

The SavvyCEO™

Volume 2 • Issue 1 • January 2002

Extraordinary managers discuss extraordinary management.

THE SAVVYCEO SPEAKS

The SavvyCEOSpeaks is a regular feature sharing philosophies and experiences with other CEOs. Our SavvyCEO for this issue is Fairmount Minerals' President and CEO Charles (Chuck) D. Fowler. Fairmount Minerals is a privately held basic materials company with revenues of approximately \$180 million for 2001. Since its inception in 1983, the CAGR of sales is 26.4%.

The SavvyCEO met Chuck when he offered to give employees \$1000 with the purchase of a new car between Sept. 11 and Dec. 31, 2001. With most companies looking in every nook and cranny to save money, we wanted to know what was different about Fairmount Minerals. A lot!

Chuck, why is Fairmount Minerals giving away money?

We are suppliers to the auto industries. Higher sales of autos help Fairmount Minerals and if it helps us to get out of the recession, great! We don't require employees to spend the money on the new car; we'd like them to spend it on something else; they probably got a terrific zero interest deal. With a 520-employee workforce, we have 48 people participating in our \$1000 new car offer.

What else do you do right in your company?

We really practice working together everyday to satisfy our customers. That is the start and the end of how we work. But first we have to know who is the real customer, the decision maker. In our business, it might be the engineer, or the production leader. We teach our technical sales people to identify the decision makers and build strong relationships.

We encourage our people to focus on customer satisfaction. We publish customer satisfaction % in every facility, along with the monthly financial numbers and progress charts. We want our employees to realize that with 99.78% customer satisfaction, we still have opportunities to do better.

Save this Date:

JUNE 7, 2002

**SavvyCEO
Breakfast Forum**

Please tell us about your management style.

I have to give and show leadership to my group. I have to look at longer-term goals and figure out how to reach them through our people. I am definitely a consensus style manager. I like to empower my team.

What does that mean? "...everyone talks building consensus, empowerment."

It means the greatest majority comes to the decision. We focus on the lowest level possible in the decision making process. The sales guy's opinion may carry more weight; his input is more powerful than that of others if the decision is in his area. There is a higher probability of a successful implementation with that stronger input. I need to allow people to "pop up." It's ok to stand up and say what you believe.

Consensus management is harder. It takes a lot of patience. I tell myself, "I'm going to wait for this, it will come." I have to tell myself it will be better to get where we want to go together, than telling people to "just do it." I've always had an open door and that has its own challenges. I tell people they are welcome to bring troubles to my office, they're just not welcome to leave them here.

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MANAGING THE LASTING IMPACTS FROM 9/11

You Said...

"The major impact of September 11 for our company is: make sure the disaster recovery plan works. A great deal of scrutiny has gone into ensuring that it does from back-up systems to back-up locations to notification chains. Security is enhanced everywhere. Remember this is a country that has seen any number of IRA bombings. People are always suspicious of unaccompanied bags and packages and building security always has been an obvious presence."

*Brian Stange • Vice President
JPMorgan Fleming Asset Management
London, England*

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Great leaders embrace clarity and ambiguity, consensus and conflict.

For years researchers have analyzed dysfunctional patterns in companies and proposed ways to overcome the problems. And still there are no magical solutions. Why is it so difficult to get an organization to do what you want it to do?

First, there are many barriers within organizations.

- Rigid hierarchies make it nearly impossible for information to flow upward to the top.
- Multiple layers slow information and create tremendous distortions in the message.
- Departmentalization and specialization isolate individuals and keeps information contained.
- Explosion of knowledge has created a need for highly specialized workers with no common language available to help them talk to each other.
- Globalization creates physical distance and differences in culture, language and customs.
- Communication technology creates a false sense of ease of communication when in reality it creates more communication barriers.

Second, there are many barriers within individuals.

- We have been socialized as children to interact at a level that is NOT transparent. Children learn to manipulate parents and vice versa. We carry this into the work place. Interactions such as selling a product and persuading a committee to approve your project proposal are all games that require manipulation and second-guessing.

In an article by Chris Argyris, (*Skilled Incompetence*, September-October 1986 Harvard Business Review) he suggests it takes skill for a manager to send mixed messages.

- Design a clearly ambiguous message such as "Be innovative and take risks, but be careful."
- Ignore any inconsistencies in the message -- "take risks but be careful."
- Make the ambiguity and inconsistency in the message "undiscussable."

