

Introduction

By Price Pritchett,
Chairman & CEO of PRITCHETT, LP

For more than 25 years I've consulted to senior executives in some of the world's largest corporations, helping them tackle tough business issues around change, growth, and innovation. We've worked with our clients through gut-wrenching mergers, painful downsizings, and stressful growth spurts. Time and time again, those experiences have confirmed just how crucial strong leadership is during destabilized, challenging situations.

People, by nature, prefer to work with and for strong leaders. We particularly long for high-quality leadership during times of uncertainty, ambiguity, and change. Given today's relentless and ever-accelerating rate of change—and with a future that looks so vague and challenging—leadership ability is a more precious asset to the organization than ever before.

As the labor market has tightened significantly over the past few years, the demand for talent has reached new highs. Organizations are competing for leaders the same way sports teams or Hollywood studios compete for marquee talent. People who can lead carry a premium. Problem is, many companies can't ante up to compete in the open market for this talent. Even those who can afford to play this high-stakes game are asking themselves if “buying rather than building” is the best long-term solution. For all these reasons, leadership development ranks high on the agenda for most organizations.

In looking at our portfolio of offerings, we came to the conclusion that PRITCHETT should add leadership training to our list of core competencies. We conducted an exhaustive search for an alliance on this topic. We wanted to establish a long-term relationship with a partner whose messages and business philosophies complement ours. More importantly, we wanted to align ourselves with someone who could add significant value for our clients.

Of all the leadership experts we considered, we selected Noel Tichy, who recently authored an excellent book called *The Leadership Engine: How Winning Companies Build Leaders at Every Level* (HarperBusiness 1997), which was named one of *BusinessWeek* magazine's Ten Best Business Books of 1997. We chose to partner with Noel and his associates because of his outstanding reputation and our shared beliefs that—

- Leadership and change are inseparable
- Leaders have a personal responsibility to develop other leaders
- Success depends upon leaders at every level of the organization facing reality and doing what works

Knowing that time is your most precious resource, we've condensed Noel Tichy and Eli Cohen's best-selling book, *The Leadership Engine*, down to this rapid-read handbook in order to introduce the major concepts in less than an hour of reading time. This handbook isn't designed to replace *The Leadership Engine*. The rich stories and detailed accounts of leaders profiled in *The Leadership Engine* cannot, and should not, be condensed. However, we “faced reality” and acknowledged that many people might never be exposed to *The Leadership Engine* without a preview of its contents. We're convinced that reading this handbook will encourage those wanting to develop their leadership competency to read *The Leadership Engine* from cover to cover. There are no shortcuts to leadership, and this handbook won't be enough to see you through. However, it is a beginning point. And it's a good first step toward becoming the leader you potentially can be.

In addition, we've put together a dynamic one-day Coaches' Clinic called *The Leadership Engine: Building Leaders at Every Level*. Noel worked with us to design this eight-hour, information-rich experience that's packed with interactive exercises, powerful videos, and relevant business benchmarking. We see this clinic as an essential second step in your leadership development plan.

Our goal? To help you personally meet the growing leadership needs of your organization. As new technologies enable new organizational structures and different work approaches, power is being redistributed. This changes the way we conduct business. It means leadership must become more local. Larger numbers of people must become capable of leading, simply because they are operating with more power, more information, and more decision-making authority than before. *The Leadership Engine* can help you play a part in this migration of leadership ability across your organization.

