

After ten years as president of the Center for Creative Leadership, I stepped down from the post as of June 1 to pursue some interests that I had not had time for. It was a hard decision because I have devoted nearly seventeen exciting years to working in a variety of capacities at this wonderful and unique institution. Yet I felt that a decade in the president's office was about right for me—long enough to help bring about change within the institution and, more important, to help it grow and deepen its impact on the understanding, practice, and development of leadership worldwide.

From the President



And what a tumultuous decade it has been. Just in terms of the calendar alone, it straddled the changeover from one century

to another, a period of instability scholars have come to call *fin de siècle*. At the turn of the nineteenth century, for example, the dominant Victorian age gave way to an era of modernism and a flourishing of scientific discovery (think Einstein and Freud, among others) that changed the world. But it was also a time of tumult and darkness. World War I was precipitated by the gun of a mad assassin, and Great Britain's foreign secretary at the time, Edward Grey, famously observed that "the lights are going out all over Europe."

So as we greet the dawn of a new century, we are similarly faced with exciting new opportunities as well as menacing threats, some of which we may barely understand and some of which we may not yet see. From the wonders of genetic coding and the Internet to the threat of global warming and fanatic terrorism, an emerging generation of scholars, scientists, and world leaders already has its hands full. Leaders of my generation will step aside and hand over an increasingly complex set of challenges to a younger generation of leaders who are just as eager as their predecessors to make a positive difference in the world.

Of course, when you work at an educational institution such as CCL you naturally find leadership everywhere you look. I readily confess to that old if-I-have-a-hammer-then-everything's-a-nail syndrome. But what a splendid hammer it is! Since CCL's founding nearly forty years ago, the relevance of leadership has finally found its rightful place in the great debates of our times. Leadership is only one variable, but it is increasingly and rightly seen as a vital one. We may be surrounded by technical and scientific brilliance and may even have the answers to complex issues staring us in the face, but if people in leadership positions will not or cannot interpret those issues, communicate effectively to others about them, and mobilize themselves and others to take committed action to address them, then promising opportunities will continue to go unrealized and vexing problems will remain unresolved—or worse.

So in my view, a major challenge for CCL and for others in the leadership field is to effect the rapid and massive development of both individual leaders and the broader organizational leadership capacity. Without this capacity, serious problems will still go unsolved. With it, we can better understand and address complex challenges through the mobilization of human resources, in the broadest and best sense of that term.

I don't mean this to sound easy or simplistic, because it isn't. Although research on leadership is never done—and CCL continues to invest heavily in research—the fundamentals of becoming an effective leader are well known and can be learned. Moreover, CCL is rapidly learning about the ways that effective leadership manifests itself in larger group, team, organization, and even community settings, ways less dependent on the capabilities of a single leader—as

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