

New & Revised

LEADERSHIP

the inner side *of*
GREATNESS
a philosophy for leaders

Peter Koestenbaum

Contents

Second Edition

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Preface to the Second Edition | xi |
| Preface to the First Edition | xv |
| The Author | xix |

| | |
|---|---|
| Introduction—The Oath of Inner Greatness: Nine Keys to Business Wisdom | 1 |
|---|---|

Part One—The Model: What Is Inner Greatness?

| | | |
|---|--|-----|
| 1 | Foundations of Leadership | 17 |
| 2 | The Leadership Diamond: Four Strategies for Greatness | 41 |
| 3 | Vision: Thinking Big and New | 62 |
| 4 | Reality: Having No Illusions | 91 |
| 5 | Ethics: Providing Service | 112 |
| 6 | Courage: Acting with Sustained Initiative | 136 |

Part Two—The Context: The Search for Greatness

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----|
| 7 | Confronting the Challenges | 169 |
| 8 | Developing the Mind | 185 |
| 9 | Implementing the Leadership Diamond | 206 |

Part Three—The Real World: Leadership Strategies in Action

| | | |
|----|---------------------------------|-----|
| 10 | Building Individual Skills | 233 |
| 11 | Expanding Organizational Skills | 255 |

X CONTENTS

| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 12 | Diamond Relevance to Current Crises | 287 |
| | A Leadership Resource: Tips for Achieving and Sustaining Inner Greatness | 327 |
| | References | 357 |
| | Index | 361 |

INTRODUCTION

The Oath of Inner Greatness

Nine Keys to Business Wisdom

A week after the events of September 11, 2001, *Fast Company's* Polly LaBarre, a friend, called me with these powerful leadership questions:

- The big question on the table right now is, How do we behave as businesspeople? How do we reconnect with meaning as we go forward in our work?
- How do we get back to doing what we do—competing, strategizing, working effectively, making deals—without forgetting or trivializing this global tragedy? How do leaders most effectively deal with this tension between getting back to business and paying attention to the aftershocks of this event?
- What can we learn from this event? How must leaders lead and behave in order to keep that lesson alive long after the shock wears off and things go back to “normal”? Philosophers talk about courage, evil, death. Businesspeople don't. But now we have to face these big realities. What can you tell our readers about their responsibility to deal with these forces?

Great questions! They concern the line that separates authenticity from inauthenticity. After 9/11, some people responded below the line: they got sick, became dysfunctional, became dependent, fell apart, and could not go back to effective work. Others responded above the line, with depth and with truth, resolutely and with courage, determined to make themselves worthy of the

enormous sacrifice they had just witnessed. To respond above the line, as they did, is to take responsibility.

Understanding the Leadership Diamond®* model, which this book describes, helps us come to terms with these tough and eternal leadership questions, because the model is a summary of philosophical perspectives.

September 11 told us nothing new. That's the miracle. What we discovered because of it was always there. True, we did not have the good sense to be alert to these truths. Good times blind us. Bad times reveal the truth to us. Can we ever get past this proneness to illusion?

We think of business casually as being a life without greatness. But do we know what we are talking about? We think greatness is touched, evoked, aroused only *in extremis*. That's precisely where the problem lies. Extreme situations excite greatness because they remind us that we have neglected greatness and it is time we're reminded of it. Crises awaken us, but what we respond to is not the crisis but life itself. Can we understand that? The crisis is the wake-up call. What we then see is everyday life; it's been there all the time. We return to where we have been, but now our eyes are open.

William Blake saw this clearly. "If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite." A crisis cleans the doors of perception. It then reveals the truth. The crisis is the catalyst. What it reveals is life. That revelation is always there for the taking. We just would not take it.

Business carried out authentically is life with greatness. You can never allow life to be otherwise, to be anything less than great. It is a sin to ignore this principle. The Diamond approach does nothing more than to remind you that life without greatness is shabby and degrading, that it leads to existential guilt—guilt because we are responsible for our unfulfilled potential. It is this profound truth that we recapture when tragedy strikes. That is why tragedy in drama is a great art form. The greatest works of art are tragedies: *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Oedipus*, *Faust*, *Death of a Salesman*, *A Long Day's Journey into Night*, *The Seagull*. Why? Because they awaken us to the truths of life, not the truths of the play. *Hamlet* is a great tragedy because it deepens life. What's great is life, not *Hamlet*. *Hamlet* is a great wake-up call.

*The Leadership Diamond® is a trademark and a service mark belonging to Peter Koestenbaum.