Bonus Chapter

Your Next Career Move and Next Adventure

YOUR FIRST LEADERSHIP JOB

How Catalyst Leaders Bring Out the Best in Others

TACY M. BYHAM & RICHARD S. WELLINS

www.YourFirstLeadershipJob.com

#YourFirstLeadershipJob
Introduction

BECOMING THE VERY BEST FIRST-TIME LEADER

Congratulations! You’re now in charge. Perhaps it’s your first time as a leader, or maybe you want to fine-tune your skills. Either way, you’ve begun one of the most rewarding chapters of your career. But, like many beginnings, the first few years can be challenging. Fortunately, you don’t have to tackle this challenge on your own. Your First Leadership Job gives you practical advice straight from others who have walked in your shoes. Not only does it include dozens of tools to ensure your success, it’s also based on the authors’ and DDI’s extensive experience and research, which ultimately have led to the development of millions of leaders around the world. In fact, a quarter-million leaders will be developed this year alone via DDI training.

Your First Leadership Job is divided into two sections. Part 1 introduces the concept of catalyst leader—one who sparks energy, passion, and commitment in others. Your transition to catalyst leader is a major step in your leadership journey. This book provides essential tips to put you on the catalyst path. Ultimately, leadership is about the many conversations—frequent, clear, authentic, and occasionally difficult—that you will have daily. Your First Leadership Job builds awareness of the fundamental skills you’ll come to rely on to make every one of these interactions successful.

Part 2 devotes 13 chapters to critical core leadership competencies, including coaching for success, hiring the best employees, turning dreaded appraisals into discussions that propel performance, and handling difficult employees. It also includes a chapter for first-time female leaders.

Look at Your First Leadership Job as an indispensable companion to becoming an awesome leader—one who will make a positive, lasting impact on your team, family, and career. Visit www.YourFirstLeadershipJob.com to learn more.

TACY M. BYHAM, Ph.D., is the CEO of Development Dimensions International (DDI). Tacy has worked with dozens of global organizations, creating custom solutions to improve their leaders’ performance. She believes that better leadership is not only about the workplace, but also about better communities and, ultimately, a better world.

RICHARD S. WELLINS, Ph.D., is a global expert in leadership development. Your First Leadership Job is Rich’s fifth book on talent management, including the best-seller, Empowered Teams. His research has been featured in Fortune, Business Week, CNBC, NPR, BBC, and Forbes.
Contents

Foreword........................................................................................xi
Preface .........................................................................................xiii

Part 1: Catalyst Leadership ............................................................1

1. Now You're a Leader ...............................................................3
   The Journey Begins

2. Boss or Catalyst? .................................................................9
   What Makes a Great Leader?

3. Navigating the Transition to Leadership.................................17
   The Mind-Set You Need to Succeed

4. Your Leadership Brand, Part 1..............................................28
   Be Authentic

5. Your Leadership Brand, Part 2..............................................35
   Bring Out the Best in People and Be Receptive to Feedback

6. Leadership Is a Conversation, Part 1...................................46
   How to Make People Feel Heard, Valued, and Motivated

7. Leadership Is a Conversation, Part 2...................................66
   How to Build Trust and Ownership

8. Your Five-Step Conversation Road Map................................75
   Taking a Practical Approach to Get Results

9. Nothing Else Matters Unless You Get Results ....................87
   How to Execute with Focus, Measurement, and Accountability
Part 2: Mastery and Leadership Skills ........................................113

10. Hiring and Selecting the Best ........................................115
    Behavior Predicts Behavior

11. What Your Boss Really Wants from You ......................130
    Become an Adviser

12. Engagement and Retention ........................................135
    Creating the Environment to Energize People

13. Meetings ..............................................................149
    Make Them Count!

14. Coaching ............................................................161
    Learning from Success

15. Feedback Fundamentals ........................................173
    Specific, Timely, and Balanced

16. Handling Difficult Employee Situations ....................181
    Focus on the Behavior, Not the Person

17. Delegation ..........................................................191
    Be a Delegator, Not a Dumper

18. Performance Management ....................................201
    An Ongoing Cycle, Not an Event

19. You and Your Network ..........................................209
    Nurture Your Business Relationships

20. Influence ...........................................................221
    Look Up, Down, and Across

21. A Woman's First Leadership Job ............................229
    Own the Moment

22. Leadership Changes the World .................................241
    The Difference Is You
Part 3: Bonus Chapters and Tools ..............................................245
(available online at the DDI microsite)

Citations ............................................................................................247
Acknowledgments .............................................................................253
About DDI ........................................................................................255
About the Author ............................................................................256
Index ..................................................................................................259
Leadership makes a difference.
You might not know that now. But you will.

