Great leaders: Born or made?

Which leadership animal are you?

Boost your career: Volunteer

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Founder, iMatch Design
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What’s new?

The Phoenix Focus home page.

Check out your award-winning alumni magazine, now located on the University of Phoenix Alumni Association website.

alumni.phoenix.edu/phoenix-focus
Alumni ask

Each month, we receive dozens of emails inquiring about resources available to alumni through University of Phoenix. Here are a few of the more frequently asked questions.

Q: How do I join the Alumni Association?
A: If you are a graduate of University of Phoenix, you are automatically a member. Since you are likely no longer using your student email address, it is important to update your profile. To do that, visit alumni.phoenix.edu and click the “Login” tab. You will use your eCampus username and password to log in.

Q: How do I update my contact information (personal and work history) so I can continue to receive relevant communications from the Alumni Association?
A: Visit the Alumni Association website at alumni.phoenix.edu and click the “Login” tab. From there you can review and update your profile information. Certain areas of your profile can only be updated by calling the University of Phoenix Registrar’s Office; this information appears in gray boxes and cannot be edited by you directly.

Q: How do I obtain my official University of Phoenix transcripts?
A: You can order transcripts 24 hours a day through the Office of Admissions and Records Service Center. Call 800.866.3919 or visit the student portal at ecampus.phoenix.edu/portal/portal/public/login.aspx to order online. For more details, visit phoenix.edu/students/transcripts.html.

Q: I’m having trouble logging in to alumni.phoenix.edu. Help!
A: Sometimes clearing your browser history and cache can help with logging in to the Alumni Association website. If that doesn’t do the trick, please call 877.832.4867 for technical assistance or email alumni@phoenix.edu.

Results from our recent online polls

What is your primary means of reading Phoenix Focus?

- Laptop or PC 68%
- Print edition 10%
- iPhone or iPad 18%
- Android smartphone or tablet 4%
GREAT LEADERS:  
Are they born or made?

Are great leadership skills genetic, or are they a result of environment and circumstance? Our experts weigh in.

By Julie Wilson

Imagine: John F. Kennedy being raised in poverty and obscurity, Martin Luther King Jr. growing up in a place where he would never experience oppression firsthand, and Warren Buffet never working a hard day in his young life. If these were the beginnings of these renowned figures, would they still have become leaders? Would they have become great leaders?

Such questions are often asked, but experts offer a mix of answers when it comes to whether a leader’s destiny relies on what they’re born with versus the circumstances they are born into.

Dual natures
In 1979, researchers in Minnesota set out to explore the roles of nature and nurture in the making of a leader. What they found by studying sets of twins—some raised together and some reared apart—is that both DNA and personal development play a role in determining the kind of individual you become.

“Leaders are roughly two-thirds made and one-third born,” asserts Ronald E. Riggio, PhD, Henry R. Kravis professor of leadership & organizational psychology and associate dean of the faculty at Claremont McKenna College.

It makes sense, he reasons. “You can’t imagine that someone who was reared by wolves in the forest could be a leader,” he notes.

Barry Z. Posner, PhD, Accolti-endowed professor of leadership at Santa Clara University’s Leavey School of Business, also believes that much of what makes a top dog tops can be learned.

“Leadership is a skill,” he argues. “Like any other skill, there is a set of behaviors that effective leaders demonstrate.”
“Leadership is a skill, but it doesn’t mean everyone is or can be equally skilled. Everyone can learn to play the piano. But could you be a concert pianist? Probably not.”

Barry Z. Poster, PhD, Accolti-endowed professor of leadership at Santa Clara University’s Leavey School of Business

Common denominators
First and foremost, a strong leader is good at managing his or her image. “You’ve got to be able to look like a leader,” says Riggio, the author of The Practice of Leadership: Developing the Next Generation of Leaders. That means having a polished presence, because “one misstep can be disastrous.” He counts Hillary Clinton among those who do this well.

Riggio also says that former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani embodied this quality in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attacks. “He was constantly on TV [saying] I’m the leader, I’m in charge, I’m handling this and here are my experts,” Riggio notes. “He was ready.”

One-time presidential hopeful Howard Dean was not so lucky. His infamous scream during the 2004 debates is believed to have delivered his campaign a death blow because it tarnished his image in the eyes of so many.

Aside from appearance, Posner thinks that successful leaders also possess the ability to rally others around their causes. “They inspire a shared vision,” he says.

“Can you get your followers to do things?” asks Riggio. He believes that to be a litmus test for a strong leader. “Can you inspire them to give you their best?”

Posner cites Martin Luther King Jr.’s iconic “I have a dream” speech as a prime example of how to get an emotional—and action-oriented—response from others. “In order for his dream to have happened, he had to get other people to share that dream,” he says.

Born that way: The fast track to leadership
Great accomplishments may look effortless for some people who seem to have innate magnetism and contagious enthusiasm.

“One if we talk about top-level leaders, there’s an affluence advantage,” notes Riggio. He explains that those who are born into families of powerful leaders grow up knowing how to behave around other powerful people, which gives them an edge. “That’s why so many political kids—like the Bushes and Kennedys—become successful politicians, too.”
Cultivating your leadership potential

But Riggio says that even John F. Kennedy knew he couldn’t sail through life resting on his pedigree. Although he used his family connections to gain invitations to Hollywood parties, he took the opportunity to learn how to attract his own adoring following.

“JFK set up his own school of observation,” explains Riggio. “He got to see how famous actors and actresses pulled it off.”

Though you can enhance your efficacy as a leader through practice, Posner cautions that not all people are cut out to be great. “Leadership is a skill, but it doesn’t mean everyone is or can be equally skilled,” he says. “Everyone can learn to play the piano. But could you be a concert pianist? Probably not.”

Regardless, it still pays to stretch yourself to become a stronger leader. Though you can accomplish this by volunteering for special assignments at work, Posner says you can work out your leadership muscles just as well by taking the helm in a volunteer position or within your own family. “There is no shortage of opportunities,” he says.

Riggio adds, “Nothing helps you look better than preparation.”

So if you didn’t hit the genetic jackpot, rest assured that there are steps you can take to develop effective leadership skills. “It’s not about being the tallest, brightest or prettiest,” says Posner. “It’s about how you behave.”
Where do you fit in the wild kingdom of leadership? Find out.

