



SMARTER, FASTER, BETTER

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Why the paradox of slowing down and asking questions makes for better leadership !

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In today's fast-paced and highly competitive business world, many company leaders are entrenched in a daily grind of constant multi-tasking, being the 'expert' who has all the answers, and racing the clock. They shun time off, live and die by the Blackberry and shudder at the thought of relaxing-- all in the quest to produce a healthy bottom line. While firing on all cylinders, an intimidating attitude and a frenzied pace are widely accepted benchmarks of leadership; the truth is, these traits can hurt the bottom line as well as alienate staff and clients. So how do business leaders shatter the mold and evolve from a domineering manager to an inspired leader?

The key is a groundbreaking approach that encourages leaders to slow down, ask questions and focus on how their decisions impact the big picture. Successful leaders aren't all cut from the same pattern according to acclaimed executive coach and author Karlin Sloan. "I don't believe there is a set of attributes that makes a great leader," says Sloan. "I believe all leaders are unique and different, and that true leadership development isn't about teaching a formula for success – it's about eliciting the unique strengths and skills resident in each of us as individuals."

Many leaders assume that hoarding information and having all the answers makes them appear smart in the eyes of their staff. In her one-on-one coaching and executive seminars and her book **SMARTER, FASTER, BETTER: Strategies for Effective, Enduring, and Fulfilled Leadership**, Sloan offers a new definition of smart. "Smart doesn't mean being the expert," says Sloan. "It means being the person who knows how to ask the right questions."

Sloan's mantra of **SMARTER, FASTER, BETTER** chips away at misconceptions many business leaders wrestle with on a daily basis. Sloan uses real-life business scenarios to demonstrate how the paradox of actually slowing down, taking time to reflect and focusing on the greater good can create a leader who is smarter, faster and better.

- To be **smarter**, leaders stop trying to be an expert and ask more questions. Smart leaders know how to ask the right questions, how to distribute and manage information and how to surround themselves with smart and talented people.
- To be **faster**, leaders take time to reflect and focus. Slowing down sounds contradictory to working faster, but innovation often happens when you relax and lose track of time; that's when your brain is in the "alpha" or "theta" states.
- To be **better**, leaders stop focusing solely on gaining a competitive edge. Instead, they direct their energy on improving themselves, their team members, their organization, their industry, their customers and their communities. Leadership is no longer about 'me,' it's about 'we.'

"Not all leaders are visionary and not all leaders change the world for the better," says Sloan. "My challenge to you is to be one of the leaders that *are* visionary and *do* change the world for the better." Sloan's challenge resonates loudly in an age when customers are demanding more accountability from companies. Leaders at some of the nation's most recognizable brands, including Leo Burnett, Allstate and Rodale Press are taking notice and implementing Sloan's principles in leadership development. By asking questions, slowing down and searching for better solutions for the workplace, customers and beyond, business leaders can develop more than just their careers; they can carve out an enduring legacy. ~