

BusinessRecord

# 90 IDEAS

IN 90 MINUTES

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# BusinessRecord

# 90 IDEAS

## IN 90 MINUTES

Welcome to the 2018 90 Ideas in 90 Minutes magazine.

Nine leaders from nine of Central Iowa's most successful businesses and organizations shared 10 ideas – big and small – that can be applied to any team or business.

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We've compiled their ideas into this publication so you and your business or organization can learn and apply the ideas about workplace culture, employee engagement, training and treating customers. Think of this publication as a tool for you to write down their ideas – and perhaps a few of your own. There are several pages inside for you to take notes or jot down questions.

When you return to your offices and coworkers, we hope this will be a spark for new ideas you can shape to best fit your needs.

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## BusinessRecord

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**MARY  
ANDRINGA**  
BOARD CHAIR,  
VERMEER CORP.

### Every moment matters.

Culture is created one moment at a time. At Vermeer, we say people are our greatest asset and have implemented programs, processes and safety procedures to put our people first. We care for our people as an organization and we encourage the team to care for each other — and they do. On July 19, when a tornado hit our facilities, our team was tested. The next day, two goals were set before our team: 1. Recover completely. 2. Bring our team members back to work as quickly as possible. The team worked harder than ever to care for each other and rebuild. Make sure you're using every moment and every decision to build the right culture, because it will be tested — and when it is, you want your culture, and your team, to stand strong.

### Walk the floors.

One of the best lessons from our lean journey has been to go to “gemba,” or go to where real work happens. On the factory floor, we get to see into our team members' lives, how engaged they are and how they work as a team. On our customers' job sites, we are exposed to barriers our customers have. Truly understanding the dynamics and pain points of our team members and customers drives innovation to help solve real problems. Spend time where the real work happens. You'll be surprised what you can learn.

### Develop people.

A team member's experience at work is largely based on their manager or leader. True leadership extends far beyond business acumen and corporate competencies. It's the authentic leaders that help define your culture. Taking the time to develop leaders, not just managers, shifts the focus from competent performance to building a deep understanding of self. Do more than a simple assessment. Help your leaders discover their passions, unique abilities and what drives them. Empower your leaders to lead with who they are. This creates authentic leadership and a people-focused environment.

### Educate educators.

Continuous learning is a passion of mine. Since teachers are often the inspiration for students choosing a particular career path, it makes them the perfect student for learning about future opportunities for their students in manufacturing. Each summer, local teachers participate in a two-week program at Vermeer that engages them in all areas of the business, introducing them to the innovation, technology and various skills needed to make manufacturing work. Teachers complete the program by presenting a manufacturing lesson plan they will take back to energize their classrooms, and ultimately introduce students to a potential future career.

### Find the fun.

In October, we open our doors to more than 700 local students for Manufacturing Day, a celebration of modern manufacturing meant to inspire the next generation of manufacturers. Students don't know what careers are available to them until we show them. Seeing is believing, but experiencing is even better. To help students understand the opportunities, we don't simply ask them to consider a future in finance. Instead, games and activities tied to each functional area pique inter-

est. Students compare currencies from different countries to see how finance reaches much further than an Excel spreadsheet. Find the fun in the work you do to excite the next generation.

### Work together.

Business and education working together in new ways will drive economic success like never before. The potential of this partnership creates new educational opportunities for the future workforce and gives an unmatched, real-world connection to educators. For example, work-based learning opportunities, like our registered apprenticeship program, offer an earn-while-you-learn option that brings high school students into our workforce the summer after junior year, part time during senior year (while they take local career academy classes) and for approximately one year following graduation, at which point the student receives a general studies degree from a local community college. Another example is our location at the Iowa State Research Park — the Vermeer Applied Technology Hub. The physical space allows for ultimate collaboration between the university and the Vermeer team, connecting students learning about a field of study, but also Vermeer as a future employer.

### Take care of your team.

In 2002 we opened the Vermeer Health Center, and in 2007 we opened an adjoining Vermeer Family Pharmacy. Team members and their families have on-site access to quality health care services at no cost or a reduced rate, managed by a third party. With same- or next-day appointments and lobby wait times of less than eight minutes, team members are back at work in a fraction of the time compared to a traditional office visit. Plus, the pharmacy functions as any other, with prescriptions and over-the-counter items. Provide ways for your team members to take care of themselves. In the end, it's better for everyone.

### Say “thank you.”

An informal mentor of mine, Max DePree, said, “The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The second is to say ‘thank you.’” Throughout my career, I intentionally set aside time to send notes to people to say thanks for their extra efforts or to recognize issues that a team member is dealing with. Specifically calling out a contribution or recognizing the issue makes the interaction that much more meaningful. In today's world of social media and texting, we may underestimate the importance of an old-fashioned note. Take time to say thanks.

### Don't let retirement be the end.

The third phase of life — life after work — has been an area my husband, Dale, and I have spent time educating ourselves, and others, on. Personally, we encourage people to plan and prepare financially, but also emotionally and socially. At Vermeer, the team members who enter the third phase of life are considered and referred to as Friends of Vermeer. Part-time or special work is available to this group to help ease the transition. We hold quarterly coffee times or lunches to connect the retirees with their Vermeer friends and help them stay engaged in the business through updates from our executive leaders.

