matter of conscious choice and discipline.

– Jim Collins *

IF BEING SEEN AS A GREAT LEADER OR A GREAT COMPANY

matters to you, then this finding from Jim Collins might be worth thinking about.

Collins' research consistently shows that the choices we make about how we lead our company and its people – and how we manage ourselves – are the critical factors. THE critical factors.

So if we are to build a great company and to be seen as a great leader, what should we do differently? That... is the challenge.

What should you re-consider? The way you think, plan and act?

The way you lead? The example you set? What you ask of your people? Your focus on results first and on people, process, or planning second?

*** JIM COLLINS IS A BUSINESS CONSULTANT, AUTHOR, AND LECTURER** on company sustainability and growth.

His best known books are *Good to Great* and *Built to Last*.



**I'm tough, I'm ambitious,
and I know exactly what
I want.**

**If that makes me a bitch...
okay.**

– Madonna *

**EVER WORKED FOR SOMEONE WITH AN ATTITUDE
LIKE MADONNA'S?**

You never forget them.

For all their toughness, they often have surprisingly strategic qualities: clear priorities; the ability to analyze quickly; strong decision-making skills; and a relentless focus on outcomes.

So... does every leader need to be a bitch at times?

* **Madonna is the richest recording star in the world,** with a net worth estimated at \$800 million, sales of 300 million records, and business ventures in fashion, children's books and movie directing.



Creating a learning organization is only half the solution.

Just as important is creating an unlearning organization.

We're all familiar with the learning curve, but what about the forgetting curve – the rate at which a company can unlearn those habits that hinder future success?

– C. K. Prahalad *

I'M TRYING OUT PRAHALAD'S PRINCIPLE AT HOME RIGHT NOW.

I'm tearing out some old landscaping in order to create fewer, but more attractive, areas.

As leaders, perhaps we need to do the same thing at work. What if we did less, but did it better – or smarter?

What if we focused on the best things we do – as leaders and as a company?

If we did, would anybody miss what we unlearned or forgot?

*** The late C.K. Prahalad was an international authority on multi-national management, strategy and innovation.**

He authored four books, including his final work, *The New Age of Innovation*, published in 2008. He was the Distinguished Professor of Corporate Strategy at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan.



I always did something I was a little not ready to do. I think that's how you grow.

When there's that moment of *Wow, I'm not really sure I can do this*, and you push through, that's when you have a breakthrough.

– Marissa Mayer *

WHO HASN'T HAD THAT MOMENT OF NOT BEING SURE I CAN DO THIS?

For some of us, it seems like every day.

As a leader, what if pushing through those moments became the norm for you, not the exception?

What might that mean for your future... and for your business?

* **Marissa Mayer, CEO of Yahoo since 2012**, was formerly a long-time executive, usability leader, and key spokesperson for Google.

A recent new mother and the expectant mother of twin girls, she is currently in the process of transforming Yahoo amidst pressure, criticism and pushback from shareholders, the media and even her employees.

In 2014, Mayer was named **Fortune Magazine's 16th Most-powerful Businesswoman in the World**.



WHEN TO QUIT:

1. Quit something you don't do well – to start something you do well.

2. Quit something you're not passionate about – to do something that fills you with passion.

3. Quit something that doesn't make a difference – to do something that does.

– John C. Maxwell *

WE TEACH OUR KIDS TO NEVER QUIT, but at times in business quitting can be smart.

As leaders, we sometimes keep doing things that don't work anymore, don't provide a payoff or even hold us back. Perhaps because we've invested a great deal. Or maybe we just don't want to look like a quitter.

Maxwell's advice above is strategic: Make a decision to get from where you are to somewhere better. To end something useless to do something valuable.

Is there something you need to quit doing... in order to make something more important happen?

*** In 2014, John C. Maxwell was named the #1 leadership and management expert in the world by Inc. Magazine.** Three of his books, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, *Developing the Leader Within You*, and *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader* have each sold over a million copies. Maxwell has published more than 40 books on leadership and management.

Maxwell created and built the largest international non-profit in the world focusing on training people to lead. Trained as a minister, Maxwell speaks annually to Fortune 500 companies, international government leaders, and organizations as diverse as the United States Military Academy at West Point and the National Football League.



You don't build a business – you build people – and *then* people build the business.

– Zig Ziglar *

HAVE YOU SEEN WHAT I OFTEN SEE?...

Many businesses don't train their new hires very well. They put a lot into interviewing and hiring... only to then drop people into jobs and expect them to figure things out. Sometimes it works. Sometimes not.