Leadership quiz: Which animal are you?

By Jenny Jedeikin

Can the animal world offer up human leadership comparisons? Some seem to think so. Humans and animals share much common biology, so it shouldn’t come as a surprise that we also share some of the same personality traits, explains Kevin McGraw, PhD, an integrative behavioral ecologist.

“Humans are a pretty young species, compared to other species on Earth, and we traditionally have many of the behaviors that other animals had first,” says McGraw. “We likely inherited our behaviors and tendencies from the common ancestors with those species.”
Take this quiz to find out where you fall in the wild kingdom when it comes to leadership.

1. **If you get into a big argument with someone at work, it’s:**

   A) Shocking. You rarely interact with others and avoid getting emotional.
   
   B) OK. You need to argue sometimes in order to get things out in the open, as long as you make up afterward.
   
   C) Fine, as long as you win, and your victory keeps everyone else quiet.
   
   D) Unusual. You’re very submissive when confronted, and hate conflict.
   
   E) Fabulous, particularly if you catch the other person by surprise when you decimate him or her.

2. **If someone else finishes your ice cream in the freezer, right before you’re about to eat it, you:**

   A) Impulsively and immediately express your anger.
   
   B) Say nothing. It’s not a big deal. Why make waves?
   
   C) Remain calm, but say something so the perpetrator knows he or she made an error.
   
   D) Say nothing but silently vow to take his or her ice cream next time.
   
   E) Watch to see what others do and follow their example.

3. **The job you would despise most is:**

   A) Trailblazing tour guide leader.
   
   B) Fascist dictator.
   
   C) Author of a tell-all memoir.
   
   D) Domestic servant.
   
   E) Attendant at an amusement park.

4. **When someone on your team makes a mistake, you:**

   A) Criticize and punish to keep him or her in line.
   
   B) Say nothing, but ambush him or her later when he or she is least expecting it.
   
   C) Watch to see how others respond to figure out what to do.
   
   E) Happily take the blame. We’re all at fault sometimes.
   
   F) Use it as a teachable moment everyone can learn from.

5. **A typical fantasy for you involves:**

   A) World domination.
   
   B) A day in which you don’t have to think or make decisions.
   
   C) Negotiating peace talks.
   
   D) A pool hall filled with unsuspecting novice players.
   
   E) Sacrificing yourself for another’s happiness.
When supervising a work emergency that involves everyone working on task quickly, you’ll most likely:

A) Encourage cooperation with a shared dialogue and open discussion.
B) Intimidate everyone with your forceful personality.
C) Micromanage your team by standing guard.
D) Assume everyone will get his or her job done and leave them alone.
E) Spy at a distance, until you catch someone making an error, then come in for the kill.

When a young inexperienced person is placed on your team, your first thought is:

A) He or she’d better follow my orders
B) Hmm. I’ll wait and see how others respond.
C) Everyone has something of value to add. I just have to find out what it is.
D) If something goes wrong, I’ll take the fall.
E) I’ll act nice but gather evidence to ambush him or her later.

At the end of the day, you feel most successful if:

A) Everyone got along.
B) You came out on top.
C) Everyone left you alone.
D) You fit in with everyone else.
E) No one could tell what you were thinking.
Score yourself: Tally your answers by color to discover your dominant animal leadership type. The color you chose most often will reveal your animal instincts when it comes to being a leader:

**LION:** Proud, strong and domineering, you are most comfortable being in charge of a group where there is little room for questioning authority. You work well when you are given complete control of a situation and don’t have to consult others for advice. For a more balanced approach, try to listen to what others have to contribute; you could be missing out on a lot of helpful input.

**SHEEP:** Submissive, shy and concerned with minutiae, you are much better at following instructions than stepping out to lead a team, and you pride yourself in your ability to follow rules. Although your obedience and attention to detail can be appreciated, in order to learn to be a better leader, try to tune into your own ideas and assert a few of your own opinions once in a while.

**BONOBO CHIMPANZEE:** Cooperative, communicative and social, you do well working in a team. You are concerned with making sure everyone has a voice and can contribute to the group’s activities. For a more balanced approach, learn to differentiate between the need to make others happy and making more effective decisions that can help the group.

**GREAT WHITE SHARK:** Aggressive, smart and deceptive, you don’t like to feel exposed, but prefer waiting in the wings gathering information until it’s an ideal time to come out and ambush the group. Although you’re a very good strategist, you’d improve by being more transparent and trusting other people.

**REDBACK SPIDER:** Not an animal, exactly, but quiet, independent and self-sacrificing, you work best when you’re completely alone, left entirely to your own devices. You have a hard time contributing to a group effort due to your loner nature. In order to become a better leader, you should work toward becoming more cooperative and learn to share more of yourself with the team.

Jenny Jedeikin lives in Northern California, and her writing has appeared in San Francisco Chronicle Magazine, Rolling Stone and .429, among other national publications.
What's Your CQ?

5 tips for improving your cultural intelligence

By Lori K. Baker

If you’re American, it’s easy to forget so many of our innocent hand gestures—from the encouraging thumbs-up to the hippie-era peace sign—are interpreted as offensive and even vulgar overseas. For example, the A-OK sign is decidedly not OK in Brazil—nor in other countries in Latin America, Europe and the Middle East.
Failing to heed cultural do’s and don’ts in today’s global economy is risky, with everything from a lost sale to a lost job at stake. With business booming in faraway places like China, Brazil and Australia, Americans now embark on more than 6 million international trips each year. Meanwhile, the United States is increasingly becoming a cultural melting pot, with the U.S. Census Bureau predicting that nonwhites, now more than one-third of the U.S. population, will emerge as the new majority by 2043.

In today’s global economy, professionals need more than high intelligence (IQ) and emotional awareness (EQ) to succeed—they also need cultural intelligence, better known as CQ.

CQ is a vital 21st-century skill set, says David Livermore, PhD, author of *The Cultural Intelligence Difference* and president of the Cultural Intelligence Center based in Holt, Michigan. But what exactly is CQ? Livermore defines it as more than cultural sensitivity and awareness: It’s having the specific skills that are needed to work effectively, regardless of the cultural differences involved.