In order to get people to act, you need to understand that communication is often highly complex, very uncertain and multilayered and then communicate accordingly.

- Identify problems that impede communication.
- Recognize, decipher and deal with hidden and subtle messages -- gossip and the "grapevine" in organizations, and body language, inflection and metaphors in individuals.
- Articulate company goals and vision through simplified information networks and channels.

For more information on organizational communication call
Laverne Wilson @ 440-777-0155

"Routine work drives out important work."

Warren Bennis

Make Plans Reality!

We develop wonderful plans; three year, five year plans. We work hard everyday; we tell our people how important the plans are. They don't happen. There are scores of reasons why not. Just look at any proposal for bonuses when the companies do not make plan: the weather was terrible this year (El Nino), our customers are having a bad year, housing starts are down, we were not able to hire a, the company tightened the budget (sure, the company wasn't making plan) so we couldn't

But what about those companies that do make plan? What are they doing right? Yes, sometimes they are very lucky. But most times, the senior management is doing things right:

- They select a few major initiatives (no more than three) directly related to company goals and they concentrate all efforts on achieving these initiatives.
- And everyone is pointed toward these initiatives. The CEO is a broken record. Every time the CEO and the senior management speak, it is related to these initiatives. Every conversation begins with 'Where are you on your three initiatives?'

• He doesn't just talk about the initiatives. When there is money to be dispersed, the first project is an initiative project. When

there are people to be praised, they are people working on the initiatives. When he hears of projects not related to the initiative, he asks why. And if the answer doesn't make sense, he stops the project.

- He walks around his company, pointing out people and their accomplishments supporting the initiatives. He redirects people who are misdirected. And if they cannot be redirected, he asks for help with them.

In most companies, we are trying to complete too many projects. We allow our energy to be diffused and wasted.... the important work doesn't get done. Sure, people have to get paid, product has to get shipped, etc. We need to make sure that is happening, but with as little effort and few resources, as possible.

Ask these questions every day:

Is this work focused on our major initiatives?

Does this work need to be done?

If so, can someone else (lower paid, outsourced) do it?

What happens if we just stop doing this?

Leaders direct the creative energy and resources toward building a stronger, more sustainable organization.

Need help? Call Lee Nielsen @ 440-786-8800

THE SAVVYCEO SPEAKS

continued from cover

What is the best part of your job as CEO?

I enjoy my job most when our people are successful and rewarded by accolades, promotions and recognition. A recent example is our quality guy, working for QS 9000 certification. We had a ceremony for him and were able to give him a gift, recognition, and a bonus. That's when I feel best. It had been a roller coaster effort to get our certification. He had to educate fellow employees throughout the process and there were times when his patience would wear thin. But he has a good sense of the overall impact, a broad perspective of the long road to quality. I feel good about that.

How has your role changed?

In my early years of business, I had a sense of gratification everyday. I was a production supervisor on the 2nd shift.

I knew the schedule; I didn't have to think much about tomorrow. If we met schedule, I felt gratified, it was very immediate. As my career has grown, it takes longer to reach gratification.

Also, there is a growing sense of loneliness. It is difficult to make sure I am getting input from every level, to get buy-in from each level. When I was promoted from VP to President, others treated me differently. Their perception of my power changed how they treated me. They perceived that I had a power over them that I didn't have the day before.... It's one of the unwritten rules of business.

How do you handle the loneliness?

It is difficult to find good sounding boards, but I have some. My partner, Bill Conway and I have had a peer relationship for years; power is not an issue for us. My Board of Directors is very important: some board members are very available to talk things through. Also, I have a couple of retired subordinates who are willing to tell me the truth.

Who have been some of your mentors?

My father. He taught me the basics, the traits I live by. I was raised on a farm with farmer values. It was a good training ground: honest, hard work.

A very important mentor was a new boss, a new division head at Martin Marietta. Very clearly, our hands were being slapped. Most every one felt threatened. He didn't know much about our business, but was very open minded and won over a few of us quickly. He would recognize strength and depend on us. He said 'You just run it' and would let us do our jobs. We had a number of troubling times during this period but he took a long

perspective. "One hundred years from now, no one will know the difference." He supported a longer perspective, but expected that whatever we did, we gave it our best shot.

Another was my brother. He was five years older and very aggressive. I was probably too trusting and he taught me lessons as to how to manage in the 'real world': how to recognize people and how to deal with them.