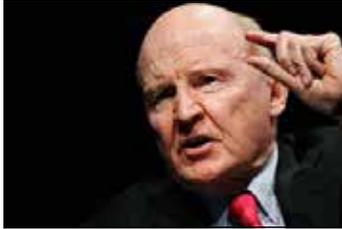
Perhaps, as Zig suggests, we should think more in terms of building people – finding ways to orient, engage, and nurture them better from the start. It's not impossible or prohibitively expensive. Many good companies have figured it out – and it helps them prosper.

What difference might it make to your company's growth, profitability and future if you prioritized helping new people master skills faster and then kept developing them consistently? How about increased productivity? Lower turnover? Better customer service? More promotable candidates from within? What are those worth?

Maybe building people should become a strategic priority...

*** THE LATE ZIG ZIGLAR WAS A BELOVED AND RESPECTED AMERICAN AUTHOR AND MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER.** He taught millions around the world how to lead, sell, and relate better to others.

Proudly hailing from Yazoo City, Mississippi, Ziglar worked his way up from salesman in a succession of companies to become head of his own worldwide leadership training organization. Known for his down-home humor, inspiring stories, and unusual wisdom, Ziglar published more than 14 best-selling books.



An organization's ability to learn, and translate that learning into action rapidly, is the ultimate competitive advantage.

— Jack Welch *

LEARNING AND ACTING RAPIDLY... what a incredible combination.

At GE, a world leader for decades, Jack Welch proved that figuring out what would benefit customers — and quickly delivering it — could become a real source of advantage.

Imagine if you focused on continually seeking out what your customers want and need — and then making it happen fast?

What could that lead to?

It could make you untouchable...

*** Jack Welch was Chairman and CEO of General Electric from 1981 to 2001.** During his tenure, the company's value rose from \$12 billion to \$280 billion. He is widely recognized as the best business manager of the 20th century.

Through the 1980s and 90s, Welch streamlined GE: trimming inventories; dismantling bureaucracy; closing factories; reducing payrolls; and cutting lackluster units. Welch believed a company should be #1 or #2 in an industry — or get out. To implement his market leadership strategy, Welch made 600 acquisitions to shift into and later dominate emerging markets.

Welch also lived speed and decisiveness in building a stronger GE. He continually selected and developed leaders — and then quickly focused them on achieving goals. Even in retirement, he spends much of his time teaching executives and young leaders.



**I have many regrets....
The stupid things you do, you
regret if you have any sense, and
if you don't regret them, maybe
you're stupid.**

— Katherine Hepburn *

IS IT POSSIBLE TO LEAD... AND NOT END UP WITH REGRETS?

Leaders constantly make choices. *What should I do? Who should I listen to? What will succeed and what will fail? Which choice will make money? Which puts us at risk?*

The choices and questions that come to leaders provide unlimited room for second-guessing later — which can be paralyzing.

Despite enormous talent, Katherine Hepburn made choices and suffered many failures, even becoming known as *box office poison*. But her regrets didn't stop her (see below).

Are your regrets in business holding you back?

It's easy to let happen... unless, like Katherine Hepburn, you decide they won't.

* **KATHERINE HEPBURN** was a leading lady in Hollywood for more than 60 years and was known for her fierce independence and spirited personality.

Early in her career, after several big movie flops, critics called her box office poison. But Hepburn masterminded her own comeback by acquiring the rights to *The Philadelphia Story*, later selling those rights with the condition she would have the starring role. The movie became a huge box office success and led to a long career with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer — as well as working with the love of her life, Spencer Tracy, in nine movies.

Hepburn famously shunned the Hollywood publicity machine, and refused to conform to society's expectations of women. She was outspoken, assertive, athletic, and wore trousers before it was fashionable for women to do so. With her unconventional lifestyle and the independent characters she brought to the screen, Hepburn epitomized the modern woman in 20th century America.

Hepburn challenged herself even later in life, regularly appearing in Shakespearean productions and literary roles. In 1999, Hepburn was named the Greatest Female Star in Hollywood History by the American Film Institute. She died in 2003 at the age of 96.



Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work.

— Peter Drucker *

THIS COULD EXPLAIN WHY MOST PLANS DON'T PRODUCE MUCH.

Somehow as leaders we often struggle with getting from the thinking and planning side to actually making things happen.

What would it take to change that in your organization....

To become an organization that **both** plans *and* produces?

