



!nspire!

From the FOREWORD: *!nspire! What Great Leaders Do* is a very important book. Lance Secretan's ideas have changed our lives and our organizations and the lives of tens of thousands of our employees. These ideas have touched the lives of millions of people whom we serve every day. This book could change *your* life—and your organization, too.

We are the leaders of some of North America's largest and most successful healthcare systems. **Healthcare is the largest employer in Canada and America—employing one in eight people. Fifteen percent of U.S. gross national product is spent on healthcare.**

For years, we have looked to industrial and commercial organizations for our role models in leadership. The public and community sectors have not been appreciated in the same way. This is changing. **Healthcare is perhaps the most complex sector of the economy.** In healthcare, leaders guide, coach, and mentor tens of thousands of employees, negotiate with thousands of suppliers, regulators, independent contractors, police, security, and safety institutions. We oversee police, fire, ambulance, helicopter, and drug control services. We build enormously complex buildings and infrastructure. We operate degree-granting colleges, laboratories, and research centers, bring babies into this world, care for those leaving it, and heal those in between. We employ diagnostic equipment that is some of the most expensive and sophisticated in the world. We work closely with national security, military, law, and drug enforcement agencies; foreign governments, academic and research institutions, and foundations and charitable organizations. In effect, we are running a vast medical community—a sprawling and immense hotel, complete with complex, internally managed catering needs, power and energy systems, water, security, maintenance, insurance, and fire services—not to mention a wide array of life-and-death medical interventions and services. All this is done in collaboration with physicians, who are among the best educated and most intelligent people, and who are, for the most part, independent practitioners, not employees. Thus, old story tactics of intimidation and fear do not work—the leader must rely on influence and inspiration. The CEO of a healthcare system has, in effect, a more complex responsibility than a city mayor, in one of the most regulated, legally challenged, and critical industries in the world. It can be argued that if one can learn to lead and inspire in these contexts, one can lead and inspire anywhere.

This book is important because it describes a philosophy called **Higher Ground Leadership** that has been widely used in healthcare and, as a result, **has contributed to widespread personal transformation among healthcare workers and their leaders, service providers, and vendors, and has thus helped to inspire an industry that is not only reinventing itself, but is also setting the agenda for leadership and corporate governance in the decades ahead.**

The principles of Higher Ground Leadership have helped our organizations **reduce staff turnover by as much as 66 percent, double levels of employee morale and patient and customer satisfaction, increase the clinical outcomes of many procedures, implement Six Sigma programs successfully, thus contributing to dramatic cost savings and waste elimination, cut the time taken to prepare operating rooms by 50 percent and dramatically increase their throughput, increase profits by 1,000 percent, and eliminate lay-offs and the use of outsourced labor.** Higher Ground Leadership touches the whole human, not just the working human, so it has helped to heal marriages, improve relationships between parents and children, among others, contributed to addiction cessation, strengthened values and beliefs, and raised personal performance. Most importantly, it has contributed to personal fulfillment, meaning, and inspiration and, therefore, organizational performance and reputation. One person stated simply that, after the birth of her children, Higher Ground Leadership was the most important experience in her life.

This is a book for our times and our success. Our society has been so caught up in reacting to change, making a strong bottom line, reducing our workforce and running from one magic bullet to another that we have lost sight of the very essence of what makes great organizations—its people—and understanding what inspires (not motivates) the hearts and souls of people. People want to be led, and they will follow an inspired and committed leader. Inspiring through love, caring, compassion, and hope is what gets to the heart and soul of who we all are. However, this has too often been seen as the “touchy-feely stuff” that gets in the way of the hard-core, tough-action leaders we have been reading about for the past 10 to 15 years. What we have also been reading about is the lack of integrity, trust, commitment, and loyalty that our organizations now face. Why? It is because we have been ignoring the “soft stuff” that draws people in, gives them a purpose, inspires, and fulfills them. It is what helps them to make a difference and keeps them doing and being all they can be for their friends and loved ones and for the organizations in which they work. This book touches the core of what we believe and feel is the essence of success. It is reaffirming and gratifying to see a book that talks to the human side of business and how we as leaders need to spend the majority of our time doing the “soft stuff”—which is, actually, the “hard stuff.”

We urge you to consider the wisdom contained in this book. Read it with an open heart— to read it and reap. It contains the secrets of our success, and perhaps yours.

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