Are you ready to learn how to succeed in today’s global economy? “It’s not automatic, but with training, experience and coaching, anyone can improve their cultural intelligence, or CQ,” Livermore says. Here are five easy steps that multicultural experts recommend to get you started:

**Tip #1: Know thyself**
Gloria Petersen, president of Global Protocol Inc., based in Phoenix, says, “I think people need to realize it is very, very difficult to avoid cultural biases and prejudices. Some were taught to us as children. Others were gained through personal experiences and outside influences, like television and media. The challenge is to develop the ability to put aside those biases or prejudices and learn to communicate with individuals.”

For a frank look at your cross-cultural skills and weaknesses, many online self-assessments are available, including some developed by the Cultural Intelligence Center (culturalq.com/assessments.html). “With these tools, you can begin to look at where your greatest strengths and opportunities for improvement lie,” Livermore says.

**Tip #2: Face the facts**
To boost your CQ, do your homework, including reading books on cultural intelligence and etiquette. Make it a point to attend seminars and workshops that will deepen your understanding about race, ethnicity and culture, as well as help you learn more about the particular groups of people with whom you work.

Before embarking on your next international business trip, cultural speaker and author Terri Morrison recommends delving deeper. Find out: When is it appropriate to use first names? How does the culture view time? What is appropriate behavior in different circumstances? What’s the best way to negotiate? What are the religious taboos?

**Tip #3: Talk it over**
After you’ve done your homework, Petersen recommends contacting a person from your travel destination. “Buy them coffee or lunch, and it’ll be the best money you’ve ever spent,” she says. Explore questions such as: What have been your stumbling blocks in our culture? In what ways has it been difficult for you to adapt to us?

“I get the background from books and research, but then I validate it with people,” Petersen says. “You get your best CQ from talking to people from other countries.”

**Tip #4: Practice your way to perfection**
“Look for creative ways to gain hands-on experience in new cultures,” Livermore says. “Whether it’s traveling overseas, joining a project team that is focused on a new cultural market, or simply roaming the aisles of a grocery store in an ethnically diverse neighborhood, firsthand experience is one of the best ways to improve cultural intelligence.” To discover more intercultural opportunities, Morrison recommends checking with your local library’s reference librarian.

**Tip #5: Hire a coach**

To hone your skills, consider enrolling in cross-cultural and intercultural training or hiring a coach. Cross-cultural experts can provide practical tips for living and working abroad, including how to handle money and set up a home.

In addition, Petersen recommends receiving training from an etiquette and protocol expert who can coach you on polite behavior and mannerisms overseas, including what hand gestures never to make.

Boosting your CQ may be an investment in time and even money, but there are huge payoffs. “It only takes a couple of culturally insensitive statements to cost an employee their job or a company a contract,” Livermore says. “For most companies—small, midsize or large—the greatest opportunities for growth lie outside domestic markets. Those with higher levels of CQ are able to more effectively expand into new markets.”

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**Recommended reading:**

- *The Cultural Intelligence Difference*  
  by David Livermore

- *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands*  
  by Terri Morrison and Wayne A. Conaway

- *Do’s and Taboos Around the World*  
  by Roger E. Axtell

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Lori K. Baker is an award-winning journalist who specializes in human-interest profiles, business and health. Her articles have appeared in *Ladies’ Home Journal, Family Circle, Arizona Highways* and *Johns Hopkins Health.*
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Volunteering isn’t just good for the soul. It can also look great on your resume.

By Cynthia Ramnarace

More than 60 million Americans volunteer their time to a nonprofit or charitable organization each year, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. But they’re doing more than spreading goodwill. They’re also making connections, learning new skills and embracing opportunities that can seriously pump up their resumes.

“Boost your career: Volunteer

You’ve never thought of it like that before? Consider this: The work you do for good can be work that looks good on your resume. Did you help raise money? Develop a social media campaign to get your organization’s message out to the masses? Design a new community garden? If so, let the world know—and most importantly, let potential employers know.

Resume placement

Don’t bury volunteer experience at the end of your resume under “interests” or the like. Move it up top where it should be, because it’s the accomplishment that matters, not whether or not you were paid for it.

“What I suggest is that under ‘Work Experience’ people put down ‘Employment-Related Activities.’ That’s where you list your volunteer roles.”

Bruce Hurwitz, president and CEO
Hurwitz Strategic Staffing

When doing so, include the name of the nonprofit, the work you did and your title. Don’t have one? Knight yourself, says Mark McCurdy, author of Strategic Volunteering: 50 Ingredients to Transform Your Life and Career.
“It’s common as a volunteer not to have a title, so create one,” says McCurdy. “Let’s say you helped them with a fundraising event. So you were a fundraising or events assistant. Then think about the outcomes you produced and pepper in the skills you used while doing that job.”

**Fill in the resume gap**
Are you between jobs or wanting to make a career leap? If so, volunteering can be a great way of showing that you are remaining current in your field or learning new skills. But remember that it’s not just the volunteering itself that matters—it’s what you do specifically that makes the difference.

“What’s important is to make sure that the volunteering is relevant to your profession,” says Hurwitz. “Once I had a meeting with an older gentleman who was out of work after spending many years in a career in TV and broadcast. I suggested he start volunteering. He told me he’d been volunteering for many years. What do you do as a volunteer? I asked. He said, ‘I stuff envelopes.’ What he should have been doing was working on the marketing committee or public relations committee.”

Volunteering only adds to your resume if the skills are transferable, Hurwitz says. Building a website, supervising other volunteers, creating a marketing plan—if the task could be found on a job description, then it can be a benefit to you. If you are the PTA treasurer, that shows you know how to track and save money.
If you run your charity’s fundraising committee, that shows you know how to raise money. Both can be valuable skills to the right employer.

Companies that care
WONDERING WHERE YOU SHOULD SEND YOUR REVISED RESUME? COMPANIES THAT ARE MISSION-DRIVEN WILL PUT A HIGHER EMphasis ON YOUR VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE, SAYS Hurwitz. “THERE ARE A LOT OF COMPANIES THAT PRIDE THEMSELVES ON VOLUNTEERISM AND HAVE THEIR OWN FOUNDATIONS,” SAYS Hurwitz. “THERE ARE PLENTY OF CEOs WHO VOLUNTEER THEMSELVES.”

