OVERVIEW AND EXCEPTS FROM:

REWRITING THE FUTURE:

LEADERSHIP THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

(WORKING TITLE)

STEVE ZAFFRON
Vanto Group
szaffron@vantogroup.com

DAVID C. LOGAN
Management & Organization, Marshall School of Business,
University of Southern California
dlogan@marshall.usc.edu

You may redistribute this document freely, but please do not post the electronic file on the web. We welcome web links to this document at:
http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=980304

We revise our papers regularly, and providing a link to the original ensures that readers will receive the most recent version. Thank you, Steve Zaffron and Dave Logan.
Abstract

In a book to be published in 2008, we propose three laws of performance, which we argue are at the source of the effectiveness of individuals, groups, and organizations. These laws are:

1. People’s actions correlate with the way the world “occurs” for them.
2. How the world occurs arises in language.
3. The generative use of language transforms how the world occurs.

Organizations’ success (or lack of success) is a function of what people do (or don’t do). People design and implement competitive strategies, create plans, operate systems, and manage teams. For example, no matter how intelligent or artful a new strategy may be, its impact is a function of human performance.

Ironically, executives spend their time and money adjusting the systems in which people operate rather than targeting people’s performance directly. The reason, we assert, is that there is no profound understanding of what is at the source of human performance and therefore, of how to elevate it.

The laws of performance presented in this book give access to designing and implementing new types of interventions that result in elevated performance—through individuals, groups and entire organizations, as evidenced by the results at Lonmin Plc (the case study of Chapter One).
Introduction

Not long ago, Steve and Dave were leading a discussion at the University of Southern California's Marshall of School of Business about LEBD’s work with BHP New Zealand Steel.\(^1\) We’d presented the results as a case study and everyone had been stunned by what they were seeing and hearing. The steel company had seen its productivity and profitability soar, and its culture and climate scores rise so much that experts who reviewed the case asked if we were certain our numbers were right. After the discussion had gone on for a few minutes, one student finally got up the nerve to shout out the question that was on everyone’s mind: “The results are beyond impressive, but exactly what did you do to have such an impact on your client?”

The answer to that question had its roots in decisions made by both Steve’s company and his client. LEBD and the New Zealand Steel corporate executives didn’t want a typical consulting engagement. They both knew that developing new strategies or implementing the trendiest new information technologies might get them a short term gain, but that this company and this situation required a comprehensive, totally innovative initiative. The company’s recent past was problematic and it faced seemingly insurmountable challenges in the near future. New Zealand Steel needed to rewrite its future.

LEBD came through, creating an initiative that focused on one thing: Elevating the performance of every person in the company by giving them a new vision that literally rewrote what they and the entire company experienced as the future. Odd as it may sound, most of what executives and consultants do is adjust the *systems* in which people operate. They do very little to directly target the performance of the individuals who have to make these systems work.

Surprisingly, if you boil down all these diverse offerings you'll find that there's

\(^1\) Much of the intellectual property we’re referring to is copy written by, and used with the permission of, Landmark Education Business Development.
just one theory behind them all—they all assume that people’s performance is a function of their “mental assets,” their skills, understanding, and emotions. Therefore, executives and consultants do their best to change people’s mental assets as a way of implementing new initiatives. For example: a new high-level strategy emerges from a senior executive retreat facilitated by consultants. The new plan is then communicated to the rest of the company through a series of speeches, memos and reports. Managers set budgets to fulfill the strategy and set out to gain compliance from employees by setting up systems to adjust people’s mental assets as follows:

• make sure people have the facts about the new business targets
• train everyone so they have the skills to do the job
• warn “problem people” by adding the fact that further lack of results will mean termination to those persons’ mental asset collection, i.e. If it becomes clear that someone’s mental assets can’t be “fixed” then that person is declared a “bad hire” and let go.

When we look in the “human performance toolbox” of most executives and consulting firms, we only see four items: train, reward, discipline, terminate. With such a simple view of performance, perhaps it’s not surprising that most companies spend very little time or money trying to elevate human performance. Companies, consultants, and executives focus on the tangible: strategy, cost reduction, outsourcing, information technology, supply-chain management, the organization of the business, debt, or acquisitions.