The late Peter Drucker was an Austrian-born American management consultant, educator, and author who taught and wrote about business.

Drucker was a leader in developing management education, inventing the concepts known as management by objectives and self-control. He put words to challenges many faced but couldn't explain. In 1959, Drucker coined the term *knowledge worker*, and later in life considered knowledge-worker productivity to be the next frontier of management.

Drucker predicted many major developments, including: privatization and decentralization; the rise of Japan to an economic world power; the importance of marketing; and the emergence of the information society with its necessity of lifelong learning.

Peter Drucker gave his name to three institutions: the Drucker Institute at Claremont Graduate University; the Peter F. Drucker Academy; and the annual Global Peter Drucker Forum in Vienna.

Peter Drucker has long been an icon for business leaders around the world. His lectures and writings have influenced millions of leaders and countless companies. In 2002, Drucker was awarded the **Presidential Medal of Freedom**.



PART OF BEING A WINNER is knowing when enough is enough. Sometimes you have to give up the fight and walk away, and move on to something that's more productive.

– Donald Trump *

WIN, LOSE OR WALK AWAY – DONALD TRUMP WILL BE TALKED ABOUT FOR YEARS TO COME.

He is doing a lot of the *wrong* things, yet he is way out front.

Have the rules of leadership changed?

Are voters so fed up with politicians that The Donald looks good?

If he wins... will young people think Trump's approach is the way to lead?

*** Donald Trump is a real estate developer, television personality, politician, and author.** He is president of The Trump Organization and Trump Entertainment Resorts. He hosted The Apprentice and The Celebrity Apprentice.

In June 2015, Trump announced his candidacy for President of the United States in the 2016 election, seeking the nomination of the Republican Party. Trump's early campaigning drew intense media coverage and saw him rise to high levels of popular support.

Since July 2015, he has consistently been the front-runner in public opinion polls for the Republican nomination.



The problem with the world is that the intelligent people are full of doubts, while the stupid ones are full of confidence.

– Charles Bukowski *

ANOTHER PROBLEM: THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF CONFIDENCE.

Good confidence comes when leaders do their homework and think things through. Good confidence is energizing, contagious, and helps overcome doubt.

Bad confidence comes from bad thinking, not doing our homework and leads to ideas and plans with hidden flaws or risks we don't see, but should.

The trick is to be an intelligent leader with good confidence. We need more of them.

*** Charles Bukowski was one of America's best-known and most influential contemporary poets and writers.**

German-born, his work addressed the lives of ordinary Americans, as well as the craft of writing, alcohol, relationships with women, and work. He published thousands of poems, hundreds of short stories, six novels, and more than sixty books.

As a result of his column for the underground LA newspaper Open City, the FBI kept a file on him. A biographical movie about Bukowski is currently in production.



If I have all the answers when I begin, some of the answers are wrong.

- Louis Kahn

AS LEADERS, WE RELY ON WHAT WE KNOW.

After all, people expect us to know. Not to be wrong.

But Louis Kahn was willing to be wrong if it meant building great buildings.

He was both certain of his direction and open to change simultaneously.

His approach sounds very strategic to me....

* **Louis Isadore Kahn (1901-1974) was an innovative American architect,** based in Philadelphia, who created dozens of extraordinary modernist buildings around the world.

After working for several firms in Philadelphia, he founded his own private practice in 1935. He served as a design critic and professor of architecture at Yale School of Architecture from 1947 to 1957.

The building shown above is Louis Kahn's National Assembly building in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and is regarded as his greatest masterpiece and one of the wonders of modern architecture.



Do one thing every day that scares you.

- Eleanor Roosevelt *

COURAGE MAKES ORDINARY PEOPLE REMARKABLE.

Eleanor Roosevelt understood courage.

She lost both her parents and a brother at an early age, was sent away to boarding school in London and then married her fifth cousin, Franklin Roosevelt, who was publicly unfaithful to her and later contracted polio — all during one of the most difficult periods in American history — the post-Depression years and then World War II.

Yet despite tragedy after tragedy, she stood up for what she believed needed to be said and done. At a time when women were largely dismissed, she inspired millions.

So quick, name something that scares you....

*** Anna Eleanor Roosevelt (1884 – 1962) was an American politician, diplomat, and activist.** She was the longest-serving First Lady of the United States, holding the post during her husband President Franklin D. Roosevelt's four terms. President Harry S. Truman later called her *The First Lady of the World* in tribute to her human rights achievements.