I’ve been in banking my entire career, primarily with Fifth Third Bancorp, which operates in a dozen states in the Midwest and Southeast. Banking is an interesting business for many reasons, but one of them is this: We don’t make anything. Our product is exactly like our competitors’. We borrow it for the most part, and it all looks the same. It’s green, rectangular, and has the same relative value on a given day. In order to stand out in a crowded field, the focus needs to be on how we deliver that value—100 percent through our people.

I believe that leadership happens all around you. It happens in the tone you set and in the many, many conversations you have to accomplish one simple, but complex thing—bring people into the vision of the outcome you need.

But most people don’t think about those things until they get their first leadership job. You’re good at being an expert, and then you get promoted for your expertise into a completely different job. And so you experiment, because no one ever tells you—except for DDI—the right or wrong way to get the most commitment from the people around you.

Let me rewind the clock a bit. My first big leadership job was what my organization called a “broadening” responsibility—an assignment that addresses a challenge a company is having and that also helps a leader grow and develop. One day I was called in to see my boss’s boss, the Vice Chairman, and I found myself being asked to take on a division in which I had no expertise. None. I was being asked to leave my job in human resources to run operations for the much larger holding company. And I would be leading folks who were highly technical, very proficient, and very experienced. I was in my mid-thirties, with three kids under 10 at home. My new reports were, in many cases, 20 years older. It was a challenging division in need of some significant change and facing big new performance goals.

I talked to some people who knew more about the challenges facing the operations division. I was worried, but I took the job. I knew going in that I didn’t have a quarter of the knowledge of the people who had been there for years. And, I was going to need all of them to teach me.
That was the moment I knew I needed to rely on leadership.

We did a number of things, all of them focused on gaining people’s trust. We began something new, what is now commonly called “one down” or “two downs.” We would regularly gather in large groups (some of the teams had 15 or 20 people), and I would encourage managers to talk about what they had accomplished. They could, in essence, brag to me. And then I would use those accomplishments to talk about what we could do if we all had the same vision. It sounds simple, but they were powerful moments. These conversations supplied the backbone for the kind of trust, vision-building, and engagement that, over time, helped everyone see how we could be recognized in the organization for the magnitude of the changes we were contemplating. I created a parade and gave them the opportunity to jump in front of it.

In the end, we accomplished one of the most significant changes in our company’s history. We centralized operations, cut costs to the tune of 40 to 50 percent, improved service-level agreements and delivery, and boosted customer satisfaction.

So, now it’s your turn. What will you do with the opportunity you’ve just been given?

I learned the concept of catalyst leadership from DDI early in my career, and this book will help you learn it too. You’ll find out how catalysts can ignite a flame in others, gain their commitment, and drive productivity. Now, I’ve never met a perfect supervisor. I’ve never been one. Leadership takes work. But, the upside is tremendous—helping people achieve their goals and dreams.

We all approach leadership from different angles. But if you focus on the goal of catalyst leadership and put it in practice every day, then you’ll bring out the best in others in surprising ways. You’ll bring it about in yourself as well. And you’ll love what you do.

Kevin T. Kabat
Vice Chairman and CEO at Fifth Third Bancorp
Preface

When we decided to write this book, we wanted to look at leadership through a fresh lens. After all, the last time we did a Google search, there were 392,000,000 entries for leadership books—double the number of cookbooks! There are leadership books written by or about the world’s greatest thinkers (Confucius, Machiavelli, and Gandhi). And thousands of books on leadership have been published by dozens of management experts (Peter Drucker, John Kotter, Tom Peters, and Jim Collins, to name a few). All offer great stories, opinions, and practices of what constitutes the DNA of great leadership.

Our book, however, differs from all the rest in three respects.