What would you want to do over as a manager?

All my regrets relate to people. It's usually when I have promoted someone or asked someone to do a job outside his capabilities and I wish I hadn't. That's when I feel the worst. If we lose someone, it's a failure. What didn't we see? If a CEO doesn't think he has failed in these situations, he is missing the boat.

**"What is the impact
of the recession
on Fairmount Minerals?"**
We refuse to participate.

Some people just don't reach leadership roles. In a company our size, it is difficult to return people to where they were, so we tend to lose them. When that happens, I feel the failure personally.

How do you share your philosophy?

I may not always be successful, but I am always on a bandwagon. The basic issue

in changing people is trust that we will be successful. I don't do anything without people. I have a responsibility to communicate where the business is, and the things we believe in to our employees and to our shareholders. I must make sure I am using all methods or forms of communications to get our message across. I learned from my father that one of the greatest positive attributes is an ability to talk with everyone from any walk of life, farmer, educator or business person.

In the past, I would travel to the plants and make presentations to the employees. As we have grown, the VPs do that. But I write notes and emails to individual employees and personal notes to new employees as well as general distribution of information about our company.

Any recommendations for a new CEO?

One: On a personal level, carefully choose someone to confide in. Don't assume someone will be the right person. He/she must know your business and bring you some balance.

Two: Determine what the culture of the business is to be and wear it on your sleeve. Take it out to people, sell it to everyone, employees, customers, sales people, everyone, all the time.

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A COLLEAGUE COMMENTS...

Prioritize 'til it hurts!

Rodolfo Salas, RSR International, Inc.

Are you developing a strategic plan because you have to? If so, stop for one moment and think what will come of it. Typically it will be presented, filed and forgotten.

Instead, if you build a plan to serve as a guide to maximize profits and create a sustainable competitive advantage, you will prioritize and focus on what's really important and define your critical path for success. You will benefit directly by no longer juggling so many things, becoming the best you can be in areas you choose to excel, and dramatically enhancing your chances to generate wealth.

"Strategic alignment is a critical step for revitalizing any organization. It is all about harnessing the energy that abounds in that organization and channeling it to achieve a unified purpose."

Rody Salas

Five steps to reaching your goals:

First: Establish aggressive, almost impossible-to-achieve goals. This exercise will stretch your thinking and cause you to ask, "why not?" You will start thinking about how you must change the way you "play the game." And you will have a benchmark to know when you have won.

Second: Choose among your suppliers, products and services, channels of distribution, customers and markets to define your critical path for success. Commit to deliver the best performance to the fewest entities that generate the most profit.

Third: Build a strong and sustainable foundation for success. Identify improvements needed and prioritize on those areas where you must excel. This is sometimes hard and uncomfortable work but must be done. Take a look at the skills, experience and know-how of your people; your critical processes such as manufacturing, product development and/or services; important

relationships across your value chain with key suppliers, channels of distribution and customers; and technologies that will differentiate you in the marketplace and result in a sustainable advantage.

Fourth: Implement a process for continuous improvement based on performance measures. See article "Make it So." on page two in this The SavvyCEO.

Fifth: Involve everyone in the implementation of your plan. Clarify and communicate roles and responsibilities. Hold each manager accountable and let people do their work. This is a difficult task: managing the "soft" skills is the hardest work of leadership.

And your job now?

Prioritize, focus, and make it happen!!

Need some help?

Call Rody: 440-247-5201 or visit: www.rodysalas.com

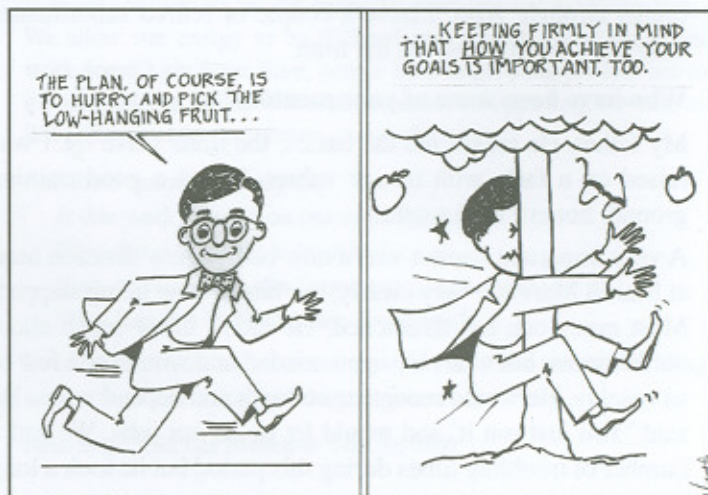
"The plan is worthless. Planning is everything."

by James Autry in

Confessions of an Accidental Businessman.