Though widely respected in later years, Roosevelt was controversial for her outspokenness, particularly regarding racial issues. She was the first presidential spouse to hold press conferences, write a syndicated newspaper column, and speak at a national convention. Occasionally, she publicly disagreed with her husband's policies. She advocated for women in the workplace, civil rights for African Americans and Asian Americans, and the rights of World War II refugees.

By the time of her death, she was regarded as one of the most esteemed women in the world. She was called the object of almost universal respect in her New York Times obituary. In 1999, she was ranked ninth in the top ten of Gallup's List of Most Widely Admired People of the 20th Century.



If you don't like change, you are going to like irrelevance even less.

- General Eric Shinseki, Retired *

GENERAL SHINSEKI REVAMPED American fighting forces to make them more effective in urban terrain.

His ideas were denounced widely by military colleagues and political leaders.

But gradually those leaders woke up to the new threats and realities facing America. Slowly, Shinseki's ideas began to gain traction and respect. The old ways had grown irrelevant.

What could make your organization irrelevant?

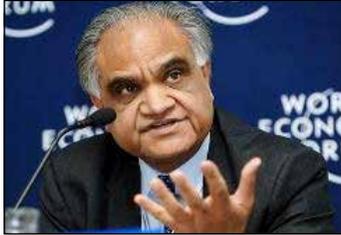
What needs to be re-imagined and replaced?

*** Four-star General Eric Shinseki, born in Hawaii to an American family of Japanese ancestry, grew up on a sugar plantation,** and was inspired by three uncles who served in the 442nd Infantry Regiment, a unit of Japanese Americans that became one of the most decorated fighting units in U.S. history.

Shinseki later graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point (B.S.), Duke University (Masters), the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the National War College.

Shinseki served two combat tours in Vietnam, earning two Bronze Stars for Valor and three Purple Hearts. During his second tour, he stepped on a land mine which blew the front off one of his feet; after a year recovering, he returned to active duty in 1971. He went on to serve in the Pacific, Europe and many other command assignments. In 1999, he became the Army's 34th Chief of Staff.

When he retired from the military, General Shinseki was the highest-ranked Asian American in U.S. history and the highest-ranked Japanese American. In 2008, he was appointed by President Barack Obama to become the Secretary of Veteran Affairs.



**No matter how successful
it has made you...
your past experience
won't ensure success
in this new world.**

– Ram Charan *

As leaders, what happens when we stop learning?

I often ask C-Levels during management audits: *What business book are you reading right now?*

The usual response: Silence and looking down at the floor.

What does that tell you?

*** Fortune Magazine called Ram Charan the most influential CEO consultant in the world.** His clients include the CEOs of many of the world's leading corporations.

Charan is also a sought-after speaker and the author of 18 best-selling business books, including: *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done* with co-author Larry Bossidy; *Know-How: The 8 Skills That Separate People Who Perform from Those Who Don't*; and *The Attacker's Advantage: Turning Uncertainty into Breakthrough Opportunities* (where this statement was found.)

Following studies in India, Charan graduated from and taught at Harvard Business School.



IF YOU'RE A JERK AS A LEADER, you will be torpedoed.

– Tom Peters *

DURING THE FINANCIAL MELTDOWN, we watched big-name CEOs dethroned and vilified for excesses and bad behavior. One MBA student asked me:

Why are we all working so hard to become leaders if someday we are just going to be thrown out of our jobs and ripped apart by the media? How can we prevent that from happening?

The room went silent.

How you are treated on the way down, I said, has a lot to do with the way you treat people on the way up. If you are arrogant, obnoxious and self-centered, when things go bad everyone that you hurt, ignored or mistreated will be thrilled to kick you, including the media.

But if you treat people with respect and a little gratitude on the way up the ladder, they will never forget.

Leaders who are admired and respected are rarely thrown to the wolves.

*** TOM PETERS IS AN AMERICAN WRITER AND SPEAKER ON BUSINESS MANAGEMENT and is best known for co-authoring *In Search of Excellence*, an international bestseller. He has since published 11 more books.**

Peters holds degrees from Cornell (B.A., Masters) and Stanford Business School (MBA, Ph.D.). A Navy Seabee with two tours in Vietnam, he worked in the Pentagon and the White House.

In 1974, Peters joined McKinsey & Company, the top international management consulting firm, becoming a partner in 1979. Two years later, Peters left McKinsey to become an independent consultant. *In Search of Excellence* was published the following year. It became a huge bestseller, gaining exposure worldwide for addressing business problems and empowering decision-makers.