1. It has a singular mission: to give you the practical advice and tools to succeed as a first-time, first-line leader. The first section features nine chapters that will help you better understand what it takes to become an awesome leader—one we call a catalyst who sparks action in others. And it focuses on a set of fundamental skills—we call them interaction skills—that will serve as the foundation for every one of the dozens of conversations you’ll have with others every day. These are skills you can use, not only in the workplace, but also at home and in your community. The second section provides advice on a host of diverse, vital skills—we call them mastery and leadership skills—that you’ll need to call upon in your new role. These include coaching, selecting new employees, and promoting a culture of engagement, among others.

2. The content of this book is based on unparalleled experience. For the past four decades, our company, DDI (Development Dimensions International), has helped clients develop over 250,000 leaders every year, in 26 countries, across thousands of organizations. Nothing we say in this book is based on whim or theory. It comes from real-time experience—a lot of it.

3. We carry our experience one step further to evidence. DDI has helped hundreds of clients demonstrate the relationship between our leadership practices and principles with metrics that matter: improved skills, higher engagement, better safety records, and gains in productivity. We don’t rest on our laurels; we rest on our proof.

Whether you read our book in detail or focus on those chapters that are the most relevant for you, we’ll have accomplished our goal if you use three or four pieces of the advice we’ve provided. You know, in many ways you can look at this book as a hybrid between a typical leadership book and a cookbook. We provide the kitchen-tested recipes, but it’s up to you to do the cooking.

Terry and Rich

xiii
If you’ve read this far, we know a great deal about you.

We know that you’re starting to understand how rewarding your leadership journey can be. And that you’re committed to doing the work necessary to become a truly effective leader.

We also know that you’re committed to doing a good job where you are right now. And that focus on your day-to-day responsibilities is important to you! But if we’ve done our jobs with this book, you’ll also have discovered some important things about yourself—about your strengths and weaknesses, your passions and ambitions, and the shape you’d like your career to take.

This chapter is all about taking what you’ve discovered about yourself and using it to help you design your future.

For many people, careers used to be simpler. There was a straight line to follow to your next job. Back in the days of multiple leadership levels, a leader’s adventure meant going up-up-up—especially if he fit the part. People would ascend the career ladder one title a time—supervisor, assistant manager, manager, assistant director, director, associate VP . . . until either world domination was achieved or a gold watch was awarded.

That was then. Today’s organizations are flatter and leaner. There’s a more diverse talent pool with a wider array of skills and each person looking to make his or her mark.
Reflection Point

Check in with yourself! Let’s start with some basic questions. Take a moment to consider them before you respond. In fact, think of this as a private performance review, with only you in attendance. Jot down (and date) your thoughts. You’ll want to revisit these questions once every few months.

• Do you want to develop new skills, or are you happy where you are?
• How challenged are you feeling in your current role?
• Have you accomplished what you set out to do in your present role?
• Is there a dream job for you in your organization?
• If so, is there a right time to go for it?
• Should you actively seek out a lateral position—one with the same level of authority—to expand your value, network, or experience?
• What have you noticed about the people in your organization who get promoted?

Personal/professional growth and development don’t always look like a job transfer or a new position. And, growth and learning opportunities can come in many different forms. We like to think of them as adventures. So, movement is not vertical (up a career ladder), but instead more like a career lattice, where adventures can (and should!) take you in any direction.

This is why we’re asking you to think about career design now. With so many options available, even thinking about it can be overwhelming. But there are some easy things you can do to stay focused on your best future.

Sometimes, your adventure might take you to another function, role, or even location. Other times, the adventure might be shorter-term and have you taking on a new responsibility or working on a new project team while remaining in your current role. Either way, the adventures make you more versatile, increasing the breadth and depth of your knowledge and experience while helping you find or apply your passion. (See Figure 1.)
We believe there are three keys to career development:

1. **Reflect**: Look inside yourself. Reflect on who you are and your personal vision.

2. **Envision the possibilities**: Synthesize insights and draw conclusions.

3. **Engage in lots of good conversations**: Explore the options on your career lattice.

On the following pages, Tool 1 provides you with an opportunity to reflect on how you see yourself, how others see you, and what it all means. Use the space below each block of questions to capture your and your peers’ thoughts. Let’s start with self-reflection. Don’t skip this step! You’ll need to fine-tune your awareness of your past and present to help chart your course for the future.

