

## ABL-The Next Generation of Leaders

By: Barry Brewster and Dr. Eileen Dowse



THE AGILE BUSINESS LEADER®



For those young people who want to be a successful leader the road can be extra challenging. They must be ready and able to perform tasks with an appropriate level of interpersonal skills, professional knowledge, and operational intelligence to achieve perform well in the organization and be respected as someone you could be promoted. A young adult who wants to gain opportunities for understanding organizational realities and the meaning of leadership development must comprehend not only on the attributes of a leader but the nature of the leader-follower relationship. This is not always easy. The young people we have talked with are frustrated that they aren't respected for either having the skills to achieve in the organization or not being encouraged to understand what skills are needed to be of benefit to the organization.

As the world of business changes so does the need for developing effective leaders who can respond to emerging issues. We interviewed Patrick Carmichael who is the Talent Coordinator from Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) about developing the next level of leaders and he said, *"In my part of the world (Saudi) we value age. Age is one of my biggest leadership challenges within the organization. Unfortunately, businesswise it hurts us dearly if we only value age. It also makes valuing leaders, only because of age, an issue of talent. Like every other part of the world, we are in a talent war and in the oil industry, technical expertise is retiring. This means the backfill has been very lean. We have the largest capital of growth factor in the region and business and the amount of work is phenomenal but the reserve of talent is short. It is the perfect storm compared to the bust which occurred in the 80's.*

*The emerging leaders we need to find need to have specialized knowledge, a strong technical knowledge base. Most importantly they must have the ability to look at the issues facing them today and for the future, multiple futures in fact. They need to be able to determine what might occur and what needs to be done. They must be able to see the forest through the trees but they also realize you have to get through the forest too. These new successful leaders understand how important people are. They know that people are more than the organization's most important asset and that everyone in the company needs to on board in order for success to occur."*

This new breed of leader knows how to enable people on how to work quickly and address stakeholders' needs through determination, conviction and going in the right direction. They are younger leaders who have valuable capabilities, are open to new ideas, are intelligent and can communicate well. The leaders organizations want, are the leaders who don't do it do it for themselves they do it for the business.

It is apparent that changes in the workplace have created the need for emerging leaders to know how to be ready to enter into the workforce as skilled, knowledgeable, and agile thinkers who can adapt to changing markets and be open to new ways of propelling the organization towards success. It is no

longer acceptable to think of organisations simply in terms of what they produce (their products and services). Rather, organizations must think about the talent or human capital they need to help build the business.

For the next generation of leaders, *the importance of* international competitiveness will be critical. Three key points are involved in preparing to become a leader in a global economy:

1. **Education**- ability to develop an educated workforce who has industry knowledge and operational intelligence who can set high expectations and achieve with self-determination.
2. **Thinking Style**- ability to generate ideas for the next generation of products or services and by using innovative practices to influence and adjust.
3. **Environment**- ability to create a productive working environment where smart people get together with smart ideas to promote change, rectify inefficiencies and deliver an outcome.

Developing the next generation of leaders is about priming individuals to become wise and innovative and prepared to meet the demands of the future. We encourage emerging leaders to accelerate their opportunity for success by developing the skills of strategic thinking, innovation, communication and self-awareness. For that reason we believe emerging leaders and organizations who want to achieve more and faster, should practice and understand techniques for effective leadership early in their career.