To find those companies, McCurdy suggests taking a look at the GameChangers 500 list of companies focused on “maximizing their positive impact,” according to list founder Andrew Hewitt. Companies on the list include Google, Etsy, Zappos, Patagonia and Ideo.

So take on the right volunteer opportunity, highlight it on your resume and then send that application to an employer. Next thing you know, you may be negotiating your start date. —

Cynthia Ramnarace is a freelance writer based in Rockaway Beach, New York. Her work has appeared in Reader’s Digest, AARP Bulletin and O, the Oprah Magazine. She may be reached through her website, cynthiaramnarace.com.

If you’re looking for a volunteer opportunity that will also look good on a resume, experts advise following your passion but keeping it small and local.

“Aim for smaller nonprofits,” says Mark McCurdy, author of Strategic Volunteering: 50 Ingredients to Transform Your Life and Career. “They don’t have the budget larger nonprofits do. That means you can dig in quickly and gain some significant skills. Volunteer in your neighborhood. You could not only be gaining some new skills, but also meeting people in your community who could be good connections as you look for your next job.”

Charities to avoid include those that are focused on politically divisive issues such as abortion or gun control, which could scare off an employer who might fear you’d inject politics into the workplace, says Bruce Hurwitz, president and CEO of Hurwitz Strategic Staffing.

Here are some recommendations for charities that could provide you with resume-building experience in your field:

Education: Try your alma mater’s alumni association, local literacy or English as a second language (ESL) programs run through your school district or scholarship funds.

Health care: Contact your local hospital, a medical clinic caring for underserved populations or the local office of large organizations such as the American Heart Association.

Criminal justice: Try the local branch of the American Civil Liberties Union, your local Legal Aid Society or Urban League.

Communications: Contact your local public radio or broadcasting station.

No matter where your interests lie, you can likely match your job skills with the charity’s needs. Regardless of the cause you’re committed to, ask how your particular skill set can benefit the organization.
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This designing alumnus has made his mark on both coasts by pairing style seekers with their perfect design match.

Fifteen years ago, Lloyd Princeton didn’t have a clue that he’d one day land a starring role in a reality television series pilot—about his life. He also couldn’t predict he’d ink a book deal, travel the world on international speaking gigs or be featured on the pages of *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. 
Lloyd Princeton, BSB/M ’03
Founder, iMatchDesigners
New York City, New York
Back then, the future looked anything but promising. He’d just lost a job without another in sight, so finally he created one. In 1999, he launched Design Management Co. (DMC), which offers design professionals sound business advice on contract negotiation, pricing, marketing, staffing, product licensing and distribution—all to help designers better manage and grow their businesses.

Entrepreneurship was a real game changer for Princeton. “I’m not saying it was easy,” says the 44-year-old who now divides his time between homes in West Hollywood, California, and New York City, “but forming my own company has been one of the best things for me.”

A who’s who of clients
Today, DMC’s client list includes American Express, Design Within Reach, Williams-Sonoma, High Point Market Authority and numerous design and architectural firms throughout North America. Princeton is a sought-after speaker who strikes a chord with designers through timely talks on how to succeed in a do-it-yourself world. From DIY tips on YouTube and Pinterest to TV shows on DIY Network, “consumers are mired in messaging related to the do-it-yourself market right now,” Princeton says.

Still, designers are as essential today as ever, he says, especially when consumers realize a DIY project isn’t as easy or inexpensive as advertised. Princeton also shares his know-how with designers in his book, Marketing Interior Design, now in its second edition.

Twelve years after launching DMC, he became a professional matchmaker who set out to revolutionize the way designers and potential clients meet. In 2011, he created iMatchDesigners (imatchdesigners.com), a concierge-style matchmaking service that pairs clients with designers who are the best fit for their projects, based on scope, budget, timeline, style and temperament.

Providing a glimpse into his world as principal of iMatchDesigners, Princeton created and appeared in a television series pilot, Matched by Design, which aired on Style Network (owned by E Entertainment Television Inc.) in August 2013. The show follows Princeton as he introduces his clients, Grammy Award-winning producer Tricky Stewart and his wife, to three interior designers who must compete to be hired to do a makeover of the clients’ guest bedroom and bathroom. The three designers each present their concepts to the homeowners, who then decide which designer best captures their style and personality. Next, viewers watch as the transformation takes place—and see the complete makeover as the grand finale.

In a real-life dramatic twist, Matched by Design was about to be picked up by Style Network until NBCUniversal Cable Entertainment Group scrapped the plan when it rebranded Style as the Esquire Network. “That’s not the end of the saga.

“I’m not saying it was easy, but forming my own company has been one of the best things for me.”

Lloyd Princeton, BSB/M ’03
because I just signed a contract with Relativity Media as my new producer,” Princeton says. “They’re going to possibly repackage and re-shop the show.”

Winning the match

In retrospect, Princeton sees how the path to success can have many unexpected twists and turns. He’d dropped out of college multiple times before enrolling at University of Phoenix at age 33, earning a Bachelor of Science in Business degree in 2003. Before discovering his career’s ultimate destination, he took detours into banking, real estate, human resources and trade associations. “I did completely different things until I finally saw a need in the design industry, jumped into it and created my own company,” he says. “I’ve never looked back.”


While widely available, not all programs are available in all locations or in both online and on-campus formats. Please check with a University representative.

5 ways to meet your (professional) match

Lloyd Princeton, principal of iMatchDesigners, has an uncanny sense of how to perfectly pair clients and design professionals. We asked for his words of wisdom on how to not only hire a professional designer, but any consultant whose expertise you might need. Here’s his advice:

1 | Look for industry-specific know-how. “I’ve seen many of my clients stymied by people who have general knowledge of what they need, but not industry-specific knowledge—and that’s a problem.”

2 | Hire someone who fits within your budget, and don’t forget to factor in the realistic length of the project.

3 | Check references and speak to former clients. “It’s not so much about vetting a professional as learning an effective way to work with them.” Ask questions such as: How did he or she deliver? Was it an enjoyable process? What recommendations would you have for me on how to work with the professional to get the best results?