*The biggest advice I would give to someone pursuing a leadership career for the first time is to know what you want and believe in yourself.*

*It is bloody hard here at work, but if I constantly feed myself negative thoughts, then I’m already negatively pulled and I’m not going to get what I want. The more you start seeing where you want to go and you believe in yourself, the more the doors will open.*

—**Finance leader, UK building products distributor**
Reflect: Look Inside Yourself

Part 1: How You See Yourself

Passions/Interests (What keeps you engaged?)
- What do you enjoy learning about most?
- What do you wish you had more time for?
- How would you spend your time if you didn’t have to work?

Skills and Strengths (What are you good at?)
- What have you always been naturally good at?
- What can’t you keep yourself from doing?
- What are you known for?

Values (What’s most important to you?)
- Looking back, what’s always been most important to you in life and in work?
- What issues or problems do you feel most strongly about?
- What are the top three values or things you hold most dear?

Dislikes (What do you want to avoid?)
- What kind of work have you typically gravitated away from?
- What tasks routinely get pushed to the bottom of your to-do list?
- What bores you, causes you to disengage, and leaves you with a sense of just going through the motions?
Preferences (How do you like to work?)
- What aspects of past jobs have you loved most or have brought you joy, energy, and a sense of persistence?
- How do you like to work?
- What kinds of work settings/spaces help you do your best work?

Weaknesses/Opportunities (What do you struggle with?)
- What lessons do you find yourself learning over and over again?
- How do your strengths sometimes work against you?
- What weaknesses do you want to work toward making stronger? Which ones are you comfortable with staying as weaknesses?
- What skills do you appreciate in others that you don’t always see in yourself?

Lifestyle Considerations (How will personal lifestyle needs impact your career direction?)
- Are you willing to move for your career, or are you limited to a region?
- Do you want to work from home or have that option on occasion? How often?
- Do you prefer job stability (consistency) or frequent job changes (job hopping)?
- Are you willing to further your education to progress in your field? If so, how much time and money are you willing to invest?
- Are you dedicated to one industry?
- What are your ideal working hours to achieve your personal work-life balance goals?
- Is travel an option? If so, how much?
Part 2: How Others See You

Gathering feedback from peers is an excellent way to help boost your self-awareness. It can be an enlightening and rewarding process. Select peers whose perspectives you value and ask them to respond honestly.

Abilities
- What are my greatest strengths?
- Which of my skills are most valuable?
- What can you always count on me for?
- What value do I bring?

Blind Spots
- What behaviors have you observed that might get in my way?
- How have I fallen short of expectations?
- How might my strengths work against me?
- What one change could I make that would have the greatest effect on my success?

Conditions
- In what settings or under what circumstances do I make the greatest contributions?
- Under what conditions have you observed me struggling?
- Do I tend to perform best when working with others or flying solo?
- What factors have you noticed triggering stress or other negative reactions for me?

Part 3: Now What Do You See?

Review all of your responses carefully and draw conclusions. Use the following questions to help guide you:
- What are the commonalities, themes, or connection points?
- What thoughts or ideas are repeated? How have your interests, values, or skills evolved over time?
- What picture/image does it yield?
Envision the Possibilities: What Are My Career Options?

So now that we’ve sparked your thinking, the obvious question is: What’s next?

Yes, a promotion might be one option for your next career move. Who doesn’t want a raise and a bump in prestige? But remember, careers can take many directions. You might have opportunities to move upward to roles of increasing responsibility or across, taking on different responsibilities at similar levels or in another department or team. Yet another path you can take is to enrich your skills in your current role. Moving laterally, realigning, or enriching within a current role are excellent career stepping stones. (See Figure 2.)

FIG 2 Types of Career Development

Here are some examples of career development moves other than promotion:

- **Realignment:** A rotational assignment from R&D into marketing would give you exposure and experience in a different corporate function.

- **Enrichment:** If your current role is supervising a team of insurance claims adjustors for automobile claims, you can enrich your role by expanding knowledge and expertise in complex automobile disputes or homeowner claims. Often, this will require additional certification, but it’s an investment in your future.

- **Lateral:** This is a job change, and particularly important if you aren’t motivated in your current role. This could include a change of department, function, or team.

- **Promotion:** Typical examples would be associate to team leader or sales professional to sales leader.
Career Options

Tool 2 below will help you identify your own career preferences as well as determine *what direction to take* as you move along in your career development. This survey is completed in three steps. Instructions for each step begin below and continue on the following pages.