SAVVYCEOWANNABE

Created by Howard Vaeth



ACTIONS SPEAK *A Fable!*

A young king, William, fair of face and manner, ruled a tumultuous kingdom. King William's kingdom was beset on all sides by other young kings (wolves!) who wanted his land, resources and wealth. The attacks from outside the kingdom were relentless and brutal. They wanted to divide his kingdom. Everyone would get more, except King William.

But King William was attacked even from within his kingdom. The family of the former king wanted to regain power for itself. They took their small visages of power and attempted to oust young William... calling him unable to serve, and wasteful of the kingdom's treasures.

Because this is a modern fable, the young king could not have members of the family beheaded (oh, what a useful strategy!) so he had to endure their public complaints, try to build support with other leaders, and strengthen his kingdom. All at the same time!

And why did the other kings, family members, and disloyal lieutenants within his ranks try to overthrow King William?

There was opportunity! William showed serious signs of weakness! He surrounded himself with poorly skilled advisors. And, of course, since their advice was poor, it resulted in more problems, loss of wealth and status for the kingdom. Problems upon problems! The wolves began circling the kingdom, looking for morsels of wealth. William felt threatened. He lost sleep and couldn't concentrate on important issues. He was distracted by hungry wolves.

William was fair of face and had enjoyed positive reactions from people all his life. He hated unpleasant meetings. He liked people to like him. And he had been made King, hadn't he? He must do some things right. Of course, he did!

But like all kings with good looks, a pleasant manner and some good skills, there came a point in his reign where that just wasn't enough. He had to learn some new things. Since William was bright, he realized he needed help. He needed to learn how to say the things that made him uncomfortable. He needed some new skills.

And the first thing he learned was he had let his personal discomfort cloud good judgment. He needed some help to see when he turned away from uncomfortable situations. He wanted to learn how to deal with difficult people. He wanted to learn how to tell his advisors he was unhappy with them. And perhaps, how to tell them to go away.

William found someone who would tell him the truth and help him to confront the problems with his team. Hooray for William!!

William used his new skills with his advisors. Steadily King William began to see improvements in his kingdom. More money began to flow into his coffers and his people seemed happier. Sadly, some of the advisors were not able to change their destructive ways and had to go away. But the best news: the wolves realized King William had grown too strong and gave up their fight, for now!

Want to learn more about dealing with problem people?
Call Lee Nielsen at (440)786-8800 • lnielsen@thesavvyceo.org

PLANNING A PRESENTATION

Planning a Presentation is Like Selecting a Gift

In many ways, planning a presentation is like selecting a gift. The best presentations start with the end in mind -- how the message will be received. Whether planning a formal presentation, running into someone in the hall, or sending voice or email, put yourself in the other person's shoes and analyze, analyze, analyze before saying a word. Answering the following questions before putting together your message will lead to better results.

WHAT'S THE GOAL OF THE PRESENTATION? What do you want them to think, feel or do as a result of receiving your message? If you aren't clear about what you want to have happen, they won't have a clue. Consequently they won't do anything with the information and everyone's time will have been wasted.

WHAT'S THE MINDSET OF THE AUDIENCE? Do they want to hear what you have to say? What's their knowledge level regarding the information? How do they view your credibility? What is their relationship to you? What do they expect to hear from you? Do they want to be there? Who do they see as your competition? What's in it for them?

WHAT'S THE SITUATION SURROUNDING THE MESSAGE? What's the bigger picture in which the message is being received and what impact might it have on the reception of the message? Is the culture and environment positive or negative? What happened just prior to the presentation? What will happen afterwards? What's the history with these kinds of presentations? Are you interrupting a thought or a mindset?

Take a few minutes to thoroughly analyze the goal, mindset and situation regarding your audience. A thorough analysis will help you 1) select the best information to be included in your message, 2) identify the most appropriate delivery method, and 3) determine the best timing. Your presentation will be much more relevant and meaningful to your audience and more likely to get the results you had in mind.

Need coaching on your next presentation?
Call Laverne Wilson & Associates @ 440-777-0155

THE SAVVYCEO CONSULTING TEAM IS AVAILABLE TO SPEAK TO YOUR GROUP.