At the end of the day, though, these initiatives will succeed or fail based on what people actually do. And the record shows that even with this toolbox at their disposal, 70 percent of business strategies fail² and at least 80 percent of consulting interventions do not meet their targets.³ Worse yet, that’s not the limit of the damage: Not only do

---

initiatives fail far more often than they succeed, they leave people and companies on the verge of burnout. As Richard Pascale, consultant, author, and former Stanford business school professor observed: “Many are exhausted by the pace of change, and their harried attempts to execute new initiatives fall short of expectations.” Overall, he suggests, “a feeling that ‘something more’ is required.”

In early 2003, a group of about a dozen academics, corporate executives and consultants came together in Barbados to examine cases like the one we presented at Marshall, where results of enterprise-wide transformation efforts surpassed expectations, were repeatable, scalable, had sticking power, and left people—and companies—inspired and energized. The group formed into an ongoing think tank. What came out of it was a realization: Merely adding new tools to the current toolbox cannot solve the high failure rate of strategies and change programs. The problem is the toolbox itself—the paradigm that assumes people’s performance is a function of their mental assets (including the external rewards and punishments they internalize).

This paradigm—this toolbox—has been the reigning view in organizations since the field of management was founded nearly a century ago. Yes, this view has been responsible for major advances in organizational behavior—competency-based training, management and leadership, but we’ve hit the point of diminishing returns. It’s time for something new.

Rewriting the Future is new. It argues that human performance, and the opportunity to elevate it, is one of the most powerful and least understood factors in

---

5 The group includes (besides both authors) Sir Christopher Ball, Patron, Talent Foundation, former Oxford Professor, former Chancellor, University of Manchester; Peter Block, consultant/author; Allan Cohen, consultant; Joe DiMaggio, former oncologist, Memorial Sloan-Kettering, Landmark Forum Leader; Werner Erhard, designer of transformational programs; Bruce Gregory, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics Science Education; Michael Jensen, Harvard Business School Professor Emeritus, Senior Advisor, The Monitor Company; Olga Loffredi, Managing Director, LEBD Latin America; Brad Mills, CEO, Lonmin Plc.; Robert Rosen, Chairman/CEO, Healthy Companies Int’l; Harry Rosenberg, CEO, Landmark Education; Allan Scherr, consultant, former IBM Fellow; Mark Zupan, Dean, Simon School of Business, University of Rochester; and Michael Zimmerman, Professor and Director, Center for
determining an organization’s success. First, a warning: This isn’t easy. To put it in the bluntest terms, the subject of this book is rocket science and we're not going to dumb down the process into sound bites and simple steps, we’re offering the rigorous version. *Rewriting the Future* will challenge you and your view of what performance is possible. Adopt this toolbox and you’ll realize that *Rewriting the Future* may be the most important business book you’ve ever read.

**Rewriting the Future**

An organization’s success is mostly determined by human performance, which we define as the collective human actions of people in the system measured against some objective. The problem with the current toolbox is that no matter what top leaders do, no matter what efforts they make to “steer the ship,” the company’s future will be a lot like what happened before.

No matter how sound the new strategy may be, for example, its impact is a function of what people do. There are documented cases of CEOs “turning things around,” but these situations are the exception. Even these remarkable leaders often fail several years later, or they move to other companies and aren’t able to repeat the miracle. This book is about what is at the heart of corporate greatness and “miraculous” turnarounds, and what you'll learn here is how to make the processes these results scalable and repeatable.

The idea that performance is hard to change and that the future will be a lot like the past is old news to Wall Street. Most analysts pay little attention to “CEO spin” and instead look to historical growth rates, market economics, and key past-based financial ratios as their indicators of how companies will perform. They make their buy and sell decisions based not on the CEO’s rhetoric about the future, but on their analysis of what the actual future will be, what we call the company’s “default future.” At best, a “default
future” is a variant of the organization’s past that assumes nothing unexpected happens (such as another 9/11 or a sudden boom in the housing market). With the “current toolbox,” CEOs are unprepared to challenge the overwhelming force of a company’s “default future.”

We propose a new toolbox with a different kind of tools, the effect of which will dramatically elevate people’s performance. Taken together, this toolbox and its contents deliver the promise of the book’s title: It will give corporate leaders the leverage they need to “rewrite the future” of their firms and replace the “default future” with breakthroughs on the order of those at BHP New Zealand Steel.