**Step 1—Assessing Options**

Circle the number (0–5) that best measures how you feel about each statement to the left.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Not Applicable</strong></td>
<td><strong>Definitely Not True</strong></td>
<td><strong>Probably Not True</strong></td>
<td><strong>Not Sure</strong></td>
<td><strong>Probably True</strong></td>
<td><strong>Definitely True</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I am ready now to take on more responsibility.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I am satisfied with the role I have in my organization.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I would like to see what other career opportunities are available within my company.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I have a strong desire to advance at my organization.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I would like a job at the same level in a different area of my company.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I am not sure what role I want to have within my organization.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I have the drive and ambition to go far at work.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. There are more appealing jobs at my level in other areas of my company.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I like to learn about other jobs inside and outside my present organization.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I would like a job with greater status.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I want to move into an area of the company that is experiencing more growth.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. There are many different career directions in the organization that I would like to explore.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I am not living up to my potential in my current position.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. Other departments can offer me different challenges at the same level. 0 1 2 3 4 5

15. I think my job could be more rewarding. 0 1 2 3 4 5

16. My current job does not take advantage of all my capabilities. 0 1 2 3 4 5

17. I am seeking new challenges without additional responsibilities. 0 1 2 3 4 5

18. I talk to my leader about career development opportunities. 0 1 2 3 4 5

19. My current position is not very challenging for me. 0 1 2 3 4 5

20. The functions other departments perform interest me. 0 1 2 3 4 5

21. I would like a change in my job or position. 0 1 2 3 4 5

Step 2—Scoring the Assessment

To determine what career options you might want to pursue based on your preferences, record the rating you circled for each statement in the corresponding spaces below. Add your ratings to arrive at the total for each option. The highest total means that option is best suited to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REALIGNMENT OR ENRICHMENT</th>
<th>LATERAL</th>
<th>PROMOTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 3—Understanding the Three Career Development Options

Option 1—Realignment or Enrichment

Questions you might be asking yourself include: What else can I do? How can I grow in my current role? What can I do to make my job more rewarding and personally satisfying? How can I expand my responsibilities to meet future capability expectations?

The options here are to make a transition to and expand via another role (realignment) or take on additional responsibilities in your current role (enrichment).

Given the rate at which the workplace is evolving, you’ve probably been asking yourself these questions anyway. If so, you’re probably in a realignment or enrichment mode. As you continue to develop within your current role, you’re:

- Taking control of your professional life and will be less likely to feel trapped in your job.
- Establishing a state of readiness—being prepared to move laterally or upward if and when appropriate and desirable.
- Taking the steps to enhance your capability and build skills to benefit you and/or your department/team.
- Getting greater exposure to key people in the organization, thereby increasing your contacts and chances for recognition.
- Looking toward the future and ensuring your value within your organization.
Option 2—Lateral

You’re searching for a change in job position or role within your organization but not necessarily a change in status or a promotion. Moving laterally within your organization can keep you motivated and challenged while broadening your knowledge and skill base across one or several functions. This breadth of experience is vital for future growth and success.

Moving across is the best option to consider if:

• You’re not motivated in your current job.
• You seek new experiences and challenges without additional responsibility or pressure.
• You want to prepare yourself for future opportunities.

Consider a lateral move if you want to:

❑ Learn new skills.
❑ Seek the stimulation of new colleagues.
❑ Change your location.
❑ Move into a faster growth area.

Option 3—Promotion

Traditionally, a promotion—a vertical or upward move—results in more money, greater status, or more responsibility. Going vertical:

• Usually means focusing on one or two levels above your current position. Anything higher probably is too distant; developing plans for such a leap would be almost impossible.

• Is usually a reward for excellence in your current position and the result of having demonstrated performance equal to that required in the higher-level position.

• Most often happens when your talents coincide with the organization’s needs.

If you have a strong drive to achieve upward mobility, having set your sights on a higher position, this option is the route to take to get you there.
When you’re on a trip, your new best friends are the seasoned travelers who have been there before you. They can recommend the best sites—such as the authentic, out-of-the-way restaurants—help you decipher local customs, and just enjoy yourself without the fear of getting hopelessly lost. Your personal leadership journey should be filled with seasoned travelers who can be your guides. Your job now is to find the leadership equivalent of seasoned travelers for your career.