### Remember where you came from.

*Take time to reflect on the values and principles that the culture of the company was built on. My dad, Gary Vermeer, valued innovative products, the people he worked with and a positive bottom line. After I became involved with the company, I had a team member ask me what second-generation family members were focused on. That is when I started articulating the four P's (principles, people, product and profit) as our values, which started with Gary Vermeer but continue as core values now and into our future.*

## ONE MORE IDEA .....

*BerganKDV is a leading professional services firm with a contagious culture; where growth is fostered and making a difference means something. Our values drive our decisions, and our passion is empowering people and creating a wow experience for our clients. More than 360 strong, we are powered by people who do business the Midwest way delivering comprehensive business, financial and technology solutions including business planning and consulting, tax, assurance and accounting, technology, wealth management and turnaround management services. From tax reform to technology, we go beyond so you can do more. #starthere. **bergankdv.com***



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# ***BRIGHT IDEAS***

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## THINGS TO IMPLEMENT



## TOP TAKEAWAYS



ADDITIONAL NOTES

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**90**IDEAS  
IN 90 MINUTES

**Culture: Simplify and live.**

Culture is a part of who we are. We do not want to have our student-athletes “buy in” to our culture. Instead, we want it to be a part of who they are. Culture exists in every team, organization, etc., so we better be intentional about it. We also want it to be something that our student-athletes can easily define and feel. For our program, we define our culture as loving basketball, loving to compete and loving Drake.

**Be autonomous.**

It is essential that our staff and our student-athletes have a say in our daily process as well as our overall vision. We constantly ask for feedback and forethought. It is imperative to our journey that we not only are able to own our own thoughts, feelings and emotions, but provide a space to allow us to share them.

**Be flexible.**

One of my favorite quotes is: “You can never win a championship on Plan A.” And that saying rings true in our everyday life as well as our ultimate goal for every season. Teams that are the most flexible and willing to adjust are the ones that just find a way to figure it out. Being flexible doesn’t always mean going back to the drawing board, but it can. As leaders we have to have the ability to be open-minded, read the situation, be OK with change and make the decision to move forward.

**Be where your feet are.**

As a mom, wife, coach and more, I tend to want to be in more than one place at any given moment ... so I need to make a conscious effort to be where my feet are.

Because it is only then that true “production” can happen. There are plenty of times, especially in high-pressure situations, when our focus slides to the past or future. We need to understand that we make our best decisions when we are present and fully engaged. I have also found that I am at my best when I am able to acknowledge the emotions that I am feeling and that others around me feel. When trying to coach/manage a team of 15 18-23-year-olds, emotions are strong, powerful, intense, deeply felt and real. Therefore, we need to have an environment that allows everyone to learn to value their own emotions, be inclusive of those around them and be where our feet are.

**Be a good person.**

The one and only “rule” we have in our program.

**Love what you do.**

Love is the strongest human emotion that we have. Our goal is that these women come in and love basketball, love to compete and love Drake. There are not many Division I basketball programs out there that openly talk about “love.” However, to us, it is an essential part of what we do. We want to be different, unique and figure out how success can find us. To do that, we know we need to work hard, get better and love harder. Love is not always easy, and it is definitely not always flowers and rainbows, but it is powerful and positive. And if we can truly find a way to have love as the center of what we are doing, I can’t think of a better way to transform collegiate athletics.

**Serve in whatever capacity you can.**

We may not be the best in this community, but we can definitely be the best for this community. In our program, we have a goal of completing 1,000 hours of community service every year. If we can create these habits at a young age, it will be amazing to see what each of our women can do when their time at Drake is done.

**Win your way (personal style and motivation).**

As a leader, we have to not only know our own strengths and how we are motivated, we have to value it and live in that space. Too often we try to emulate other leaders and try to become a certain way. There is no “right” way to lead and there is no “how-to” guidebook.

We can learn new strategies and ideas but still need to make them our own. We can all find incredible strength in our voice and in whatever seat we sit in.

**No one rocks your boat but you.**

This was a game-changing statement when I heard it the first time. There are times in our life when we become paranoid or feel we are being wronged, but when we can shift our thinking to understand this concept, we have a lot more control than we thought. Good things/wins tend to find you.

**Learn from anyone, anywhere, at anytime.**

*When I reflect about significant moments in my life, there are so many people that come to mind. The amazing part is that a lot of those people were completely random, people I had a very brief encounter with, and then of course that day you realize that your parent/boss/co-worker/friend/coach/whoever knows a lot more than you ever thought they did. The better space we are in, the more we are ready to learn.*



**JENNIE  
BARANCZYK**  
HEAD WOMEN'S  
BASKETBALL COACH,  
DRAKE UNIVERSITY

## *ONE MORE IDEA* Celebrate with your work family

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*Finding a balance between work and home is difficult - no matter how flexible the employer. Go out of your way to celebrate employees and events happening outside the office. Davis Brown Law Firm hosts multiple, fun events each year: Iowa vs. ISU tailgate, baseball opening day (we invite Cubbie Bear!), March Madness, Oktoberfest, ice cream socials, and more. Life - whether at work or at home - can be stressful, but by taking a break, celebrating even the small things, encouraging a supportive work environment, and thanking employees for their contributions to your mission, you can create a workplace that fosters professional and personal success.*



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# ***BRIGHT IDEAS***

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## THINGS TO IMPLEMENT



## TOP TAKEAWAYS



ADDITIONAL NOTES

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**90**IDEAS  
IN 90 MINUTES



**JAY  
BYERS**

CEO,  
GREATER DES MOINES  
PARTNERSHIP

### **Double down on your strengths.**

Identify what you are good at and do everything you can to become best in class. In Greater Des Moines, we know we have two powerhouse industries in insurance/financial services and agriculture. So we partnered to help start the Global Insurance Accelerator and Iowa AgriTech Accelerator, as well as the Cultivation Corridor and Global Insurance Symposium to help maximize innovation in those industries.

### **Tell your story.**

Nobody is going to tell your story for you. The launch of DSM USA and our national PR and digital marketing strategies are examples of our commitment to telling the stories of our investors and our region loud, bold and broad. The Greater Des Moines Partnership enlists others in Des Moines to help share relevant rankings and regional news through our DSM USA Ambassadors social media program.