A business that makes nothing but money is a poor business.

—Henry Ford *

YOU CAN TELL A LOT ABOUT A COMPANY AND ITS LEADERS BY LOOKING AT THE GOALS THEY SET.

If every goal has a dollar sign next to it, Henry Ford probably wouldn't approve. Neither would most strategic leaders.

Without goals focused on meeting needs, solving problems, building people, improving things, creating cool stuff that makes our work or our life more fun or more productive — or finding ways to do things better, faster, cheaper, and smarter — what good would it all be?

Oh... and doing things at work you can truly be proud of. I doubt most kids brag about parents who made their numbers last quarter.

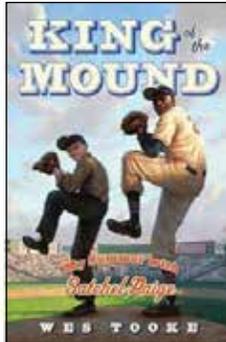
Henry Ford made a lot of money by understanding that business is about far more than money.

*** During early years working for Thomas Edison, Henry Ford (1863–1947)** caught the attention of capitalists who later invested in his vision of an automobile that middle class Americans could afford.

After many failures, he founded Ford Motor Company, later introducing the Model T, a vehicle which converted the automobile from an expensive curiosity into a practical conveyance and profoundly impacted the twentieth century.

Always searching for efficiency and lower costs, Ford introduced moving assembly belts into his plants in 1913, which enabled an enormous increase in production. Although Ford is often credited with the idea, the concept and its development came from his employees.

Henry Ford became one of the richest and best-known people in the world, largely through mass production of inexpensive goods coupled with high wages for workers. Ford had a global vision, with consumerism as the key to peace. His intense commitment to systematically lowering costs resulted in many technical and business innovations, including a franchise system that put dealerships on six continents.



It's funny what a few no-hitters do for a body.

– Satchel Paige *

WINNING IS ENERGIZING. TEAMS THAT WIN KNOW IT.

The first time a team wins, they learn how good it feels.

When a team wins a second time, nothing less than winning is ever good enough again.

As the leader, what are you doing to make sure your team wins?

Are you coaching and encouraging them? Are you making sure they have all they need? Are you celebrating every victory with them?

Or are you just hoping...

*** Leroy Robert Satchel Paige (1906-1982) was an American baseball player whose cocky and enthusiastic personality and his love for the game made him a living legend.**

On town tours across America, Paige would have his infielders sit down behind him. He would then proceed to strike out the entire opposing side. He drew huge crowds.

Paige began his career in the Negro leagues. His extraordinary pitching control soon got him noticed by Major League Baseball.

In 1971, Paige was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame, the first player to be inducted from the Negro leagues.



Never hire a prick, even a smart one.

– Jim Kilts, CEO *

KILTS CALLS PRICKS SMUG SELF-PROMOTERS WHO ARE DESTRUCTIVE TO ORGANIZATIONS.

On CNN, Kilts said that while pricks can get short-term results, they break down people and organizations over the long haul.
His advice: keep them out or get them out.

How many pricks do you have in your organization right now?

* **Jim Kilts turned around Gillette, Nabisco and Kraft Foods** and successfully led many other companies including Oscar Mayer and General Foods. One of the principles he credits for his success is not hiring pricks.

Kilts' book, Doing Things Right, is an excellent how-to volume on leading an organization.

Kilts is currently a partner at Centerview Partners, an investment banking and private equity firm based in New York City and was elected to the Board of Directors at The New York Times Company in 2005. Kilts earned an MBA in Marketing from the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business.



Small wins, small projects, small differences often make **HUGE** differences.

— Rosabeth Moss Kanter *

TOO MANY LEADERS — AND TOO MANY BUSINESS STUDENTS — ARE FOCUSED ON CREATING ONE REALLY BIG THING that will make them wildly successful.

Strategic leaders often approach things differently — by encouraging ideas that are singles, doubles and triples — each of which moves their company forward. If a home run happens now and then, all the better.

It's not that strategic leaders are any less daring or innovative.

It's that being strategic enables you to see that all kinds of progress can strengthen your people and your organization.

*** ONE OF THE FEW WOMEN IN RECENT YEARS TO HAVE ACHIEVED GENUINE GURU STATUS,** Rosabeth Moss Kanter is an expert in strategy, leadership and innovation, a business professor at Harvard Business School, the chair of the Harvard University Advanced Leadership Initiative and a respected author and management consultant.