Topics:

What is a SavvyCEO?

*Ms. SavvyCEO -vs- Mr. SavvyCEO
Dealing with the Not-So-SavvyCEO
Doublespeak-Doublespeak
Clashing Cultures*

Upcoming Programs: February 14, 2002

Ms. SavvyCEO -vs- Mr. SavvyCEO

Radisson Inn, North Olmsted; For details, or, to reserve,
call 440-786-8800 or 440-777-0155

INTERNATIONAL

Managing International Challenges

Bill Kahl, is the EVP Corporate Development, Manco Corporation, a division of the Henkel Company. Bill is responsible for growing Manco worldwide. Current efforts are in the sixty countries where Henkel currently has a presence.

On September 11 we had an international product meeting here in Cleveland. We had fifteen of our global colleagues here who stayed a week longer than planned. Of course, they were anxious about being here, not knowing what to expect, what was going to happen next. We felt the same.

But the overall response from our international colleagues was incredible. We had a worldwide response through e-mails, cards and calls immediately following the attacks. It was an outstanding feeling for us to see our global business people really care. We had so many good wishes and expressions of concern.

On an on-going basis, the biggest problem with global business is communication. We think we've communicated clearly. But what has been received is not always what we thought we were saying. We must use clear, concise language.

Some years ago Henkel required all international meetings to be in English. This helps us a lot since everyone speaks English; but, again the biggest confusion is cultural: what are they actually trying to say?

When we are introducing a new category, we can't assume people know what is duct tape. So we are back to square one: What is the product, how is it constructed, what are its' uses, etc. We try to communicate clearly, but we have some misses. So we do it, do it and re-do it. We over communicate.

We are very fortunate. The trend in home improvements is picking up around the world. The US and Europe led the trend for DIY, but we are seeing more and more home improvement sales around the world. And, our parent, Henkel, is number one in its' categories (Super glue, caulks, wall paper paste) in most markets we enter, so our products, duct tape, etc. are natural extensions. We have an in-country position and in-country sales and marketing team. This is a wonderful advantage to entering world markets.

"Given the same problem to solve, ten different nationalities are capable of producing ten radically different solutions."

*Copeland & Griggs
Going International*

ABOUT LEE

A Case Study

Problem: "Lee, we are having a problem with one of our most capable contributors. We want to keep Curt, but the fall-out from the unhappy people in his department is already costing us in turnover of good people and possible broader complaints, (and liability), of favoritism. What can we do to keep all our good people?"

Strategy: Since the company truly is concerned about keeping Curt, we work with Curt's manager to specify the problems and potential liability to the company. Then we develop a script for the senior manager to use in telling Curt that the situation is unacceptable. We use a management assessment tool to determine strengths and provide objective data. Because we know Curt wants to improve his working relationship with his staff, together we identify exactly what he can do. We practice possible scenarios. We attend department meetings to provide direct feedback to Curt. Regularly Curt follows up with his boss.

We know that changing behavior is most difficult, but focused attention and support will help Curt and most managers adapt to a more effective style. In the rare instance where a manager will not change, we then look at possible alternatives.

For information in dealing with one key contributor or large-scale people management, contact The Nielsen Group: 440-786-8800, or lnielsen@thesavvyceo.org.

ABOUT LAVERNE

A Case Study

Problem: The Comptroller of a major corporation is in line for the position of Chief Financial Officer. He wants the position. He knows in his gut that his current communication style as comptroller is working today but isn't dynamic enough for the position of CFO. He also has no idea what or how to change.

Strategy: We began by examining his credibility based on his current communication style. We determined which skills would work and which needed to be developed. His communication style was changing from "reporting" numbers (informational) to suggesting "strategies" (persuasive). His audience would remain pretty much the same, but their mindset, their relationship to him and their dependence on his information would change dramatically. Through weekly coaching sessions he learned to analyze his audiences, better organize his thoughts and prepare clear, concise, persuasive presentations. His delivery became much more dynamic through improved inflection, gestures, appropriate movement – letting more of his personality shine through. His credibility, his ability to think on his feet, and his comfort level increased dramatically. As a CFO, his messages are much more meaningful and persuasive.

For information on Executive Communication Coaching, contact Laverne Wilson & Associates: 440-777-0155, or lwilson@thesavvyceo.org.