### **Be social.**

Fully leverage social media. Here are my five rules for how to effectively and professionally use social media.

1. The Grandma Rule: Do not say anything you would not say to your grandma. Avoid profanity, unless it is "DSM USA: Hell Yes!"
2. The Media Rule: If you do not want it on the front page of the newspaper, do not put it on social media.
3. The Board or Boss Rule: Avoid posting anything that could cost you your job.
4. The Content Rule: Post things that people will find interesting and meaningful. Leverage existing content and news articles. Pictures and videos stand out.
5. The "Bring It" Rule: Growing your social media tribe requires a long-term commitment. Posting on a regular basis is important.

Remember, whether it is on social media or any other medium, every word matters. Make the most of opportunities to share your message. What you share and post about is part of your professional and personal social media brand.

### **Become an expert in your field.**

Read books that challenge your thinking. Be strategic with your time, select key publications and industry communications channels to follow. Join and be engaged with key associations related to your field. When people look to you or your organization as an expert, it allows you to help set the agenda and guide your industry forward. The Greater Des Moines Partnership encourages team members to be thought leaders in economic and community development.

### **Think big.**

Every project or development starts with an idea. Be bold and ambitious. Play the long game. You may not know exactly how to get there, but build your partners and carve a path. Put the pieces in place and have the patience to let things fall into place. Identify small early wins on big projects to build momentum. A great example of

this happening right now in Des Moines is the regional water trails project and efforts to activate the downtown riverfront and river. It is a bold, transformational plan with the right partners around the table. It will not get done overnight, but with patience and persistence it will get done.

### **Think small.**

Every big company started with an idea and a small team. The backbone of the Greater Des Moines Partnership is our 6,100 members, most of which are small businesses. There are countless small business startups with high growth potential in Des Moines. Many of these companies have the potential to grow into an international business. That is part of the reason why the Greater Des Moines Partnership has expanded our small business mentorship and program offerings. The Partnership remains committed to strengthening Des Moines' entrepreneurial ecosystem and encouraging the region to support businesses through Look Local First.

### **Create the future.**

*"The best way to predict the future is to create it." — Peter Drucker. Establish a vision for the future and develop a pathway for how to get there. An example of shaping the future is Capital Crossroads 2.0, the current regional vision plan for Central Iowa. United Way of Central Iowa, Catch Des Moines, Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Organization, Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines, Prairie Meadows, Bravo Greater Des Moines, the Greater Des Moines Partnership and multiple other public, private and nonprofit partners came together to help define the future of our region, and collectively we are aggressively implementing this plan.*

### **Fight above your weight class.**

One way of doing this is by surrounding yourself with top talent. Hire people who are smarter than you and good at the things you are not good at. Then turn them loose. Inspire and empower them to make decisions. Create the environment and culture where people can do good work and thrive. Strive to create an environment that is the best place your team has ever worked. It is crucial that ideas are coming from all levels of the organization. We have an employee-led Culture Club that focuses on planning events and creating programs to make this a culture where people enjoy working and feel empowered to do their best work.

### **Think global.**

Every business and organization needs to remember that we all operate within a global economy. To better position our region globally, the Greater Des Moines Partnership launched the Global DSM: Trade and Investment Strategy and our Global DSM: International Talent Strategy. DSM USA, the new regional identifier, also helps position and reinforce Greater Des Moines as a global player.

### **Be nice.**

Character still matters. Fight for what you believe in, and do so with civility. Hold yourself to a higher standard. When there is temptation to sling mud, remember how you want your organization to be represented. Being nice does not mean being weak. Being nice means being civil. It means being a trusted leader that people will follow and an effective advocate for your community and organization.

## *ONE MORE IDEA* Technology as an Enabler

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*As technology and innovation continue to accelerate, some question if progress will make human workers obsolete. We don't see it that way. Our view is that technology is an enabler, allowing our associates to make faster and more informed decisions while improving the customer experience with instant responsiveness and access to information. For example, using drones lets us assess damaged roofs more quickly. Our property sensors proactively alert customers to water leaks and temperature changes before significant damage occurs. Change and innovation are enthusiastically embraced by those who are empowered by it.*



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# ***BRIGHT IDEAS***

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## THINGS TO IMPLEMENT



## TOP TAKEAWAYS



ADDITIONAL NOTES

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**90**IDEAS  
IN 90 MINUTES

## Listen.

When I joined the company in June 2017, I met with our employees and agents to simply listen and learn. It was important that everyone had an opportunity and a forum for sharing their ideas and opinions. At times these were one-on-one meetings, but we also hosted several “town hall” meetings as well. Everyone was encouraged to speak up and no topic was off limits. These in-person meetings were supplemented with regular email and video communications. I also made it a point to be visible. Whether it was stopping by an employee’s office, a team meeting, or grabbing lunch in our cafeteria, I wanted everyone to know that I am accessible and approachable.

## Create a cultural revolution.

When I became CEO, the company had lost a quarter of its capital in the first half of the year. In any organization, you want the best people doing the best job. But when you’re facing adversity and you’re asking a lot from people, it’s imperative that you interject fun and allow those who are working hard to play hard. This spring we introduced monthly patio parties where employees enjoy appetizers and beverages, play lawn games, listen to live music and interact with their co-workers in a casual setting. We added an “Atari” room that’s equipped with Nintendo Switch and Xbox to give employees an outlet for relieving stress. If you drive by our building, you will see groups of employees out front looking down at their phones — this is our Pokémon Go group.