4 | Define your deliverables. “Whatever problem you’re trying to solve, you need to be super specific, not general, in your expectations.”

5 | Gauge the consultant’s enthusiasm for your project. “Hire someone who is enthusiastic about working with you.”
When Danon Carter took leadership over her own life, she gained the skills to lead others.

Danon Carter was in her early 20s and just eight credits shy of her bachelor’s degree when she decided she didn’t want to be in school anymore. The environment bored her. She wanted real-world experience. So Carter got a job as a cosmetics counter manager at a department store.
Danon Carter, BSB/M ‘05, MM ‘07, DM ‘12
Project lead/trainer, The Center for Business Solutions
Dallas, Texas
The one semester she planned to take off turned into two. She kept procrastinating, thinking, “I’ll go back and finish eventually. Oh, the stupid things you do when you’re young,” she says. “I never did finish those last credits.”

“Initially, it was ok to have just a job,” says Carter. “I had enough money to do whatever I wanted to do. I had my own apartment.” But when Carter learned she was pregnant, her priorities shifted. She knew she needed a career to support her child.

**From a job to a career**

At the time, Carter was working for Sears. She watched co-workers advance while she stayed in the same position. Yes, she was pregnant, but that didn’t mean she had given up on her goals—something she communicated to her boss. In 1996, Carter relocated to Atlanta and enrolled in the Sears management training program. The experience taught her a valuable lesson: To be a good leader for others, you first have to assert leadership in your own life.

“When I stopped procrastinating, I started excelling,” she says.

**A quick ascent**

Carter rose rapidly in her role. She was named manager of the asset loss department and turned that unit into a top-performing site.

“I learned how to manage people,” Carter says. “I would find what skill set each person was best in and figure out if my people were in the right place. I had good loyalty from that group—and when you have loyalty, you have people who will follow you, even if they’re unsure of the direction you’re going, because they believe in you.”

Carter learned that successful leaders aren’t interested in what they can achieve for themselves. She sees her success intertwined with that of the people around her.
“I learned how to manage people. I would find what skill set each person was best in and figure out if my people were in the right place.”

Danon Carter, BSB/M ’05, MM ’07, DM ’12

“It should never be about you,” she says. “The issue becomes this: That gift you have to lead—how can you use it to better someone else and help them see the talents that are within them?”

Her approach won her the respect of her employees, which translated into success for the departments she ran. She became known as a “fixer” and was sent around the country to turn around struggling departments.

Juggling motherhood and career
Carter’s rise wasn’t easy. In addition to other obstacles, she faced the challenge of being a single mother. When an opportunity arose for a promotion that involved a lot of travel, Carter, whose son was an infant at the time, admits that she hesitated. How could she be away from her baby for weeks at a time? But she wanted it and so she made it happen by convincing family members to travel along with her to watch her son while she worked.

“To young women today, I say know what your career aspirations are and don’t allow anyone to limit you,” says Carter.

Carter took that advice herself when in 2005, she decided to finish up those eight credits toward her bachelor’s degree and then pursue her Master of Management degree from University of Phoenix.

“I would sit next to my son, and we would do homework together. It was important for him to see me doing that versus putting my life on hold,” she says.

Chasing her dreams
Carter finished her master’s and went on to receive her Doctor of Management degree in 2012. Today, she is a project lead/trainer in Dallas with The Center for Business Solutions, a management consulting firm. She has traveled the world to help customer call centers improve their performance. Her son started college this year. When she’s not working, Carter, now 45, is very active with her church’s single-parent ministry and volunteers for Habitat for Humanity. In 2013, she received the University of Phoenix® Alumni Community Service Award (now the Spirit of Service Award) for her volunteer work and community influence.

“I’ve learned that if you’re chasing money and you’re chasing a title, that’s not always what’s going to make you happiest,” says Carter. “Instead, figure out what you really want to do and then don’t let anyone limit you.”

Cynthia Rannarace is a freelance writer based in Rockaway Beach, New York. Her work has appeared in Reader’s Digest, AARP Bulletin and O, the Oprah Magazine. She may be reached through her website, cynthiaramnarace.com.

While widely available, not all programs are available in all locations or in both online and on-campus formats. Please check with a university representative.
Turning PTSD into peer support

Sarah Oury Wood’s easygoing smile proves there’s potent healing power in veterans helping veterans.

The retired Army captain who survived a harrowing tour of duty in Afghanistan—and the post-traumatic stress, anxiety and depression it triggered afterward—has embarked on a brand-new mission in life.
Sarah Oury Wood, MSC/MFCT ’12
Peer support specialist, Veterans Affairs
San Diego, California
Wood is one of a growing number of peer support specialists who work for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in the newest and perhaps most promising strategy to help veterans struggling with the mental fallout of war. Peer support specialists offer a unique approach because they are the only VA health care specialists who use their own life experiences to help their fellow veterans.

“I absolutely love what I do,” says the 37-year-old wife and mother of a newborn baby girl and two stepsons who lives in the greater San Diego area. But this blessing came wrapped inside one of her life’s darkest hours.

**Behind enemy lines**

Wood earned a private pilot’s license and a bachelor’s degree in aviation flight management before joining the Army in 2000. She had hoped that military service would be a lifelong career—until a combat tour in Afghanistan in 2004, when she handled grisly duties as a logistics captain working in mortuary affairs. She spent countless sleepless nights followed by long days chasing improvised explosive device (IED) attacks and helicopter wrecks across Afghanistan, recording details of nightmarish scenes and asking distraught comrades difficult questions.

“I had exactly 24 hours to write a death certificate, plan a funeral ceremony and transport the deceased to his or her family,” Oury says. “I felt numb and showed no emotion for an entire year—it was the only way to get the job done.” To remain steely strong, she was careful to not remember fallen heroes’ names or learn details of their personal lives.

But she couldn’t hold back the tears forever. During a month-long leave in July 2005, all the raw emotions of documenting the horrors of war started pouring out when she least expected it. Just the sound of Independence Day fireworks caused her to huddle in a corner, crying and scared for her life. “I wasn’t sleeping or eating, and I had a lot of hair loss because of the stress.”