TECHNOLOGY TODAY

I Want My Data Now!

In today's environment, CEOs want flexible, continuous decision support. But often, the data is locked inside their corporate systems. The I.T. staff holds the keys. But lack of confidence in the systems to capture and report the data is one dilemma that virtually every CEO faces.

Enterprise systems are static, but enterprises are dynamic. Even if I.T. executives take their best stabs at solutions that fit their organizations, the fits may only be right for a limited time. The net result is a static solution, commandeered by an increasingly costly I.T. staff, and received with decreasing confidence by line managers. During the past decade, most companies have endured at least one major software implementation only to find that they are pigeonholed into one-size-fits-all modules and routines.

Technology is finally meeting the needs of the CEO by answering his day-to-day questions about his business:

- What and how much am I selling today?
- What are my customers concerned about now?
- What are the critical trends in our sales?
- How are the margins holding?

There is a much better way. Finally there are services and solutions on the market that actually adapt daily with your organization and provide unlimited decision support. Do you need information about your business right now?

Andrew Vaeth, CEO
SamePage Solutions
877-264-9812 x1111
avaeth@samepagesolutions.com

Mission: The SavvyCEO provides the free exchange of ideas and reflection on the art of exceptional management.

Publishers: Lee Nielsen
Laverne Wilson
Advisors: Walid Jammal
Gail Bellamy
Cartoonist: Howard Vaeth
Graphics: Bonnie App

For information on submitting articles contact:
Lee Nielsen at lnielsen@thesavvyceo.org -or-
Laverne Wilson at lwilson@thesavvyceo.org

THE SAVVYCEO SPEAKS

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What about your competitors?

All of our top competitors are good at marketing products. What has helped Fairmount Minerals is our strategy of market diversification. The largest users of sand are glass manufacturers but not a big part of our business: there are higher margins in the other markets. Most of our management team comes from a foundry background and are focused on the needs of the foundry, building very loyal customers. We take this strategy to all our markets.

We are always in process of thinking about where we are going, who we want to be, what we expect in earnings. Our company has grown by acquisitions (45%) and internally (55%). It's a very big part of this job, making decisions about where Fairmount Minerals will be in the future.

Fairmount Minerals is one of the major suppliers in the basic materials industry. Fairmount Minerals' mission is to 'work together every day to satisfy our customers, making our business stronger and more competitive.'

Fairmount Minerals • www.fairmountminerals.com
P.O. Box 87 • Chardon, OH 44024 • 440-285-3132

MANAGING IMPACT

Managing the Lasting Impacts from 9/11; continued from cover

"One word comes to mind: uncertainty. I did not know if my friends and colleagues in the tower survived. And the commercial insurance business was profoundly affected. In addition to the human costs and the loss of knowledge, insurers are estimating \$50 - \$100 Billion in losses. In response, commercial insurers are raising rates from 15 - 60%, refusing to insure difficult exposures, and even walking away from long-time relationships."

Sandra Billow - Vice President, Acordia
Cleveland, Ohio

"We are taking a two-prong approach to managing September 11th - philosophical and practical. Philosophically we are looking to create a sense of 'community' and 'purpose' - focus on our personal vision and contribute together through employee-paid community service days. Practically we are holding a class on saving/managing money and plan to increase the death benefit through our insurance plan."

Mike Foti
Chief Executive Officer, Cleveland Glass Block
President, Leadership Builders
Euclid, Ohio

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PO Box 31762
Cleveland, OH 44131

EXTRAORDINARY MANAGERS
The SavvyCEO

WE'D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

"We change when the pain of the change is less than the pain of today."

Daryl Connor, *Managing at the Speed of Change*

Our world has experienced dramatic changes in the past few months...

- What's been your toughest change?
- What impact has it had on you and your business?
- What did you do to manage the change?

Call or e-mail Laverne or Lee with your thoughts.

Laverne Wilson
Ph. 440.777.0155
lwilson@thesavvyceo.org

Lee Nielsen
Ph: 440.786.8800
lnielsen@thesavvyceo.org

CEOs IN HISTORY

Explorer Ernest Shackleton's ship and crew were locked in arctic ice for almost two years. Shackleton walked for 105 days to a research station to get help and was able to rescue all 56 members of the crew. This Captain (CEO) lived his role in providing for the safety of his team.

Trans-Antarctic Expedition 1914-1917

Save this Date: JUNE 7, 2002

SavvyCEO Breakfast Forum