

AFFILIATE NEWS

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“Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others.” –Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric

Using an amazing mix of people skills, communication, and informality, Jack Welch led General Electric through one of the most amazing growth periods by a company in economic history. From the time Welch took over in 1981 until his retirement in 2004, GE's value grew from \$12 billion to \$410 billion. However, when asked what he considered his greatest achievement, Welch responded by saying “The biggest accomplishment I've had is to find great people.” Despite being responsible for the largest, most valuable company in the world Welch spent more than 50% of his time on “people issues” which he defined as the care and feeding of talent. To grow his people and develop future leaders, Welch typically held meetings to which several levels of employees would be invited. He believed that every person counted and would *expect* candor and open dialogue with *all levels* of employees. He was known by all employees simply as “Jack”. He took time to stop and speak to anyone who needed a minute and wrote personal, handwritten notes to encourage and motivate those around him. This informal management and communication style re-wrote the traditional management level mentality that typically prevented upper management from connecting with and relaying the corporate vision to employees at the grass roots level. When asked why he managed in this way Welch responded “The story about GE that hasn't been told is the value of an informal place. I think it's a big thought. I don't think people have ever figured out that being informal is a big deal.”

How often do we forget some of these simple concepts? Do we take the time to truly communicate, in at least some small way, with those around us? In this day and age, do we carve out the time to jot a note of thanks to someone or pencil a few words of encouragement? Despite the size of the Organization that we are dealing with or the value of assets under our control, do we remember that *everyone* is important and needs to feel connected? Few of us will ever be given the opportunity to lead and manage a company the size of General Electric; however, the principles employed by Jack Welch are just as important and effective at a company of 2 as they are at a company of 300,000. – *by Randy Brandt*

Information and quotes taken from 1998 Business Week article “How Jack Welch Runs GE”

Congratulations to Carolynn Holomon who was the first respondent to correctly identify the missing orator

Give yourself a mental change of pace, pick up a good book!

As tax season starts many of us think that if it doesn't have to do with taxes it can wait until after April 15. However, the world keeps spinning on and at some point we may even decide we need a break from taxes. When you need a break from the “tax world” why not join the NSA Leadership Development Program participants in reading a new book or two. Our current reading is [Our Iceberg is Melting](#) by John Kotter. This book is a quick, easy read and a great change of pace from taxes. A couple of other great options are [How Did That Happen](#), [Holding People Accountable for Results the Positive Principled Way](#) by Roger Connors, [Monday Morning Communication](#) by David Cottrell, or, for those struggling with keeping things in perspective this time of year, try the [Last Lecture](#) by Randy Pausch.

Reading a good book is a great way to take your mind off the busy season for just a few minutes and acquire some new knowledge or skills. We can all use new skills to assist us in dealing with clients and employees this time of year. With free time being so limited during this season, consider taking advantage of the ability to shop for these and many other great titles online. You can order at amazon.com, abebooks.com, borders.com, barnesnoble.com or any of your favorite online retailers without ever leaving your office. – *by Christine Freeland*