Before Wood got out of the Army in 2006, she was in counseling. She’ll never forget her first appointment, when she walked into a counselor’s office wearing civilian clothes and a baseball cap to hide her face. “I didn’t want anyone to know I was an officer,” she says. “I was embarrassed to go to a counselor at all. I didn’t believe in it.” She even doubted depression was real—until she

“I met people who became lifelong friends, mentors and career confidence builders. It was good for my self-esteem because I had never done well in school, and I left there with a 3.91 GPA. I didn’t think it was possible.”

Sarah Wood, MSC/MFCT ’12
experienced it firsthand. “I started crying uncontrollably during the day. I had zero control. It always happened at the most inconvenient times, and that really freaked me out because I had been conditioned in the military to never cry.”

Finding help—and hope
Through counseling, she rediscovered hope in her life—and learned tools she wanted to share with others. While keeping her full-time job, she earned her Master of Science in Counseling in marriage, family and child therapy at University of Phoenix. “I met people who became lifelong friends, mentors and career confidence builders,” she says. “It was good for my self-esteem because I had never done well in school, and I left there with a 3.91 GPA. I didn’t think it was possible.” Through her teammates’ support and encouragement, she landed an internship as a readjustment marriage and family therapist (MFT) for the San Marcos Veterans Center in San Marcos, California.

The internship paved the way for her current role as a peer support specialist with the VA San Diego Healthcare System. Wood is one of approximately 800 VA peer support specialists nationwide. They encourage veterans struggling with mental health issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, addiction and military sexual trauma, to seek the care they need. Peer support specialists also help veterans navigate the VA healthcare system, serve as role models, work to eliminate the stigma of having a mental illness and share their own stories of recovery.

A wounded healer
Every day, Wood witnesses the extraordinary healing power of veterans helping veterans through a deep understanding that can only come from a shared experience. The broad smile on Wood’s face is a sign of hope for veterans who know that she, too, had once been mired in war-related mental health issues—and found a way out.

“I support and defend a team of heroes who carry a condition unknown to those who have not seen or experienced the horrors of war,” she says. “In me, they see a person they can confide in, a fellow veteran who is committed to helping better their lives.”


While widely available, not all programs are available in all locations or in both online and on-campus formats. Please check with a university representative.
Extra! Extra!

Must-reads and online resources for current and future leaders

By Paula Boon

BOOKS

1. The 5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximize Your Potential
   By John C. Maxwell
   In this practical, inspiring, funny book, bestselling author John C. Maxwell shares stories and advice to help you recognize and enact the steps you need to take to become a better leader.

2. Leaders Eat Last: Why Some Teams Pull Together and Others Don’t
   By Simon Sinek
   From the author of the bestselling Start With Why comes more sage leadership-related advice. Sinek reveals the psychology and biology behind creating a Circle of Safety in which employees and leaders all thrive.

3. HBR’s 10 Must Reads on Leadership
   By Harvard Business Review
   In this volume, Harvard Business Review editors have collected the 10 most important articles they have ever published on the subject of leadership, written by experts like Peter Drucker, John Kotter and Jim Collins.

4. Turn the Ship Around!: A True Story of Turning Followers into Leaders
   By David Marquet
   Based on his experiences as captain of a nuclear submarine, Marquet provides insights into how leaders can change their workplace culture by giving control to others so that workers become committed, engaged partners.

   By Carol Kinsey Goman
   In this book, a respected management coach teaches you how to modify your own body language and interpret the cues of others to increase your effectiveness as a leader.

6. Total Leadership: Be a Better Leader, Have a Richer Life
   By Stewart D. Friedman
   The founding director of the Wharton School’s Leadership Program has adapted his practical Wharton course into this engaging, practical book, which provides the tools you need to lead in every aspect of your life.
MAGAZINES AND ARTICLES

1. Forbes, December 15, 2013
   “Leadership Is About Emotion”
   By Meghan M. Biro
   Learn the eight keys to mastering the art and science of leadership and inspiring those who follow you, like the great leaders you admire.

   “When Power Makes Others Speechless: The Negative Impact of Leader Power on Team Performance”
   By Leigh Plunkett Tost, Fancesca Gino and Richard P. Larrick
   An academic article describing three different studies about how a leader’s humility and generosity affect team performance.

   “The Leadership Lessons of Nelson Mandela”
   By Nicholas Pearce
   A reflection on the three most important things we can learn about leadership from the life and accomplishments of this great man.

ONLINE RESOURCES

4. TEDxToronto talk: “Everyday Leadership” by Drew Dudley
   ted.com/talks/drew_dudley_everyday_leadership
   A hilarious and touching six-minute TEDx talk reminding us how powerful we can be in other people’s lives.

5. Forbes Leadership Forum
   forbes.com/sites/forbesleadershipforum
   A trusted biweekly business magazine provides leadership-related news, commentary and advice.

6. LeadershipNow
   leadershipnow.com
   A site dedicated to building a community of leaders at all levels of society, with articles, a blog, quotes, a newsletter and more.

Paula Boon is a freelance researcher, writer and editor whose work has appeared in publications in the United States and Canada.
The BUZZ

We want to celebrate you in our alumni announcements. Share your story and be part of “The Buzz.” Email us at alumni@phoenix.edu.

Published by alumni

**Big Business is Murder**
By Bruce Little

In this novel, alumnus Bruce Little, AACJ '08, spins a tale of drama and mystery in the world of big business, and shows how getting ahead can be murder.

The book is available through Amazon.

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**Frustration-Free Technical Management 2nd Edition**
By Jarie Bolander

The latest book by Jarie Bolander, MBA/TM '01, gives managers tips, tools and techniques to not only survive but thrive in the constantly changing world of technology management.

The book is available through Amazon.

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**A Less Than Perfect Beginning**
By Diane L. Huffman

Diane Huffman, MBA '93, shows that surviving the school of hard knocks is possible—even if your friends’ families resemble the one on *Leave It To Beaver*, while yours is like an evil version of *The Munsters*. All you need is a positive attitude, a sense of humor and a secret escape plan.

The book is available through Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

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**The 21-Day Salad Fast**
By Kyla Latrice

One of three cookbooks by Kyla Latrice, MBA '07, this one is dedicated to men and women who are dealing with obesity, or who simply want to lose weight and get healthy and fit once and for all. The author shares how she shed 170 pounds—and has kept it off.