## Don’t make rules for the 5 percent who can’t be adults.

Building a culture of empowerment and accountability requires looking at everything you are doing to either build or block that culture. This includes employment policies. We moved to a “dress for your day” policy that allows employees to think for themselves and dress appropriately based on what they have going on. It can’t stop there — we must continue to think about what we do every day to ensure we reflect the culture we are building. We shouldn’t have to hand-hold or micromanage if we hire capable adults who are professionals. Expect more and you’ll get more.

## Hire people who look different than us.

You hear a lot about diversity and inclusion. They are not “nice to haves,” they are “need to haves” if we are going to improve, innovate and better understand our customers. We need people who think differently, who bring new ideas from diverse cultures and different backgrounds. Many companies talk about diversity and inclusion, even create training programs, manuals and other “check the box” processes. However, true diversity and inclusion is where all levels of management include all types of people, and they are valued equally for their skills and abilities. At GuideOne, our senior leadership team includes women and a minority.

## When things look good, look under the rocks.

My advice to all of my leaders is things are never as good or as bad as they seem, but we have to be intellectually honest with ourselves. To help ensure that, we started holding quarterly operating review/

challenge sessions. This achieves multiple outcomes, and it allows all disciplines of the organization to hear from product line leaders about how our business is performing. ... This also gives employees at all levels of the organization practice at presenting in front of colleagues to talk about their products and initiatives. It’s a great tool for coaching people and creating opportunities.

## “I’m just a girl.”

I’m always amazed when I hear that employees think the CEO is unapproachable, or that senior leaders are entitled to anything by the mere title of their jobs. We earn respect by actions, achievements and by how we treat and develop others — not by the office we sit in. The insurance industry can be old-fashioned in hierarchy and tradition. I believe to win the hearts and minds of your employees they must trust and believe in you — and get to know you as a real person.

## Innovate — GuideOne Garage.

Our business faces both a reality and a perception of being old-fashioned and stagnant; nothing in insurance happens fast. We believe there will be more change in the insurance industry in the next five years than we’ve seen in the last 100 years. This change is being powered by entrepreneurs armed with big data, artificial intelligence, the internet of things and machine learning. Those who see opportunities to disrupt and transform the industry are drawing astonishing amounts of venture capital money. The GuideOne Garage (everything good starts in a garage) was created to partner with these businesses to drive changes. We bring our employees into the Garage and encourage them to think differently about work problems and explore how insurtech can play a role in the solution.

## Break down the silos.

*It’s not uncommon in insurance to see departments working in silos, where underwriting, product development, claims, sales and marketing don’t collaborate or even talk to each other. I worked with my senior leadership team to create an organizational structure that supported alignment and accountability, while encouraging collaboration. As an example, we introduced large loss meetings where claims, underwriting, product management and sales discussed significant claims to determine how we can work together to avoid similar losses in the future.*

## GuideOne Women’s Network (GOWN).

Only 4 percent of CEOs in the insurance industry are women. On boards it’s 19 percent, and in management it’s 25 percent. Women in leadership positions in our industry are significantly underrepresented. We firmly believe in the collective power of women coming together to support one another. That is why we felt it was imperative to create the GuideOne Women’s Network.

## Make the world a better place.

We do many things to support this mission — through the products we offer; the religious institutions, schools and nonprofit agencies we insure; and the things we do outside of our traditional jobs. The GuideOne Foundation was established in 1999 and is funded by the company and by voluntary employee and customer contributions. This spring we surveyed our employees to help us narrow our charitable areas of focus. Using their responses as our starting point, we are currently working to revise our foundation strategy to better align with the causes that are important to our employees and where they are volunteering in their communities. We also contribute our time. Employees are encouraged to use their 16 hours of volunteer time off each year. I personally volunteer and recently participated in the



**JESSICA  
CLARK**  
CEO & PRESIDENT,  
GUIDEONE INSURANCE

## ONE MORE IDEA .....

*How does an ad agency hang around for more than 100 years? By embracing change. Lessing-Flynn was among the first ad agencies in Iowa to advertise on radio and television, use computers, and use e-mail. For a century-old company, we still think of ourselves as quite the trendsetters.*

*We're lucky to work with some of the most entrepreneurial companies in the world. Our client list is filled with clients who sell heavy machinery, financial products, and technology. Many started with one person tinkering in a garage willing to take a smart risk. If your story is similar, we'd love to visit.*



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**JUDI  
EYLES**  
DIRECTOR,  
PAPPAJOHN CENTER  
FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

# ***BRIGHT IDEAS***

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## THINGS TO IMPLEMENT



## TOP TAKEAWAYS



ADDITIONAL NOTES

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### Engage students.

Young people (students, interns and new employees) are innovative thinkers, so give them a chance to shine and contribute. At Iowa State, I am surrounded daily by eager, technology-savvy young people, and I am always astounded at how great they are at problem-solving. Students simply need an opportunity to feel like their input matters and the chance to be a part of the solution.

### Build and foster cross-functional teams.

Within CyBIZ Lab, our university student consulting program, we intentionally form teams across disciplines and intermingle undergraduate and graduate students. The result is that everyone's minds and learning experiences are broadened, and outcomes are so much more robust and valuable for clients and the company. Seek input from employees outside your functional areas, and always, always ask customers what they think.

### Learn to pitch.

Pitch a business idea, a sales strategy, a proposal or yourself. Perfect your pitch through practice and by getting feedback from others. Then ask someone else to pitch your idea, and listen to what you hear back. You may learn something new or different about what key message you are hoping to share. Recently I asked each of 15 student entrepreneurs who had been working together in our summer accelerator to stand up and pitch the person's business sitting next to them. It was awesome to hear the important and succinct messages and thoughts students shared about each other's ventures.