In 2007, a year before the first American presidential election in which a woman stood a real chance of winning, she wrote *America the Principled: Six Opportunities for Becoming a Can-Do Nation Again*. In it, she talked about education, a workplace social contract and international relations.

Kanter has been called the thinking woman's Tom Peters. A large selection of her writing was gathered together in Rosabeth Moss Kanter on *The Frontiers of Management*.



Nothing comes merely by thinking about it.

– John Wanamaker *

SOMETIMES THE LEGACY WE CREATE IS DIFFERENT THAN WE THINK IT WILL BE.

Here in Philadelphia, the holidays make us think of Wanamaker's Department Store: meeting friends at the Eagle; watching the five-story Light Show; listening to the still-biggest-in-the-world Pipe Organ; or having lunch in the Crystal Tea Room.

Today, the name on the building is Macy's. Inside though, much that John Wanamaker created for his customers lives on.

But imagine the pushback Wanamaker faced: That show of yours will cost a fortune and distract people from buying! That ridiculous organ takes up space we need for selling.

Surprisingly – generations later – those crazy ideas are what many of us remember, what we take our kids to see, and what we reminisce about.

For John Wanamaker, the beauty and magic he brought to customers was like giving them a gift to take home... a gift to open in their thoughts anytime... and a gift that brought them back.

What will you be remembered for? Will it be for what you made or sold or received from life? Or will your legacy be what you gave to others...

*** JOHN VANSANT WANAMAKER (1838-1922) opened his first store at Sixth and Market Streets in Philadelphia in 1861.** He prospered.

In 1910, Wanamaker opened his flagship 12-story granite store encompassing an entire block across from Philadelphia's City Hall. That store stands today and houses the Wanamaker Grand Court Light Show and Pipe Organ, and the 2,500-pound bronze Wanamaker Eagle, which became a famous meeting place for Philadelphians. *Meet me at the Eagle* is a Philadelphia byword.

Wanamaker was an innovator, merchandising genius, and a resolute believer in advertising. He gave his employees free medical care, education, recreational facilities, pensions and profit-sharing plans before such benefits were common.

At his death, Wanamaker's estate was estimated to be \$100 million (\$1.4 billion today). John Wanamaker was long known for his philanthropy. In 1878, he co-founded Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission, a homeless shelter and soup kitchen, which is still in operation 137 years later.



Carefully watch how people live, get an intuitive sense of what they might want and then go with it. Don't do market research.

— Akio Morita *

A FEW GENERATIONS AGO, SONY WAS WHAT APPLE IS TODAY.

Sony co-founder Akio Morita believed in finding problems consumers wanted to solve: like listen to music on the go; make home videos; and watch tv programs later.

Morita was a genius and a great businessman. He was even willing to sacrifice a profitable product and replace it with something better.

One day, Morita told his engineers to make their best-selling camcorder smaller. The engineers argued it was impossible.

He said, *If I drop this in a bucket of water and bubbles come out, it can be made smaller.*

The bucket arrived. He dropped the camera in. The engineers huddled around... and bubbles came out.

Morita turned and walked out of the room.

* AKIO MORITA (1921-1999) was trained to take over the family business in sake and soy sauce, but his calling was in math and physics.

In 1946, in a bombed-out building with \$350, Morita and his partner founded Sony. Morita was 25.

Sony soon invented magnetic recording tape and the first tape recorder. In 1957, the company released the first pocket-sized transistor radio. When the radio proved too big for the shirt pockets of his employees, Morita made shirts with bigger pockets.

In 1973, Sony unveiled Trinitron technology followed by the first Betamax home video recorder, a year before VHS format came out. In 1979, the Walkman was introduced, making it the world's first portable music player. In 1984, Sony launched the Discman series which played CDs.

In 1994, Morita stepped down as Sony chairman and died in 1999. The company struggled with new product development soon after Morita left and lost its prominence for innovation before the digital revolution in music.



Throw out these words:
If I can, I hope and maybe,
and replace them with
I can, I will, I must.

– Mary Kay Ash *

MARY KAY ASH BELIEVED IN WOMEN.

She also believed in the power of words to praise, encourage, and inspire – and to help women believe in themselves.

To build her business, she used what she had: her charm, her beauty and her ability to sell.

Her leadership changed millions of lives.

*** Recognized as one of America’s greatest female entrepreneurs,** Mary Kay Ash started her business in a tiny storefront in Dallas, Texas, with five products and a big dream – to inspire women to transform their lives.