'Rewriting the Future' is built on three laws. Usually conversations about strategies begin by talking about steps—about a progressive move from one level to the next. Rewriting a company’s future, generating breakthrough performance, is a more complex process than that. Physics has laws as well and they, it’s important to note, are not steps. From these principles, however, scientists have been able to send space probes to meet comets, to build computers that can beat chess masters and to map the world inside the atom.

It’s the same with 'Rewriting the Future'. Harvard Business Professor Emeritus Michael Jensen refers to these principles as "laws about being," rather than the laws of knowing. The laws are not steps, but armed with them, you will be able to produce results that were previously unimaginable.

**Law #1: People’s actions correlate with the way the world occurs for them.**

'Rewriting the Future' is not like other current business books. 'Rewriting the Future' is not about “confronting reality”. While “reality,” or “the objective world,” clearly exists, people’s performance has much more to do with how the world in which they are working “occurs” or “shows up,” for them. “Occurring” includes, but goes deeper than what one sees, hears or feels, the narrative or frame to which one subscribes, your point of view, mental and emotional states, memory, or any other experiential components. To
paraphrase the Zen Buddhists, water is to the fish as air is to the bird as “the occurring world” is to people. This first law points us to an almost universal human blind spot: people think that they see the world the way that it actually is. In fact, the first law says that what people see is not how the world actually is, but how it occurs to them.

*Rewriting the Future* asserts that how the world occurs to an individual, a group, or an organization, is the ultimate determinant of business results.

If you—management—don’t understand this law, if you try to operate without utilizing this law, how the world occurs is left up to chance, and programs that target performance often achieve minimal results.

New employee incentive plans are good examples. The current toolbox would suggest that the best way to get your people to perform the way you want to perform is to add two more mental assets: understanding the new incentive plan, and employee buy-in. To accomplish this, the company offers training programs in the new pay plan, with executives explaining how it’s good for everyone. Many companies have tried this approach, and often, the situation doesn’t improve. Experts in the current toolbox would conclude that it was a failure in training, since people either didn’t understand the plan, or haven’t bought in.

Ironically, this perception leads to more training, but the training itself often makes the employees see management as manipulative, heavy-handed, patronizing and offensive. “Where’s our choice?” they ask. The result often turns into a downward spiral in how the program and the company occur to people, and a corresponding decline in performance.

Most managers, armed with only the current toolbox, would look for a bigger carrot, or another way of explaining the benefit of the program. To them, employees aren’t getting it. And suddenly, the way the employees appear—are occurring—to the managers’ changes: *Are my employees so stupid that they can't see the benefit to them?*

People act in ways consistent with how the situation occurs to them, so that manager's employees become resistant, defensive, passively hostile, and they spend a lot
of time at work griping about how management is “clueless.” Managers micromanage and complain about the lack of intelligence in the workforce. Their actions reinforce how they show up to the other side. It’s a vicious circle, and none of the four tools from the current toolbox—training, rewarding, disciplining, terminating—can offer any real help. Each side is justified and clearly let down by the behavior of the other. And performance goes to hell.

The same cycle will repeat itself whether executives present a new strategy or IT announces a new technology platform. What determines how each of these is received is how it occurs to both management and workers. If these occur as being something not in people’s best interest, they will fight Six Sigma, undermine any merger, resist SAP.

*Rewriting the Future* would interrupt this cycle by asking a unique question: “How is this occurring to these people? Why aren’t these initiatives working?” The person asking this question can have an insight that most people in the system don’t have: That people can't describe what's going on objectively; they can only tell you how it occurs to them. Now that you've learned the necessary question, the second law can you a way to alter how the world occurs for people.

**Law #2: How the world occurs arises in language.**

If you want to know how the world occurs to someone, you only need listen to the language they use to describe it. There are two important pieces to this second law: how it works, and “so what?”

Here’s how it works. Words link together and form filters, or screens, that allow us to see in certain ways and blind us to the alternatives, just as a red filter allows us to see some colors and not others. Because these screens are composed of words, or terms, literary writer Kenneth Burke calls them “terministic screens.” Burke said: “Even if any given terministic screen is a reflection of reality, by its very nature…it must be a selection of reality; and to this extent, it must also function as a deflection of reality.”