Career moves are like adventures. They make you more versatile. They increase the breadth and depth of your knowledge and experience while helping you apply your passion. We’ve said early and often that leadership is built one conversation at a time. This time, the conversation is about you. The many conversations that you’ll have over time with other leaders can help you shape your career now and for years to come. We encourage you to leverage the tools in this chapter as you think about how you want to grow. You’ll reap the benefits in terms of your own engagement, productivity, and a sense of peace that you are in the right role at the right place at the right time for you. If you ever start feeling burned out, these conversations can help you find a new lease on life and reconnect you with the passion that has already brought you this far.
About the Author

Tacy M. Byham, PhD

Tacy was named CEO of Development Dimensions International, Inc. (DDI) in 2014. She began her career there in the early 1980s as an intern in the video productions department and computer/technology groups. After graduate school she worked as a trainer in Europe and an assessor for tech clients in the United States. She helped develop innovations and eventually used her experiences to build DDI’s fast-growing executive development business.

An expert in creative, custom solutions to address talent management challenges, Tacy’s clients include Keurig Green Mountain, ADP, BNY Mellon, and Texas Children’s Hospital. Her writing has been featured in The Conference Board Review, CLO magazine, People Matters (India), and The ASTD Leadership Handbooks (2010 and 2014). She is also a frequent presenter for the Conference Board and ATD (formerly ASTD), where she speaks on topics ranging from innovation, to women and leadership, to mid-level leadership.

Tacy grew up in the home of a thought leader and entrepreneur. Her father, Bill Byham, founded DDI in 1970, and Tacy’s own perspective on leadership was developed over a lifetime of dinner conversations with her family about what makes people better stewards of the things that matter to them. She was immersed in the science of human possibility from day one as well as the importance of community service (her mother is a retired politician and community volunteer). We traveled the world as DDI grew, Tacy says of her early access to leaders and management thinkers. I had a bird’s eye view of how things actually worked and could work better. I was inspired. And, after working for a few bad bosses in the tech industry, I wanted to join DDI to work with our fascinating clients and help solve their people challenges.

On reflection, it’s not what you get, but what you give. Well, recently, one of Tacy’s teammates left DDI to pursue his life’s passion. In a parting note he wrote, I could write pages on how thankful I am to have worked for you. I really appreciate your genuine care and concern for me... for all of us!

Tacy holds an MA in Mathematics/Computer Science from Mt. Holyoke College and a PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from the University of Akron.

@TacyByham
About the Author

Richard S. Wellins, PhD

Rich currently serves as head of worldwide research and marketing for DDI. He has loved every minute of being a leader (well, almost every minute). Since joining DDI more than 30 years ago, he’s held various leadership roles, including positions in sales, R&D, and marketing. Rich earned his PhD in Social/Industrial Psychology from American University. Prior to DDI, he served as a professor of psychology at Western Connecticut State University and as a research psychologist for the US Department of Defense.

This is Rich’s fifth book on leadership, including a best seller, Empowered Teams. He has worked with dozens of clients on leadership assessment and development projects, including Toyota, AXA, Nissan, Colgate, A.T. Cross, and Sunrise Living. He has presented dozens of conference keynotes on his research around the world, including the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), The Conference Board, Association for Talent Development, HRout (China), and People Matters (India). He currently serves as a judge for CNBC’s Asia Business Leaders of the Year Award (ABLA), interviewing the top-performing CEOs throughout Asia. Rich also spearheads DDI’s biennial Global Leadership Forecast, which features data on best leadership practices collected from over 75,000 leaders. His work has been featured in Forbes, the New York Times, National Public Radio, CNBC, Fortune, and the Wall Street Journal.

Rich’s interest in leadership came from two life-changing experiences. The first: My father owned two drug stores, and my mother worked with him running the cosmetics counter, he recalled. As a teen, Rich was assigned every dirty job there was, from running deliveries to cleaning restrooms. My dad wanted to make sure that nobody thought I got better treatment than anyone else. One of the stores served a neighborhood in New Britain, Connecticut, with a high poverty rate. His dad sent him on almost all the deliveries in the community to individuals who relied on the supplies he delivered. His objective was to teach me, and I’m grateful, Rich said. All of these were valuable lessons in leadership, sharing, and accountability.

His second leadership learning experience was with the Department of Defense as a research psychologist. He spent time on field exercises with the 101st Airborne, working with first lieutenants. As Rich likes to say, If you can do well as a military first-line leader, the rest of your leadership positions will be a lot easier.

@RichWellins