

## "Take Me To Your Leader"

**From ER Daily By Howard Adamsky**

If you are a leader and you are maintaining a "wait and see" attitude as you hold your company in limbo, you are not the leader you think you are. You are not creating value, not creating jobs, not devising new and inspired ways to serve your customers and certainly not making your company more valuable than it was yesterday. Don't take this the wrong way, but leadership is your job. And if you are not leading, the board should remove you.

What is required of our leaders? They must carry on each and every day with courage, conviction, and an eye towards making the best decisions possible in very dangerous and uncertain times. (Did you know that in a recent study of Fortune 500 companies, 37% of the CEOs had been in the military and of that number, the greatest representation was from the Marines, which, coincidentally, is the smallest branch of the military? I suspect they know something about leadership that many of the others don't.) This is not a time for "blue sky" leadership. Those days are gone and except for the occasional slow news day, they are gone for good.

One could, of course, speak endlessly about doing nothing as a good business strategy, but doing nothing achieves nothing. Left to entropy, clients disappear, good employees become bored, profits erode, morale suffers, and sales slip. This is called "the competition eats your lunch because you have adopted the 'wait and see' leadership approach," and this is not the type of leadership we need today.

Leaders must learn to lead in times of uncertainty — or find themselves other jobs that require less courage and daring. The ability to lead in times of doubt and indecision is an absolute requirement of the leadership portfolio, and if you do not have what it takes, that is okay — but a replacement must be found.

Uncertainty is the new rule of the day, so the time to get used to it is now. After Iraq, there will be another problem with another disturbed religious fanatic or dictator who wishes to rattle our cage as the world we live in becomes more angry and violent with each passing day. We will of course, deal with and hopefully resolve the situations, but as soon as one goes, another will take its place. Whether you agree or not, you can see that the world is not the same place it was ten years ago, or even five, and if you do not have the stomach for it then leadership is not for you.

Einstein said, "The world war after the next will be fought with rocks." He of course, having a deep understanding of the atom and all of the wonderful ways it could be harnessed and utilized, knew of what he spoke. There will be new countries that will develop nuclear weapons. Some countries will develop dirty bombs. Others will develop horrors not yet imagined. This is all coming and it is coming fast, because technology feeds upon itself, and it is only a matter of time before most countries can get just about anything they want in one way or another. As an aside, let's not forget terrorism. It is guaranteed to be a part of our existence for the rest of our lives, and there is little we can do other than to adjust to a very different reality than we have lived with for so many years.

The sad state of our economy need not be a precursor of things to come, but if this is to be, we need courage and conviction from the people we look to for the answers. Saddam Hussein is here now and will be gone sometime soon, but it is incorrect to assume he will not be replaced by another madman using a different name while holding the world hostage from another location.

Thus the question to American corporate leadership is a simple one:

Who is calling the shots in your organization — you as the organization's leader or the lunatic of the month that has rendered you ineffective and redundant?