

INTERVIEW TOPICS

Lisa J. Marshall is a recognized authority in the field of leadership development, and founder of The Smart Work Company, which trains and coaches managers in the art and science of achieving their full potential as communicators, visionaries and organizational heads. She is a charismatic, media-savvy public speaker who has held seminars for hundreds of executives worldwide. Here are several possibilities for timely, issue-oriented features, articles, columns, shows, and segments on which the expert can work closely with business and human-potential media.

PETER PAN LEADERS: What happens when leaders don't want to grow up?

Since the 1960s and continuing through the dot-com era, we've been seduced by the image of the charismatic, youthful, successful entrepreneur/risk-taker who cares only for his "Lost Boys" and for playing and winning. Michael Milken of junk bonds fame, Steve Case of AOL, and Enron's Kenneth Lay all come to mind. Such Peter Pans, says Lisa Marshall, ultimately fail to mature into leaders, and hold neither the power nor the profound moral center needed to meet the challenges of today's world community.

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF STORY: Two compelling stories that inspired organizational change.

When told well and often, stories create meaning for people and make them want to be part of them. Lisa Marshall shows how masterful storytelling works in the business world by profiling two organizations that understood the power of story to motivate their people and accomplish remarkable success. Ford Motor Company of the 1970s and '80s resurrected its company with a story entitled "Quality Is Job One." In Pittsburgh, Bill Strickland showed how "Art Can Save People's Lives" through his Manchester Craftsman's Guild, which offers disadvantaged youth vocational training in the arts, providing them with jobs, hope, and futures.

WHAT BUSINESS SCHOOLS AREN'T TEACHING: Expert says young people are being taught how to manage, not how to lead.

In this controversial critique of today's business education, Lisa Marshall argues that the true qualities of visionary leadership—including accountability, self-examination, circumspection, ethics, and service—are not being taught in our best business schools, or written about in the latest business best-sellers touting quick-fix solutions.



MATURE LEADER ROLE MODELS: Eight people who have achieved mature leadership, and what we can learn from them.

From Thai pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, to Nelson Mandela, there are some shining examples of individuals in public life who embody the qualities of a mature leader. Lisa Marshall talks about what it means to lead, why we face a dearth of role models today, and what up-and-comers can learn from eight very different people who have all answered a call to action, faced adversity, and emerged on the other side bigger, wiser, stronger, more energized, and able to both serve and inspire others to do the same.

WHAT'S YOUR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY STORY?: How the classic hero's story can help you understand your true leadership potential.

The archetypal hero's journey provides an ingenious framework for understanding leadership problems, identifying your organization's potential, and developing moral authority over your future and organization. Based on her highly effective coaching methodology, Lisa Marshall offers people who are floundering with such issues as lack of employee commitment, poor teamwork, and loss of competitive edge, a creative way to navigate pitfalls, become leaders in their own story, and reach new levels of professional success.

THE CORPORATE CORRUPTION DRAGON: Lessons learned from CEOs who failed to slay their monsters.

We can learn a great deal about what it takes to complete the mature leader's journey by observing those who have stumbled along theirs. Lisa Marshall puts a refreshing new twist on a continuing hot-button story as she discusses current newsmakers, such as Kenneth Lay, Martha Stewart, and Worldcom's Bernie Ebbers—all textbook examples of people who lowered their sword in the face of “monsters,” such as greed, arrogance, and cynicism, and were burned by them as a result.

WHAT IS LEADERSHIP MATURITY?: The four domains of mature leadership and the challenges they hold.

Leaders have to do battle with internal saboteurs on four separate fronts—intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual. Lisa Marshall explains what it means to achieve mature leadership in each of these four realms, and illustrates the perils unique to each domain using real-life examples of current business, political, and social leaders who have both succeeded and failed along their leadership maturity journeys.



BABY BOOMERS: A FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP? As Baby Boomers leave the workforce en masse, have they stepped up to the challenge of training the next generation of leaders?

The current legacy of business leaders leaves a lot to be desired – Kenneth Lay and Jeffrey Skilling (Enron), Bernie Ebbers (WorldCom), Joe Albritton (Riggs Bank), and dozens of others have perpetuated the worst possible role models for Generation X and Generation Y leaders, leaving them often angry and confused. What should we be doing to help them develop the maturity that the Boomers failed to demonstrate?



SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is leadership maturity and why is it so critical, in your view?
2. How does mature leadership affect people in an organization?
3. How does the archetypal hero's journey, as described by Joseph Campbell and others, provide a model for the leader's journey to maturity?
4. What is a Peter Pan leader, and what's wrong with Peter Pan leadership?
5. Why are Peter Pan leaders so admired in our culture?
6. Why aren't business schools teaching the concepts of mature leadership? What can they do to change that?
7. What are some tangible steps leaders can take to begin their journey to maturity?
8. How do you see Peter Pan leadership playing out in politics today? What about in the business arena?
9. In your trainings and seminars, how do you use the idea of "story" to help leaders understand leadership maturity and the journey to it?
10. What is the difference between an effective manager and a mature leader?
11. Who are some shining examples of mature leaders in today's business, government, and community organizations?
12. How can a leader begin a leadership maturity dialogue within his or her organization?
13. Describe what would happen if such a conversation were alive and well in our organizations.
14. Peter Pan-type leaders emerged within the past two decades. What were leaders like before then, and why did they change? What has been the result—not just in terms of the leaders themselves—but with regard to, say, the global economy?