### Provide leadership opportunities to others.

Give individuals the opportunity to lead projects, activities and workshops. The best way to build a strong team is to trust other people to lead. Match employee interests and skill sets to work that needs to be done, and then trust those individuals to lead and collaborate. Provide support, direction and guidance as needed, but then take a step back and encourage others to be accountable for (and proud of) the results.

### Start something.

Be entrepreneurial! Think entrepreneurially! Encourage others to have an entrepreneurial mindset. Learn how to constantly be evaluating things that need to be improved, think about products or services that would solve a problem or help people, or consider how new technologies might make your business or your world more efficient. Write down your ideas and mull them over in your brain. Share your concepts with others and invite feedback. Brilliant entrepreneurial innovations result from the constant churning of ideas and considering a number of different pathways to success.

### Team-building through play.

There's nothing like a little competitive team sport or creativity exercise to make it possible for people to laugh, get to know each other better, identify individual strengths, and work together more productively. Play soccer or build spaghetti towers with employees. Engage in brainstorming and ideation. Take a break every now and then and do something fun to foster teamwork and collaboration.

### Go out of your way to help others.

Do your very best and more in your job, as a volunteer and as a leader. Practice positivity in your workplace, and eliminate "it's not my job" from your workplace vocabulary. I work in a very large university, and people often have a hard time finding the right contact or resource. If you happen to be the person who intercepts a call or visit from someone looking for help, take the extra time to help that person find their way. You may never see or hear from that person again, but at least you have the satisfaction of knowing you saved them some degree of frustration in their day, and you have hopefully left a positive impression of your company or organization.

### Every action has a consequence.

Call it ethics, or just good decision-making, but every business or personnel action has an intended or perhaps unintended result. Ensure that your actions and your team's actions and comments pass the "media test." If a comment about a client or co-worker or communication about a business decision or program result was broadcast in the news media, how would it reflect on you, your team and your company or organization? We ask that question in our office every day to ensure people are working and interacting in a way that will ultimately make a positive and

### Be a mentor.

*And allow your colleagues to mentor. Give time to helping others personally and professionally. Don't be afraid to be honest and straightforward in a mentoring role, but also be a good listener and a cheerleader for others. At the Pappajohn Center, we regularly engage successful businesspeople, entrepreneurs, alumni and professionals with our clients, staff and students. The differing perspectives and connections are incredibly valuable, and the exchanges are most always mutually beneficial.*

"feel good" news story.

### Show appreciation.

When I was a young girl, my parents used to force me to sit down and write handwritten thank-you notes. I will be forever grateful that they instilled that good habit in me because it is so important to take a moment to thank others. Individual and corporate donors are incredibly important to Iowa State University. One of the most impactful ways to say thanks is to have a student or program recipient send a personal story, essay, photo or letter to someone who has provided support through their gifts. Even though it is so much easier today to send a text or email, think about doing it the old-fashioned way with pen and paper. People matter, and we should never be too busy to let them know they are appreciated.

## ONE MORE IDEA .....

*Simple concepts such as learning, earning and saving urge us to be innovative in creating new opportunities for the Principal Foundation to help people when they need it the most.*

*Explore our corporate citizenship mission at **Principal.com** to learn about a few of our new ideas that will help and empower youth around the globe to earn more and save more.*



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# ***BRIGHT IDEAS***

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## THINGS TO IMPLEMENT



## TOP TAKEAWAYS



ADDITIONAL NOTES

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BusinessRecord

**90**IDEAS  
IN 90 MINUTES



**MICHAEL  
HOUSHOLDER**  
SENIOR PASTOR,  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
OF HOPE

**Get over yourself; everyone else has.**

Be a servant leader. Genuinely cheer for the success of your co-workers — when they do well, it's better for the whole team (including you). It's amazing how far an organization can go when its leaders don't care who gets the credit for success.

**Listen more than you speak, and dream big based on what you hear.**

A compelling vision can change the world. Set the sails of your organization to a wind that's way more powerful than you. Money and power can be good, but they don't have the potential to satisfy souls. ... Seek higher goals for your organization that will last longer and accomplish more. When you catch a compelling vision from above, don't put it up for a vote. Rather, invite folks to join in the journey toward the realization of a big dream.

**If you want to be a beloved and respected leader, then love and respect people.**

There's nothing deeper for us to learn or more important for us to share than love. Treat volunteers as partners, not subordinates. Lead with an attitude of gratitude, teamwork, joy, humility and harmony. Say "thank you" and mean it ... say "please" and mean it ... say "I'm sorry" and mean it. The forces that unite us are greater than the issues that divide us, and we're better (and accomplish way more) together, united in love.

**Healthy things grow; if you want an organization to grow, focus on health, not growth.**

Go the extra mile to make your organization safe — physically, emotionally, spiritually — for all. Reward relational integrity and restrict gossip. Support your co-workers publicly and resolve conflicts privately. Human nature prefers win/lose and either/or scenarios. Counter that by seeking win/win and both/and alternatives. Seek to be better, not bigger. If you do grow, celebrate growth as a blessing, not a burden (even if it makes some aspects of work more challenging for you).

**Hire high-achieving and high-integrity leaders who fully embrace your mission.**

As you hire staff and build volunteer teams, look for leaders who are "all in" and don't need to be sold on the heart and purpose of your organization. Pass on "superstars" or "lone rangers" with competing agendas who are in it for themselves. Instead, make sure anyone you hire has all three C's (competence, character, cooperative spirit); two out of three isn't enough, and regardless of how good they are, they are not a fit for you and they won't last.