More than 50 years later, Mary Kay Cosmetics has more than 3.5 million independent beauty consultants in a multi-billion dollar global network.

Married at 17 and later divorced, Ash learned sales by selling books door to door. She eventually remarried and went to work for Stanley Home Products. Frustrated when passed over for a promotion in favor of a man she had trained, she resigned in 1963.

Ash planned to start a cosmetics business with her new husband, but a month before it was to open, he died of a heart attack. Two months later, armed with \$5,000 from her oldest son, Ash launched Mary Kay Cosmetics at the age of 45.



All we need are destinations and deadlines. *We'll take it from there.*

– Charles Bolden *

THE ADMINISTRATOR OF NASA WAS EXPLAINING WHAT HE NEEDED from the White House and Congress.

Where do you want us to go and by when?

He was asking only for vision and guidance – nothing more.

He had plenty of smart people who would figure out how to make it happen.

That's a powerful statement about leadership.

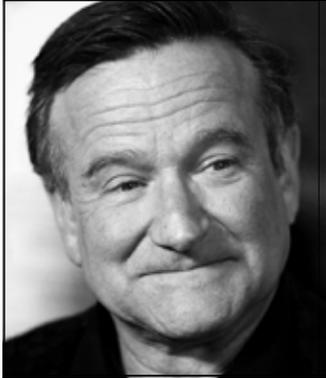
Are you providing the destinations and deadlines your people need – and then letting them figure out how to get there?

*** CHARLES FRANK BOLDEN, JR., (born 1946) IS THE ADMINISTRATOR OF NASA**, a retired United States Marine Corps Major General, and former NASA astronaut.

A graduate of the United States Naval Academy, he became a Marine Aviator and flew more than 100 sorties into North and South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. In 1998, he served as Commanding General in support of Operation Desert Thunder in Kuwait.

After his military service, he returned to NASA, leading four space flights, including piloting the Atlantis, Discovery, and Columbia space shuttles, plus missions aboard Spacelab and deploying the Hubble Space Telescope.

In 2009, President Obama appointed Bolden to be Administrator of NASA.



**You are only given
ONE little spark of madness.
You mustn't lose it.**

– Robin Williams *

ROBIN WILLIAMS UNDERSTOOD MADNESS LIKE NO ONE ELSE.

Perhaps the greatest improvisational actor of all time, Williams could instantly become someone else: a character or a person he just made up. The voice, manner, and humor were extraordinary.

He was beyond brilliant. His ad libs were often better than the work of Hollywood's best writers... and invariably became part of his films and shows.

The undisputed leader in the world of comedy for decades, he set the standards by which other comics were judged.

During his too-short life, Robin Williams's remarkable gift was not just to make us laugh.

Robin Williams brought us unforgettable moments of madness.

*** ROBIN WILLIAMS (1951-2014) WAS AN AMERICAN ACTOR AND COMEDIAN known worldwide for his brilliant improvisational skills.** Starting as a stand-up comedian in the mid-1970s, he led San Francisco's comedy renaissance. After rising to fame as Mork in the sitcom *Mork & Mindy*, he established a career in both stand-up comedy and feature film acting.

When his friend John Belushi suddenly died, Williams decided to quit drugs and alcohol. Said Williams: *Was it a wake-up call? Oh yeah, on a huge level. The grand jury helped, too.*

In 1998, Williams won an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for *Good Will Hunting*. During his career, he also received two Primetime Emmy Awards, six Golden Globe Awards, two Screen Actors Guild Awards, four Grammy Awards, and was inducted as a Disney Legend in 2009.

12 Ways Strategic Leaders Outperform Mind Map by Carl Francis



Decision making

Imagine having a simple system for evaluating and making decisions. Many strategic leaders have created their own systems, enabling them to move faster with greater certainty.

Paying attention

The old luxury of ignoring competitors and trends is long past. Today you have to be watchful and learn from everyone around you. Once you fall behind, it's very difficult to catch up.

Diagnosing

What's working and what's not? What steps are we missing? How do our clients really see us? What can we do better? What do we need to do less of – or more of? These kinds of questions overlaid on your business problems can produce remarkable insights and speed resolution.

Planning and Strategy

The ability to quickly assemble and produce a workable plan is a multiplier. Good plans focus attention, resources and effort – as well as unify people around a common cause. Everyone benefits. Without a plan, uncertainty reigns.