The book is available through Amazon and Barnes & Noble.
Recognition

California
Orange County
David Gerber, BSB/M ’96, MSTM ’98, was awarded the Orange County Business Journal’s Excellence in Entrepreneurship for the second year in a row. Gerber is the CEO of Tallega Software, which focuses on selling, delivering and supporting document scanning, document management and workflow solutions primarily in the B2B environment. The company was previously selected as one of OCBJ’s 100 Fastest Growing Private Companies in 2008, 2009 and 2011.

Florida
Miami
Tamar Lucien, MBA ’07, recently launched CanUStart.com, a hiring system for the restaurant industry that requires no searching on the part of job seekers or employers. Formerly a University of Phoenix® enrollment representative, the CanUStart CEO was inspired through her MBA program to pursue a career in human resources, which led to the creation of the hiring site.

Maryland
Severn
Earlier this year, David Hatfield, DM ’09, participated in the evaluation of research applications submitted to the Gulf War Illness Research Program (GWIRP) sponsored by the Department of Defense. Hatfield was nominated for the program by PANDORA Organization, for which he serves on the board of directors. As a consumer reviewer, he was a full voting member, along with prominent scientists, to help determine how the $20 million appropriated by Congress for fiscal year 2013 will be spent on future Gulf War Illness research. Hatfield, sergeant major, U.S. Army (Ret.), is a Gulf War illness advocate and sufferer.

Tennessee
Chattanooga
Robert Modrall, BSB/GBM ’11, was recently named as the 2014 Outstanding Individual Volunteer of the Year by The Salvation Army of Chattanooga, Tennessee. Modrall is an active volunteer with several area nonprofits and previously won the University of Phoenix Alumni Association Community Service Award in 2013.

Utah
Provo
Josh Case, MBA ’06, CEO of Energy Capital Group, was selected as one of Forty Under 40 by Utah Business Magazine for 2014. Case is a finance and business development professional who is leading the development of a 300-megawatt, $600 million solar plant that reportedly will be one of the largest solar projects built in North America. Previously, Case was an advisor at Bank of America Merrill Lynch and founder of M.J.M. Capital Inc., a national equipment leasing company.

United Arab Emirates
Dubai
Creativemode (a subsidiary of ideanco) announced earlier in the year that Maher Ezzeddine, MBA ’06, rejoined the company, which he started in 1999, as CEO and partner. Ideanco is a global management consulting firm with offices in Beirut, Abu Dhabi and New York that has two services: Creativemode (branding arm) and Consultivemode (management consultancy arm). The entities focus on corporate strategy, sales, marketing, branding, cultural change, innovation and corporate cultural revolution. Ezzeddine is also a recent graduate of the Harvard Business School, with concentrations in leadership and strategic management.

Virginia
Alexandria
The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) recently appointed Bettina Deynes, BSB/M ’04, as vice president of human resources. SHRM is the world’s largest HR membership organization devoted to human resource management. Previously, Deynes served as director of human resources for the city of Alexandria, Virginia, director of human resources for the National Association of Social Workers in Washington, D.C., and as an HR executive with the Washington Nationals baseball team. Deynes is also a published author.
Farewell, John Sperling

On August 22, University of Phoenix lost its founding father. John G. Sperling, PhD passed away at a San Francisco Bay Area hospital. He was 93. The activist, union organizer and educator-turned-entrepreneur is credited with ushering in for-profit higher education for working adult students.

Renowned as a “Rebel With a Cause” (the name of his 2000 autobiography), Sperling founded his first company in 1972. The Institute for Professional Development created degree programs for working adults, primarily police officers and firefighters.

In 1978, after facing political opposition, he founded University of Phoenix in Arizona, one of the first institutions to develop distance education online. The institution has since pioneered and redefined many aspects of higher education. The University became part of Apollo Education Group, which went public in 1994.

Sperling was a Merchant Marine and U.S. Army Air Corps veteran who attended Reed College on the GI Bill and later attended University of California at Berkeley, where he was awarded an Ehrman Fellowship to study at King’s College at the University of Cambridge. In 1955, Sperling earned a doctorate in 18th-century English mercantile history. He became a tenured professor at San Jose State.

In addition to being a tireless academic, Sperling was a significant champion of social justice and science, who later engaged in public policy. He was passionate about environmental issues and supported agricultural research and solar initiatives. He was also an enthusiast of health matters, which led him to acquire biotechnology firms and to found Kronos Optimal Health Company of Scottsdale.

Sperling is survived by companion Joan Hawthorne, former wife Virginia Sperling, son Peter, daughter-in-law Stephanie and two grandchildren, Max and Eve.

University of Phoenix launches faculty news portal

The University recently introduced Phoenix Faculty, a news portal designed to support its faculty by putting the news and information they need—and want—to know at their fingertips.

The new portal combines feature articles, inspiring faculty stories and operational news previously shared with faculty in the Academic Matters newsletter, Faculty Matters magazine and messages. Other highlights include event calendars and dedicated news pages from schools and colleges—all in a commenting platform providing faculty opportunities to contribute to discussions and offer suggestions. Visit the site at phoenixfaculty.net.
Motivational speaker Travis Angry visits Phoenix

University of Phoenix alumnus Travis Angry, BSB/PA ’12, made a recent appearance in Phoenix, Arizona, to kick off a national tour for his book Change: If I Can You Can. The event was held at Changing Hands bookstore and was moderated by University of Phoenix’s Academic Dean for the College of Criminal Justice and Security, Ret. Army Col. Garland Williams.

Angry, a youth inspirational and motivational speaker, rose from the depths of a troubled youth and wrongful imprisonment to earn his GED and join the U.S. Navy at age 27. He served in Iraq where he was honored with several medals, including the Global War on Terrorism Medal. Two years into Angry’s service, he was diagnosed with lymphoma. Since his bout with cancer, Travis lost both of his parents to the disease—something that strengthened his resolve to honor their legacy by transforming young lives. Earning his degree, which he did in 2012, and writing his book became part of that commitment. Angry is a full-time single parent to a young daughter and son. The book is about his journey as someone who turned his life around and became a role model.