**Let your leaders lead.**

If you hire well, and if relational accountability structures and organizational boundaries are in place, then give trusted leaders room to breathe and function. Hold on too tightly and micromanage your staff, and you'll squelch spirits, minimize potential and stunt growth. The most effective organizations are not built on the talent or skills of one person. Make room for multiple trusted leaders to participate in the deepening and widening of the organization. A full team rowing in the same direction will always beat the boat with a single rower doing all the work. Plus, with everyone rowing, it's harder to rock the boat.

**Tell your team why, not just what.**

The best leaders are thermostats, not thermometers — they set the climate for an organization rather than just report the temperature. Do more than just make announcements and send emails; interpret those announcements. Honor and respect your teammates, and give them a better opportunity to buy in, by letting them know the good reasons underneath the decisions you make. Be open to changing your mind as a leader if someone has a better idea. Organizational communication shouldn't be about power and control, and it isn't parenting. "Because I said so" or "because I'm the boss" is not an effective leadership strategy.

**Trying and failing is better than failing to try.**

Fear of failure stunts the development of an organization. Encourage your team to take risks for the sake of mission, and if they don't work out, thank them for trying ... and learn from the experience so the next time you try something similar

you'll have a better shot at success. The wilderness is never a waste. What we learn while we wander, or fail, is often the key to a future breakthrough.

**Take good care of your team.**

Set high expectations for your team and let them have some fun! When it's time to work, work hard. But when it's time to take a break, give them a break. Insist on a Sabbath (day of rest) for your staff. Well-rested and refreshed teams get way more done. Encourage laughter, and never underestimate the power of good, clean fun; people learn and accomplish more when they're having fun. At Hope, we're fond of saying, "We take God very seriously, not ourselves!"

**Identity leads to mission and vision.**

*We'll never know what we're doing (mission) or where we're going (vision) until we know who we are (identity). If we do what we do just for the sake of doing it, then it's just a matter of time before we falter or fail. But if we do what we do because we know this is who we are, then we will endure through challenging times and increase our potential to experience miraculous and wonderful things. Remind your "choir" that we sing songs because we are singers. It's who we are. Then teach the lyrics of your mission and vision as a fond and familiar chorus for the full choir to sing, in perfect harmony.*

## ONE MORE IDEA .....

*Generation Z (those born after 1995) accounts for about 25 percent of the U.S. population, making it larger than millennials and baby boomers. While the work habits of millennials have been extensively studied by companies all over the world, Gen Z is knocking on the door, and in some instances they are already in the workplace. How do you recruit them? Move your recruiting efforts online. Emphasize your organization's diverse and socially responsible culture. Generation Z is as motivated and driven as ever to make a difference in the workplace and beyond.*

# ***BRIGHT IDEAS***

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## THINGS TO IMPLEMENT



## TOP TAKEAWAYS



ADDITIONAL NOTES

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BusinessRecord

**90**IDEAS  
IN 90 MINUTES



**JOSEPH  
JONES**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
HARKIN INSTITUTE

### **It's not your gumbo.**

One of the hardest lessons of leadership is not only knowing that you can't have complete control of everything, but also being comfortable with this reality. Leading a successful and happily motivated team requires empowering others to take ownership of their work and giving them the tools to do so. I cannot do my job successfully if I am worried about how someone else is doing his or hers. Give direction, set goals and let them get in front of the stove. You have asked them to take over cooking the meal, but they don't need to follow your recipe.

### **The perfect recipe.**

When thinking about hiring new team members, remember that you are adding to a "team," which most likely isn't the human resources team. That means that more than just HR should be involved in the process — from application construction, to skills really needed, to screening questions. Full-time, part-time and undergraduate employees all form some portion of the interview and hiring process. We also believe in involving our peers and partners from outside of our organization in the process.

### **Cream of the crop.**

One of our biggest assets at the Harkin Institute is our student staff program. Our undergraduate employees are trusted with the same level of responsibility as fulltime staff members. At the same time, we provide an environment where they can learn and understand how a professional office functions. I sometimes refer to it as a "teaching hospital." Quite simply, they are the reason we have been able to put out as much quality product as we have in such a short time. I often describe the students working at the institute as co-workers who happen to go to school.

### **Chew the fat.**

Why? Well, it is not just because we are nerds and love "The West Wing." We try our best to practice what we preach, especially in the area of health and wellness. Groups of different sizes from our team take a few trips around campus or through the Drake neighborhood throughout the day. We use this time to catch up on projects or just on life. Most importantly, we remind each other to move each day. We have managed to convince others to do the same, and it is now not uncommon to schedule walk-and-talk meetings with other people on campus.

### **Lettuce think globally.**

We are approached on a weekly basis by people with policy and political issues they think we should delve into because there is undoubtedly an existential problem. Our work with the disability community in China constantly reminds me of what real problems can look like, yet I know that "problems" are relative. I can attest that there are days where everything seems like a fire to put out. It is important to take the time to assess whether a real forest fire exists or if someone is just trying to light an index card with a match.

### **The coffee break.**

Work hard and play hard. That is not unreasonable for most professionals. We also know that work-life balance is important in order for employees to thrive. We believe that one of the best ways to allow that to happen is to implement a "no-contact" rule from the outset. Constant connectivity to work and friends has skewed many people's expectations of communication. We do not contact each other about work after 5 p.m. and before 9 a.m. We each communicate differently, so it is allowable to send emails and texts, but it is understood that responses cannot be expected outside of work hours.

### **Grate minds think alike.**

In keeping with the tradition of our founder, Sen. Tom Harkin (retired), we believe in fairness and justice and that in the end, people will form coalitions of like-spirited individuals and organizations to make positive change. That is why we work diligently on building a network of corporations, microenterprises, government, academia, funders and NGOs to focus on the state of employment of people with disabilities around the globe. These coalitions are necessary to achieve our goal of doubling the rate of employment of people with disabilities by 2027. Look to build groups of likely and unlikely partners, and don't be afraid to change the narrative.