Leveraging knowledge and assets

In an age when knowledge, skills and intellectual property are the primary assets of most companies, knowing how to maximize their use and increase their value is a priority for strategic leaders.

Adapting to change

Change is no longer an option. Leaders who are slow or resistant to change eventually run irrelevant operations. It's important to always know: what is happening and what it means; the best ways to adapt; and how to build a culture open to consistent improvement.

Clarity, Confidence and Control™

When you think through an issue thoroughly, first you get clarity. That clarity builds confidence, and confidence is contagious. Together they enable you to pull what's needed together to make the right things happen. That's control.

Getting buy-in

Buy-in is all about getting others to believe in what you believe in. Strategic leaders know that buy-in comes from a combination of credibility, logic and shared beliefs.

Long-term Thinking

Thinking only about today is not enough to build a sustainable organization. You have to be able to merge what you are doing now with what will move you forward for a long time.

Setting goals and targets

If every goal you set has a dollar sign in front of it, you are not leading strategically. Instead create a mix of goals including customer satisfaction, innovation, productivity, skill-building and other activities which build a culture of achievement and improvement. That mix will drive revenue and profits faster and longer.

Taking Action

Action is far easier to initiate when you know what you want to do and why, and what is likely to result.

Recognizing + Resolving Problems

Every leader faces business problems. Being slow or unwilling to address problems keeps leaders from having time, energy or resources to work on matters that will produce real progress. Strategic leaders know how to deal with and resolve problems quickly, freeing time and talent to get to that which moves the organization forward.

Great Thinking. Remarkable People.

I've brought together my series of weekly emails from Summer 2015 into one eDoc. I hope you'll find an idea that inspires you or your team.

Why this email series? For years, I've been recommending people stay in touch with their clients and friends, but have lacked (as I've been told) in that area myself. It was time. But I didn't want to do the same old thing. I wanted to send something useful, in a format short enough to be read quickly.

How did you create the Remarkable approach? I considered lots of ideas, but decided to combine two areas I love: great people and great thinking. So I worked on how to do it, including adding a few words to relate these ideas to what I see every day in organizations. I think that makes what they say more relevant.

Do you hope people will act on some of these ideas? Actually... at first, it was a hope. Then people started emailing me back and calling. I think people enjoy smart, interesting ideas and some will definitely use them.

Why is that? Peter Drucker was the first one to recognize the emergence of the Information and Knowledge Age and its requirement for lifelong learning. I believe we not only need to *keep* learning, but we need to better learn *how* to learn.

Excuse me.... One of my regrets was to rely primarily on learning by doing: starting from scratch and trying to figure out complicated and perhaps risky stuff on my own. That

method has a certain appeal, especially to entrepreneurs. But it's the slowest and least efficient way to learn.

That's why I encourage my Leadership students to train themselves to learn from experts — people who have already solved the problems they are facing. Experts have invested the time, learned the lessons, made the mistakes and found the best ways to successfully accomplish the tasks.

In other words: start off with a proven approach. Master one way that really works first. THEN experiment to see if you can improve on it. You can move much faster and increase your likelihood of success.

Explain how you choose subjects. I believe we rise to the level of the people we surround ourselves with. So I try to find people to include who are smart and accomplished — and have something valuable to share. Some do research (like Jim Collins). Some are street savvy (Zig Ziglar). Others cheeky but insightful (Madonna and Katherine Hepburn). Many understand leadership and strategy in a profound way (Welch and Drucker).

What will you do next? The readership and feedback have been terrific, so I will continue the *Remarkable* series into 2016. I'm also working on some new articles on *Strategies for Tomorrow and Beyond* and *Growing Strategically* and will make portions available through my weekly emails. Watch for them... every Friday morning!



EnvisianStrategic works closely with CEOs, Owners, and Boards to help them address challenges like growth, competitiveness, planning and innovation. We also collaborate with Advisers to resolve critical situations, threats and transitions, get deals finished and achieve important outcomes.

CARL FRANCIS is an award-winning adviser, instructor, inventor and author. His expertise spans strategy, planning, leadership, resolving critical challenges and corporate makeovers. He is an Adjunct Professor and Guest Lecturer in Drexel University's LeBow College of Business' internationally-ranked MBA and Corporate Education programs. Carl is also the inventor of the Enactix platform of diagnostic and strategic tools.

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VISIT CARLFRANCIS.COM

You'll find my blog with dozens of posts about leadership, strategy, marketing, branding, and how to deal with strategic challenges and critical situations.