

SELECTED QUOTES ON THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

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“The primary task of leadership is to communicate the vision and the values of an organization. Second, leaders must win support for the vision and the values they articulate. And third, leaders have to reinforce the vision and the values.” -- Fedex Chairman and CEO Frederick Smith

“First of all it [what makes Nokia work] comes from how the management team works, how they communicate.” -- Former Nokia CEO Jorma Ollila

“You’ve got to lead by example. There are CEOs who get to love their office. You’ve got to get out into the markets. You’ve got to meet your customers. You’ve got to understand your competition. You’ve got to give the same speech too many times. You’ve got to go to the lunch bag forum with discipline. I write an article every month for the company newspaper. I do videotapes. I do company broadcasts. Communicate, communicate, communicate! You cannot be a remote image. You’ve got to be touched, felt, heard and believed. And you’ve got to stand up for what you stand for. When the company comes under attack -- whether it’s from Washington, the competition, or industry analysts -- you’ve got to be out there taking the brunt of whatever it is and lead by example.” -- Former AT&T CEO Mike Armstrong

“The particular size and shape of a leader's ego, they claim, is less important than his or her authenticity. Inspirational leaders succeed because they effectively communicate themselves--both their virtues and their flaws--to their followers.” -- Harvard Business Review 2001

“I think the CEO today has to be far more hands-on than he has had to be in previous eras. He has to be far more communicative in terms of the various constituencies the company serves. And I think he has to be far more nimble.” -- Former AlliedSignal CEO Larry Bossidy

“But governance experts say that part of the CEO's job is

communicating the company's success to the market.” -- Business Week 2000

“Communication needs to be a core competency of any business. It starts with the CEO.” -- Sun Microsystems CEO Scott McNealy

“Secondly, communication has become much more important, especially in large companies where everybody needs a lot of information to keep focused on the mission at hand. Communication from the company's leadership is essential. I underestimated this many times in my career, especially at Oracle, where we went from 8,000 to 45,000 people. Keeping all those people on the same page required a great deal of communication. If you don't continually tell them your vision or your strategy, they make up what they think the company is all about, and if you let that go too long, you end up with a disaster. I also think the need to have a real focus on competitive positioning is a significant change in leadership. If the leadership doesn't have a competitive mindset—how to position products, services, marketing, market share, what your competitor's weaknesses are, and so on—this could be disastrous as well.” -- Former Oracle president and COO Ray Lane

“To me transparency means that I will communicate truthfully what I do and don't know about my company's performance and prospects, the doubts that I have, and the things I don't doubt. The goal of transparency is to give the shareholder an opportunity to form an opinion about you, to make a judgment.” -- Novartis CEO Daniel Vasella

“Leadership is an unbelievably hard communications job. You must have a firm grasp of your competitive environment, encapsulate the spirit of an organization, package it in strategic statements, and then emphasize those statements repeatedly, so that the message becomes part of the conversation.”-- Tuck School of Business Dean Paul Danos