### **Spice of life.**

This is a place for patience and true investment of time. We cannot solve the diversity and inclusion equation instantaneously. But we can each do our part to positively affect our own space. For us, that space is public service in general and working in Congress specifically. The first step to joining a congressional staff is to intern on Capitol Hill — often for little or no pay. Many students cannot afford this rite of passage. We believe that congressional staff and Congress should reflect the country — including the wealthy to the less affluent. We provide

scholarships to help Drake undergraduates pursue internships on Capitol Hill they otherwise wouldn't be able to afford — internships that are often a key first step to becoming a congressional staffer.

### **Out of the frying pan and into the fire.**

In our world, there are few conversations that are offlimits. We encourage others to do the same. For example, we ask people to consider talking to others about the supposed taboo subjects of religion and politics. I think one of the best ways to understand someone's core values is to understand their faith tradition or nontradition and their thoughts on government's role in society. Beliefs help us to understand values, which inform our worldviews and our work product. We also recommend finding a "thinking partner" who will challenge your views or beliefs.

### **All in good thyme.**

*Winning and seeing results are important. Each has its place, but it is important to understand what a real "win" is. Sometimes wins are slow and take time. That means it requires patience and perseverance to accomplish the goal. You have to get comfortable with slow and steady, but also be ready to strike at the right opportunity.*

**Provide resources to support innovation.**

It is fine to talk about encouraging innovation, but innovation often takes resources — put your resources where your mouth is and set aside a pool of funds or other resources that can be used to help people at every level develop ideas. Time off or a release from other duties can be as important as money. If you care about it, provide meaningful support to foster innovation.

**Acknowledge a rebound from failure.**

Companies and institutions often talk about how important failure can be, but failure in and of itself is not necessarily helpful — learning from failure and rebounding from it are what matter most. We rarely directly recognize the individual effort involved in such cases, but something as simple as a note to acknowledge the rebound and to say “keep up the good work” can reinforce that upward trajectory.

**Provide tools for real change.**

Do not just criticize problem behaviors; give people tools to change. Most problems with management are in essence behavioral problems, and it is notoriously hard to change human behavior. But we do know some things about how to help someone change (e.g., cognitive behavioral therapy). Hire an outside consultant or a psychologist to work with employees who really want to change their behavior. Based on evidence, behavioral methods can help support actual change.

**Plan for the worst.**

Prepare for bad periods by setting aside sufficient reserves so that you do not have to make rash short-term decisions. It may seem pretty obvious, but you never know when a major problem might strike. Buy yourself time to think by having dedicated emergency reserve funds to get through a rough patch.

**Promote quality of life initiatives.**

Create a forum for ideas about how your organization can support quality of life (family, friends, personal interests) outside of work, and every year try a few. Sometimes low- or no-cost initiatives, such as a baby-sitting co-op among employees, can lead to significant work-life quality satisfaction improvement.

**Establish independent research and assessment processes.**

Have some entity or person whose primary responsibility is to understand (independent of the people who do the work) how well the organization is doing. Establish multiple methods of analytic appraisal constantly looking at how you are doing as an organization and how you can get better.

**Think big, big picture.**

Every year assign a task force to think in a deep way about one aspect of how the world is changing and the implications for the organization. Consider topics outside your immediate sector, and then encourage wide-ranging thought about future impact and intersections. Set aside funds for consultation with outside experts or online training to delve deep into an area that may bring future consequences — and opportunities — for your organization.

**Refresh your culture with fresh ideas.**

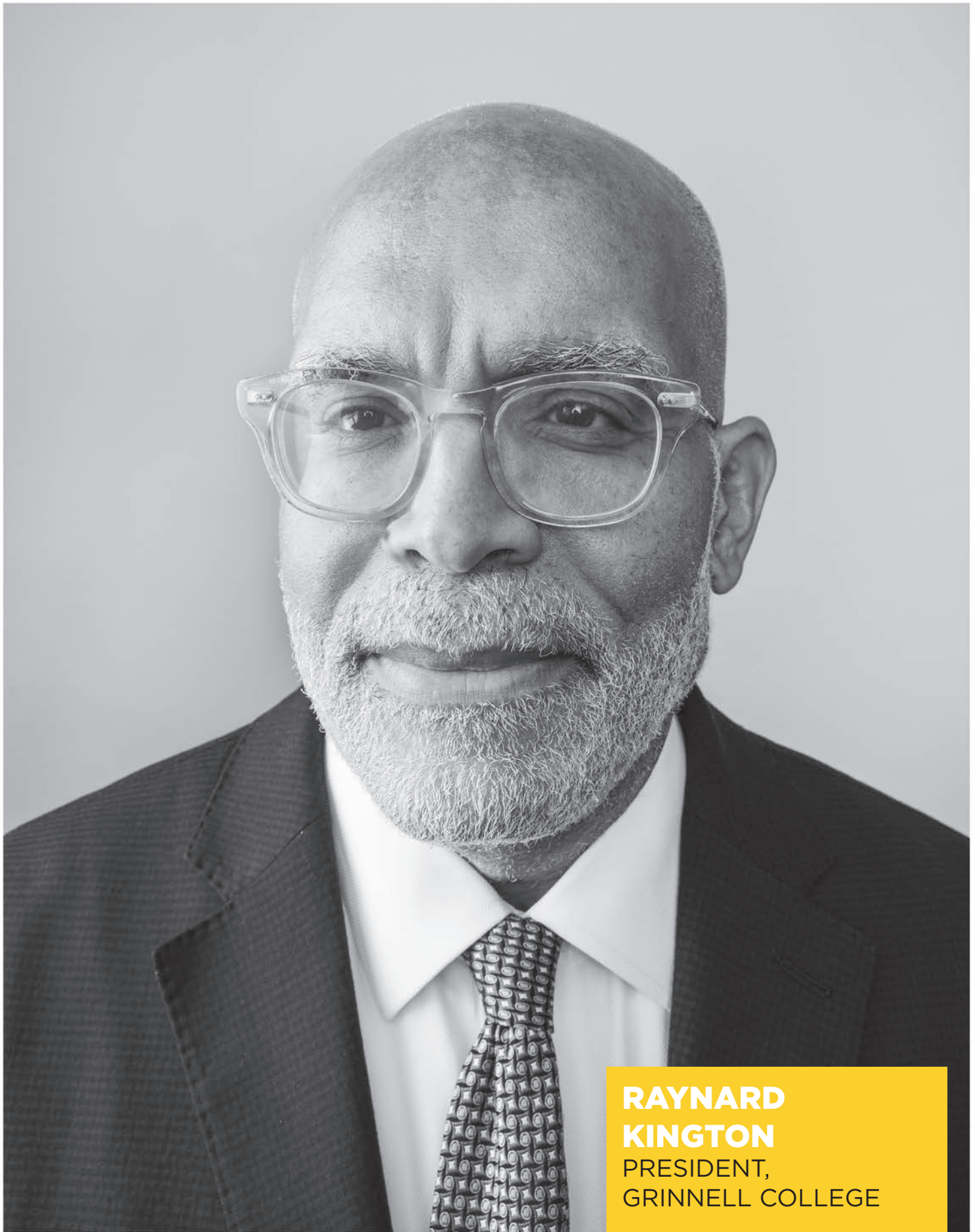
*It is always good to promote qualified candidates from within; even so, aim for regular outside recruits to maintain some flow of new ideas and energy from the outside. A healthy mix of employees with existing knowledge and experience alongside those with fresh perspectives will help promote a vibrant work culture.*

