



CLEARVISION
CONSULTING

Accelerating Organizational Effectiveness

CORPORATE CLARITY® INSIGHTS

December 2015

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Welcome to the December 2015 edition of **Corporate Clarity® Insights**. This newsletter is dedicated to the friends, colleagues and clients of **Katherine Hart** and **ClearVision Consulting**. Within you will find short, pithy and easy-to-apply insights for how to boost your business and personal effectiveness. As always, your feedback and ideas for improvement are appreciated.

Reflection

November was a tough month with the terrorist bombings in France taking center stage in the news, followed quickly by Obama granting amnesty to a turkey. In this day of instant technology and 24/7 media, we are bombarded with mixed messages, constantly trying to decipher the banal from the newsworthy. Piercing through the plethora demands focus and attention, which is in short supply against everything vying for attention. This same phenomenon happens within companies, escalating frustration levels as the layers of hierarchy and bureaucracy increase. This results in a key function for leaders: providing a clarion call to those they lead as to what is worthy of attention and focus, and what may be diverting, misleading or just not feasible given time limitations. In business vernacular this is translating the desired organizational goals and strategies into manageable expectations, priorities, and bite-sized messages that can quickly be absorbed and acted upon. How skillful and consistent leaders are at providing this laser focus directly affects their people's clarity in determining where to spend precious time and attention. How would you rate your effectiveness on this ability? How would your employees rate you? What one or two actions could you take to be even more effective?

Accelerating Organizational Effectiveness

Focusing on Priorities: The metaphor of the leader as translator is epitomized in the ability to cascade organizational

Where will Kathy be in December?

Attending the [NCHRA Holiday Party](#) for the East Bay on Thursday, Dec 10 at 5:30 pm

Performing at the **LOPC Christmas Concert** for three performances on Saturday, Dec 12 at 4:00 pm, and Sunday, Dec 13 at 2:00 pm and 5:00 pm. The concert is sold out.

An alternative outing is the **Oakland Easy Bay Symphony** production of [Let Us Break Bread Together - Sinatra Style](#) on Sunday, Dec 13 at 4:00 pm

Joining friends and celebrating at an invitation only holiday party with the [Center for Elders Independence](#) on Tuesday, Dec 15 at 6:00 pm

Joining the **Women of Impact** and attending an invitation only holiday gathering for the [Girls Inc of Alameda County](#) on Wednesday Dec 16 at 5:30 pm

Performing at the [LOPC Christmas services](#) on Thursday, Dec 24

New Opportunities to Connect with Kathy and Ideas to Accelerate Organizational Effectiveness

Starting January 2016 Kathy will begin providing a mid-month two to three

direction and strategy into clear and specific actions/projects that people can in turn execute. Once this is done, typically at the beginning of the year, there is still the followup and re-prioritizing that must take place consistently throughout the year. This is where I find many leaders stumbling. Overarching changes due to societal shifts, one-off requests from senior leaders or shareholders, and competing demands on their plate quickly distract them. Suddenly, it's the end of year and time to get ready for performance reviews. So what's the alternative? A few quick tips for action:

- Share during group and 1:1 meetings what your key priorities are. Highlight when there are shifts or changes to these priorities, and how they might affect your team and individuals.
- Have a quarterly agenda item. Ask each team member to share their key priorities for the coming quarter, along with what's being put off for future quarters in the year. Ensure group alignment.
- During 1:1 meetings ask how people are shifting priorities, increasing or decreasing importance, and provide feedback and insights if you have outside information.
- Praise people who excel at boundary-setting, prioritizing, and being able to say "No" in a client-oriented way.
- Identify and develop people who do not have these skills. Offer to brainstorm with them what projects may need to be shifted or may no longer be viable due to business circumstances.

Clearing the Fog - Personal Actions for Prioritizing

- **Clarify What's Important:** Whether it's business, personal or just planning for the holiday season, be clear about what's important to you, your family, your boss, etc. Spend some time to clearly ask others what's important, and be honest with yourself. This is not a checklist, but a handful (two to four items) of what's important to focus on. And when you need to prioritize, align with those 'whats' that are most important so you can stay focused.
- **Work on the Right Activities:** Use some type of framework to plot the work you are doing. I like **Stephen Covey's** 2x2 Time Management Matrix of Importance vs Urgent. (If you want a copy with directions send me a request at kathy@clearvisionconsult.com) Once you've figured out the quadrants your work falls into, ask yourself if you are really working on the right activities. You may find, as I often do, that you need to re-prioritize your efforts.
- **Ask for Assistance:** A huge part of prioritizing is recognizing what you actually need to do and what you

minute **video segment** on topics related to leadership effectiveness. If there are specific areas of interest to you, please feel free to share them with me at kathy@clearvisionconsult.com so I can incorporate them into the content

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can delegate, streamline, or get assistance with. If you are already quite adept at doing this, terrific. If not, I recommend using a friend, spouse, boss, team, etc to help you creatively think about what alternatives you have to just doing the work yourself.

**December Reading List:
From Values to Action: The Four Principles of Values-Based Leadership by Harry M. Jansen Kraemer, Jr**

I really enjoyed this book for a number of reasons, but two have particular resonance for me. First, it is a very easy read that gets right to the point, with lots of examples. Part of the succinctness could be because it's written by the former CEO of Baxter International Inc, who is now a professor at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management. Mr. Kraemer's four principles for values-based leadership include: self-reflection, balance and perspective, true (as opposed to bragging) self-confidence, and genuine humility. Secondly, there is an immediacy of application as the author aligns the leadership traits with the elements of a value-based organization. Along the way he points out what he believes are appropriate activities for senior leaders to focus on, as opposed to what they need to involve others in and/or delegate.

Our goal is to provide you with simple and clear actions to accelerate effectiveness in your life and organization. You now have a choice. If you don't want to receive future issues, follow the information below to unsubscribe. If you liked what you read, share the information with a friend or colleague.

Wishing you and your families a joy-filled holiday season and a Happy New Year.

Katherine Hart, Ed. D.
President of ClearVision Consulting

**Be sure to check out ClearVision's
[Free Resources](#) page on the
[website](#). Come back periodically as
we will continue to post articles and
topics of interest.**

ClearVision Consulting was founded in 2005 with the express purpose of promoting the potential of people within business environments. Key consulting services offered to accelerate organizational effectiveness and improve human performance include:

[Feedback and Facilitation](#) that jump-starts your business and breaks through human impasses
[Organizational Improvement](#) that aligns structure, business processes and needed change efforts
[Leadership Coaching and Team Development](#) that enforces strengths and refines challenges

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