

ships. Sweat the small stuff—and the big stuff will take care of itself. I am 67 this year—and this is, as I put it, all that I’ve learned for sure in 6.7 decades.

Robert Greenleaf is the author of *Servant Leadership* and the potent idea of the leader-as-servant. He asks: 1) *Do those served grow as persons? And 2) Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more likely themselves to become servants? Wow! What a high standard! Do you measure up?*

If you buy Greenleaf’s standard, ask yourself, at the end of the day, “What did I do to be of service to my group? Was I fair and truly a servant?” You might work with a friend-coach on this topic. This idea of a *leader as servant* applies as much to the individual contributor as to the chief of thousands.

When I look at these four interconnected ideas—primal leadership, only connect, small courtesies, and leader as servant—I’m *blown away* by their power.

I recently came across this quote from Plato: “Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle.” It reminds us that we seldom know as much as we might imagine about the person across the table. In my experience, Plato got it exactly right. Hidden from sight is an ailing parent, a life-long battle with excess weight, abiding shyness, or whatever. This “great battle” colors our mate’s or employee’s every action. I am not counseling “going easy” as a boss. I am counseling understanding (compassion) and listening 100 percent of the time. As leaders, we have a sacred trust—as well as a job to get done. *Compassion* and *thoughtfulness* are always merited.

Why must we pursue *breakthrough thinking* and *leap out of the box* when the secrets to success and, conversely, the causes of failure—in the sense of persuading people to pursue and achieve *excellence* in any endeavor—almost wholly depend upon character traits and personal characteristics that are, in fact, more or less eternal and transcend cultures? For example, Nelson Mandela’s smile disarmed one and all.

We are confronted with an economic crisis of epic proportion. There is no better time to heed the *eternal lessons* of great leaders: the keys to surviving and thriving will not primarily be the out-of-the-box cleverness of our “strategic response,” but *character* as expressed by the depth and breadth of relationships throughout our networks. LE

Tom Peters is CEO of The Tom Peters Company. Visit [www.TomPeters.com](http://www.TomPeters.com).

**ACTION:** Heed the lessons of classic leadership.

## Leading Bold Change

*We’re taking charge of change.*



by Ann Schulte

WHEN MASTERCARD went public in 2006 and faced the challenges of such a major change, we began crafting a more *systematic approach* to the way the company talks about and leads change projects, which has built vital organizational capabilities in the years since. We selected John Kotter’s *Leading Bold Change* methodology and partnered with ISB trainers to bring the program to life. Since the fall of 2007, nearly 1,000 employees in nine global markets (five different countries) have gone through the *Leading Bold Change* workshop and have learned to plan their change initiatives.

The *Leading Bold Change* training program has the right blend of accessible workshop content and research (books, articles, videos), and, the ability to certify our trainers to drive the delivery. We kicked off the program with executive sessions to build buy-in and support.

All participants were asked to read Kotter’s book *Our Iceberg Is Melting* and complete online pre-work. During the workshops, the participants developed *action plans* to apply the *8-Step* model. Many executives saw the benefits of applying “lessons from the colony” and requested *Leading Bold Change* sessions with their teams. After the workshops, change teams receive consulting from the Global Talent Management & Development team on implementing their action plans.

### Six Program Components

The *Leading Bold Change* workshop consists of six components: 1) interactive dialogue on the book and reinforcement of its key concepts; 2) discussion of how the archetypes from the book relate to participants’ leadership styles; 3) video presentation of several case studies on why the *8 Steps* are needed and what successful implementation looks like; 4) breakout and group discussion on the past experiences of participants with change initiatives and how they relate to successful implementa-

tion of each step; 5) exploration of the current state of the team, including strengths and weaknesses, and analysis of critical change issues; and 6) application of the *8-Step* model to the identified focus areas, including completion of a *plan* and *goals* for each step.

### Eight Steps to Change

Here’s how we’ve progressed with the *8 Steps*.

- To *increase the urgency for change* (Step 1), the CMO introduced employees via a global teleconference to the key change themes and their application to the company. A week or so later, all employees were invited to listen to Dr. John Kotter and ask questions during a live global broadcast.
- While we *focus on creating a culture of change*, we allow each business unit to assemble the correct *guiding team* (Step 2) for their own change initiative.
- The *teams then create a vision* (Step 3) for their project that embodies their willingness to learn to be *change-ready*.
- Our *broad communication efforts* (Step 4) are enhanced by our strategic partnership with the corporate communications team. Teams from around the globe, and their change project success cases, have been featured in the corporate news.
- We have *empowered action* (Step 5) by providing employees access to the *Leading Bold Change* methodology and by certifying our own team as facilitators and consultants.



- As for *producing short-term wins* (Step 6), teams are now thinking about and planning for change and creating a common language around change. For example, any team that speaks of their “green bottle” is sharing an understandable urgency that something needs to change.

- To *keep the momentum going* (Step 7), we help teams see the end goal and remember why this work is so vital.

- To *make these changes sustainable* (Step 8) the Global Talent Management & Development consultants follow up with business unit teams, providing guidance, monitoring progress, and serving as group mentors to make the changes a permanent part of our culture at MasterCard Worldwide. LE

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**ACTION:** Take charge of leading bold change.

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