About the event, Angry states that it was a great success, thanks in large part to Col. Williams’ participation.

“As a UOPX alumnus and veteran, it was an honor to share my story with so many supporters, including distinguished members of our local community, educators of our youth, people who have battled and survived cancer,” says Angry, [as well as those] “who help the next generation of young people understand that they matter, they need to stay in school, there is hope, and they too can change. I am proud to have started this journey.”

To read more about Travis Angry, visit phoenixpatriotmagazine.com/article/summer14/changing-lives/.

The executive dean list

The University announced in August that it had filled its remaining executive dean positions for the schools and colleges. After a months-long search, the final selections are:

- Dennis Bonilla
  College of Information Systems & Technology

- Meredith Curley
  College of Education

- Hinrich Eylers
  School Of Advanced Studies

- Constance St. Germain
  College of Humanities and Sciences, College of Social Sciences

- James “Spider” Marks
  College of Criminal Justice and Security

- Tamara Rozhon
  College of Health Sciences and Nursing

- Ruth Veloria
  School of Business, Continuing Education
New alumni chapter kicks off with successful events

The Richmond-Virginia Beach Alumni Chapter has gotten off to a great start with events that have brought in more than 200 members.

In June, the chapter helped new graduates celebrate at the Richmond Campus commencement, hosting a chapter information table. The chapter’s VP of communications, Tara Garrison, summed up the event in three words: excitement, smiles and relief. “It was heartfelt to watch everyone tell their stories to one another and determine their plans for their future. So many—from different backgrounds—with one precise thing in common: each one is a Phoenix,” she states.

In July, members held their chapter inauguration at Brio Tuscan Grille in Richmond. The event was an opportunity for chapter members to meet the founding chapter council leadership and for fellow area University of Phoenix alumni to meet and network. And in September, the chapter worked with the Alumni Association to host the local Homecoming 2014 event at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in downtown Richmond. The two-hour event was also a networking event where local alumni could meet and network, as well as learn more about the benefits of being a Phoenix.

For more information about the Richmond-Virginia Beach Alumni Chapter, visit facebook.com/groups/uopxalumnirichmond.

Las Vegas Alumni Chapter keeps new events coming

They say what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas, but what’s happening with the Las Vegas Alumni Chapter is just too good to keep in. In fact, they don’t mind a bit if word gets around.

Launched in spring of 2014, the Las Vegas Chapter has gotten a running start on being a local resource for alumni networking, career development opportunities and simply having fun—and it shows no signs of slowing down. The chapter, now with more than 200 members, has already held several events, including a meet and greet in April, Graduate Appreciation Night in June and the local Homecoming 2014 event in August, with plenty more in the pipeline.

Says Chapter Administrator Jennifer Bingen, “New chapters are always excited to get going, but we are meeting two to three times a month to keep planning new events. We keep moving forward and planning our events for every quarter.” For more information about the Las Vegas Alumni Chapter, visit facebook.com/groups/uopxalumnivasvegas./
Do you know someone on this list?

Each month, approximately 8,000 dedicated students earn their degrees and become proud University of Phoenix graduates.

Phoenix Focus magazine celebrates the newest members of the growing alumni community—now more than 878,000 strong—with an online list of recent graduates.

To see the list of graduates from July 1 – September 30, 2014, visit the Phoenix Focus home page.

alumni.phoenix.edu/phoenix-focus
We’ve asked you to share your University of Phoenix stories, and you’ve answered. In this section, we highlight your accomplishments and accolades in your own words.

Mario Garcia, AAGS ’05, BSIT ’05, MBA ’10
Versatile technologist for Boeing
Salt Lake City, Utah

I was one of five boys raised in a single-parent home from the time I was 5 years old. At age 44 (and four children later), I pursued my degree. I was the first in our family to graduate college, successfully completing my undergraduate and graduate programs at University of Phoenix. Earning my degrees is one of the best educational and professional moves I made. Education is very important, no matter what age you are. There is a reward at the end, if not for you, for your kids because it sets an example for them to follow. If you have the discipline to do it, they too will adapt that same discipline to accomplish that same task. It proved to be true for me.

Tracy Hallead, AACJ, BCJA ’12
Compliance officer
Prudenville, Michigan

I was a single mother of two boys, trying to find my way in life, care for them and stay part of my small community. I would do homework at night outside of the public library in my van with my children playing in the back for hours, just so I could turn in a homework assignment on time. I met my fiancé while obtaining my Associate of Arts in Criminal Justice. I then started my bachelor’s and became pregnant with our daughter. Once my daughter was born, we found she had a life-threatening illness (hydrocephalus) and a cyst in her brain. She had two emergency surgeries to save her life. I was able to complete my degree while being at home with her. She has made a full recovery, and I am proud to say that I now work as a compliance officer in my community. I fulfilled a lifelong goal.

Mary Anne Tagulinao, MSN ’13
RN and nursing professor
Tacoma, Washington

I’m an immigrant from the Philippines who had just started another page with my husband and son in the USA. At first it was a struggle, since we didn’t have anybody here. My husband and I are nurses, who already had our BSN degrees, but I had to take the NCLEX exam here while taking care of our 3-year-old son. Finally, when I took the test, I passed it after the first try. I immediately got a job at one of the tertiary hospitals in Washington, where I honestly found that nursing is my calling. It’s not an easy job at all—it’s very challenging, labor-intensive, experience, but the smiles of appreciation you get are enough to make you come back to work for more! After two years, I became a Certified Rehabilitation RN. Two years later, I got my MSN at University of Phoenix. Now I am a full-time nursing professor at a community college, as well as a per diem RN. Stay focused and achieve your goals!
Everyone has a story to tell.

Share yours and you could be in an upcoming issue of Phoenix Focus.

phoenixfocus.com/share-your-story

Emilio Parga, MAED/ECN ’03
Founder, Solace Tree
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The Phoenix Career Guidance System™ is here.

An intuitive, integrated and guided experience exists to help alumni across all stages of career planning. The Phoenix Career Guidance System combines cutting-edge tools with expert career content to help you get where you want to be—it’s like a personalized GPS for your career. Exclusively for use by alumni and students of University of Phoenix, log in to eCampus and click the Careers tab to get started.

Try it today at careers.phoenix.edu