**Expand minds and productivity.**

Helping employees gain valuable perspective about dealing with new situations and ideas also can help them deal with problems and change at work. Develop a place, such as a curated website, where employees are encouraged to share “interesting” experiences and explain how they might be relevant to the organization’s mission (e.g., an art exhibit they saw even though the type of art made them uncomfortable and how that led them to think about how they might approach new areas at work).

**Open minds to grow creativity.**

Develop a pool of funds specifically to support employees who wish to engage in some activity that will spur their imagination — every breakthrough begins with the imagination. Create a competitive application process for monetary support of mind-expanding opportunities, such as a creative writing course or an immersive retreat experience, that go beyond traditional professional development. Employees with open minds and active imaginations are better prepared to help your organization adapt and advance.



**RAYNARD  
KINGTON**  
PRESIDENT,  
GRINNELL COLLEGE



**JACKIE  
NORRIS**

CEO & PRESIDENT,  
GOODWILL OF  
CENTRAL IOWA

**Report on financials quarterly.**

Share your financials with all staff quarterly — whether they are good or bad. Celebrate the wins, acknowledge the losses and state how you will improve in the next quarter. Do this regardless of whether you are a not-for-profit or for-profit organization. Transparency matters.

**Celebrate youth.**

There should be young people in your building all the time. Host internships, invite job shadows, host tours for high schoolers and welcome the family members of employees to run through the hallways occasionally. There is nothing that reduces stress more than youthful optimism and inquiry.

**Everything and everyone deserves a second chance.**

How many things have you thrown out at work that could have had a second life? Last year's calendar can make great gift tags. Did you reuse single-sided copies for scratch paper? How many people have you prejudged? How many people with a blemish on their resume have you overlooked? Think twice. Everything and everyone deserves a second chance.

**Invest in relationships: In-person matters.**

Slack is effective, FaceTime is great, email can be helpful, but sometimes there is nothing better than face-to-face. Breaking bread or having coffee or taking a walk with someone will build trust and pay dividends in the future.

**Listen to the grassroots.**

Your employees tell it like it is, especially when you work side by side with them. Some of the best ideas to make the customer experience and work environment better come from listening to frontline employees.

**Evaluate every program.**

Every program you run should be evaluated regularly. Always ask two questions. First, what is the return on investment? Second, what is the return on mission? Both of those things matter in making thoughtful decisions.

**Create a walking track.**

*Taking a walk can change your mindset. In the wintertime, it gets harder to get outside. Set up a walking track in your headquarters and put up mile markers. A brisk one-mile walk takes 15 minutes. You can go solo or host a walking meeting.*

**Ask questions.**

I ask many questions, and they are essential for me to gain insight into operations. However, sometimes it can feel like an inquisition. Be sure to explain why you are asking questions and that you are seeking to understand so you can be a better thought partner.

**Stay committed and connected to the why.**

The mission of your organization should stay front and center. Put it on employee T-shirts, share the mission in annual calendars, remind folks monthly at staff meetings and host spontaneous celebrations when a milestone is accomplished. Keep mission top of mind always.

**Walk in my shoes.**

From time to time, it is helpful for people to understand just how hard the leaders' job can be. By inviting an employee to attend a board meeting, talking through a big decision or attending a meeting with you, they get a better sense of what you do every day and how complex decision-making can be from time to time.

REITBACH KATHIE LYMAN JAMES S H RON GIDDINGS DEBBIE FISHERSHERY FAILOR MARY SIMON JOHN RUSSELL ROB REINARD TRAVIS ECHTCHACH  
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ELTJES GREG MEANS TRACY ABBAS DONALD COFFIN TIM GEHM TIM KINTNER GARY BUELT SAUNDRA MILLER BETTY RIDOUT SURASEE RODARI STACY VAN I  
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