

**EFFICIENCY
MAKEOVER**

Win expert advice and \$10,000 worth of what your business needs. If chosen, we'll provide an expert to evaluate your business. You take the advice and we'll foot the bill for their recommendations.

Apply now at BusinessBreakthrough.com

**business
BREAKTHROUGH**
PRESENTED BY **VISA**

**CLASSIFIEDS**

HOMES JOBS AUTOS ADS

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

suntimes.com

Member of the Sun-Times News Group



78°F
Mostly Sunny

Traffic • Weather: "MAYBE"

Search »

Site STNG
Make us your Home Page

- Subscribe
- Easy Pay
- Reader Rewards
- Customer Service
- Email newsletters

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Business](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Columnists](#) | [Lifestyles](#) | [Ebert](#) | [Search](#) | [Archives](#) | [Blogs](#) | [RSS](#) | [XML](#)

Business
Archive
Appointments
Technology
Currency
Futures
Personal finance
Conrad Black on Trial
Portfolio
Real Estate
Stock market
Auto News
Dan Jedlicka
Real Estate and
Homelife
Chicago Innovation
Awards
Made in Chicago
What's my line?
Columnists
Casual Friday
Sally Duros
Robert Feder
Francine Knowles
Lewis Lazare
Ted Pincus
David Roeder
Terry Savage
Brad Spirrison

[BOOKMARK](#) ...

BUSINESS :: PRINTER FRIENDLY » [EMAIL ARTICLE](#) » [BOOKMARK](#) ...

Polishing up on leadership qualities

BOOK REVIEW | Insightful read outlines values needed to succeed today

July 12, 2007

BY JOHN A. CHALLENGER

Everything was supposed to change after Enron. Leadership driven by arrogance, greed, aggression and secrecy was supposed to give way to a kinder, gentler era of leadership driven by humility, transparency and ethics.

While American business has come a long way toward that goal, the recent scandals involving options backdating as well as numerous chief executive officer departures related to unethical or illegal behavior serve as a reminder that we still have a long way to go.

To get us there faster, Chicago-based business consultants Susan and Thomas Kuczmarki have written *Apples Are Square: Thinking Differently About Leadership* (Kaplan, \$25, 235 pages).

In this quick but insightful read, the authors outline the six critical values needed to lead and succeed in today's workplace. Their roadmap is based on extensive interviews with 25 pioneering leaders who embody these values. Among the interview subjects are several fellow Chicagoans, including U.S. Rep. Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.); Carol Bernick, chairwoman of Alberto-Culver, and Chris Zorich, the popular Chicago Bear defensive tackle who left pro football in 1997 to pursue a law degree and devote more time to the Christopher Zorich Foundation.

It was Zorich who gave the book its unusual title. Zorich told the tale of growing up in Chicago's public housing where his single-mother family would often be forced to scavenge Dumpsters for their next meal. His mother would "take a knife and cut or square off the bad spots," leading the young Zorich to believe that apples were square.

In *Apples Are Square*, the Kuczmarksks point out, "squared apples symbolically stand for a new way to lead in the workplace and a new way to measure success – both personally and professionally. While Zorich's mother took rotten apples and literally reshaped them into something edible and appealing, we, as a society, need to take bruised work environments, and reshape them into dynamic, inclusive and collaborative organizations."

Each side of Zorich's squared apple (including top and bottom) represents one of the six critical values the authors say are necessary in today's workplace: humility, compassion, transparency, inclusiveness, collaboration and values-based decisiveness.

Continuing the apple theme, the authors contend that we need to re-examine the central core within our own personal life. Is the core selfish or selfless? Are we out for material gain and to control the people around us? The authors insist that serving others, helping others, and inspiring others to bring out their inner core of strengths and talents redefine what success is.

The second half of the book focuses on the steps that leaders and organizations must take to achieve the "culture-altering revolutionary change." The authors avoid the tendency toward preachiness that afflicts many authors of management books by relying on the real-life experiences of their interview subjects as examples of the six critical leadership values at work.

The book might be particularly interesting to local readers because many of the people featured work in the Chicago area. Carol Bernick speaks eloquently about collaboration, communication and the importance of emotional connections. Henry Givray, chairman and CEO of SmithBucklin, serves as an example of selflessness by giving back \$1 million, an action other leaders might examine.

The book also succeeds in terms of its relevancy to today's business environment. Leadership, or the lack thereof, is one of the most pressing issues facing organizations today.

ROLL OVER

TO SEE ALL THE FIRSTS BUILT IN.



toshibadirect.com/r500

TOSHIBA

Leading Innovation >>

[Jump 2web](#) | [What's This?](#)

What's in Oak Park?

Cool kids' clothes

Pack a picnic

The best beer lists

VIDEO :: MORE



Lady Bird Johnson
Dead at 94

[Play](#)



'Caged Kids' Case
Parents Want Children Back

[Play](#)



Report on Iraq Shows
Mixed Results

[Play](#)



**TO THE PEOPLE WHO
LIVE HERE, CHICAGO
IS WORTH MILLIONS.
NOW, IT JUST COSTS
A LOT LESS. WED -
SUN FOR JUST \$1.00.**

When you subscribe to
the Chicago Sun-Times.

**CHICAGO
SUN-TIMES**

Let's get into it™

suntimes.com: [Send feedback](#)
| Contact Us | About Us |
Advertise With Us | [Media Kit](#) |
[Make Us Your Home Page](#)
Chicago Sun-Times:
Subscribe | Customer Service
| Reader Rewards | [Easy Pay](#) |
e-paper | P.M. Edition | [Online Photo Store](#)

Affiliates: [jump2web](#) |
[RogerEbert.com](#) |
[SearchChicago - Autos](#) |
[SearchChicago - Jobs](#) |
[NeighborhoodCircle.com](#) |
Centerstage Partner:
[NBC5.com](#)

In a survey of human resource executives conducted by my firm last year, nearly three-quarters of respondents named poor leadership as the top cause for low employee morale, compared with just 11 percent who put the blame on issues over salary and benefits and 16 percent who cited heavy workloads as the primary cause of low morale.

At a time when too many corporate leaders are still reading Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, this book offers an important alternative approach to leadership. While it might not be the catalyst that finally sparks the revolution, it should at the very least prompt readers to think about the type of individual they are and the type they want to become.

John Challenger is chief executive of Chicago-based global outplacement and business coaching consultancy Challenger, Gray & Christmas.

Ads by Google

Leadership Consulting

Learn How Accenture Consulting Can Help Your Business Succeed.

[www.Accenture.com](#)

Disney® Leadership Skills

Learn effective leadership skills at the Disney Institute.

[www.DisneyInstitute.com](#)

Leadership Management

Business Leadership Skills for HR, Online Certificate from Cornell
[eCornell.com/StrategicManagement](#)

People Ready Business

Learn how your people, with the right tools, can grow your company

[microsoft.com/peopleready](#)

Business communication

Professional planning & training designed to fit your organization.

[www.theforteinstitute.com](#)



© Copyright 2007 Sun-Times News Group | [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

Member of the
Real Cities Network