---

6 Burke, Kenneth, *Language As Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method*. Berkeley:
When employees at New Zealand Steel looked at management, they thought they were seeing the situation as it really is. The truth was more subtle: They were seeing management’s action and their own language-based screen together, and like all of us, couldn’t tell them apart. What appeared obvious and undeniable to them—that management was acting in bad faith—was a natural consequence of their language screen. This process shapes our every action and reaction and yet it happens below our awareness.

To be clear, there is an objective reality, but most of what people deal with is the reality created through language. “Objectives,” “strategy,” “friendship,” and “success” are all aspects of reality impossible without language. When one adopts a language screen, the world occurs in a predictable way. When people adopt the screen of medicine, they have taken the first step in becoming a doctor. When people see the world through the screen of business, they are close to getting their MBAs. The process of education is, fundamentally, teaching people the terms and connections between terms until the world occurs for people as it occurs to their teachers. People learn screens through lectures, discussions, readings, test questions—in short, through language. How the world occurs to you—how this book occurs to you and the people in your life—is a consequence of your language screen. Just like the rest of us, you can’t see reality; all you can see is reality through your language screen.

Now we get to the important question: “so what?”

This law has two implications. First, it begins to loosen the grip of absolute certainty that makes workplace conflict so entrenched. Once people in the mining company “got” that their conclusions of the other group were functions of language, they were more able to listen. They let go of some of their righteousness and took a big step toward collaboration. When managers spoke about their situation, the word “union” got the response “they don’t give a damn.” Once they, management, could hear this connection, they were less bound by it.
Second, it’s much easier to change our language screen than to change “the real world.” The next law offers the piece that makes such change possible.

Law #3: The generative use of language transforms how the world occurs.

“Generative language” is language that rewrites the future. When fifty-two men wrote and signed the Declaration of Independence, the future of a nation was created. The writers of that document didn’t describe that moment in 1776, they declared what would be—they created the possibility of a new future, a break with the past, and the beginning of what has turned out to be a unique social experiment.

The current toolbox says that language should be passive and value-neutral, so that it doesn’t get in the way of representing reality. We refer to this use of language as “descriptive.” Descriptive language is past-based; it argues for what has happened up this point and what its likely consequences will be. Descriptive language has utility, but it has no capacity to rewrite the future. (Imagine what a different document the Founding Fathers would have produced if they had titled it, “The Description of Independence.”)

Until you are using language to create possibility, to craft a vision, to eliminate the blinders that are holding you back, you are trapped in the default future. In short, until you master generative language, you are stuck.

Consider the power of language that rewrites the future. When Martin Luther King said, “I have a dream,” he created that dream in others—and destroyed the default future of racial segregation. Benjamin Franklin is credited with having invented the word “American,” and in so doing, transformed thirteen warring colonies into a nation. His words rewrote the future that most political analysts of the day predicted was inevitable—that the colonies would never speak with one voice.

Declarations—like the famous document from 1776—are one form of generative language. Others are commitments, requests, and promises. All have the power to create future states in the moment of speaking. For example, when a person makes a promise, he is saying that an outcome will be produced in a future time. A promise doesn’t
describe anything in the current reality. Rather, it creates a possible future to which he is giving his word.

In one company the Barbados Group examined, Magma Copper, executives, managers, and union officials were engaged in rewriting their future, and debate broke out about whether their declaration of how they would relate in the future should include the word “family.” One executive held out, saying that family has nothing to do with business. After hours of discussion, much of it heated, he realized that the power of this group calling themselves a family in the future was more important than his reservations. He announced his support of “family” and everyone stood up cheering. It was as though 100 people were suddenly speaking with one voice. By declaring themselves family, the experience of family appeared in the room, and that experience became an important element of the company’s future.

The power of “generative language” gave birth to the United States but its power is rarely brought into companies—something we hope to change with this book. Generative language has the power to rewrite the future by altering how the world occurs for thousands of people.

**The Laws at Work**

If we expect a hurricane to hit us in the next few hours, all our concerns and actions will be in response to that expectation. We seek shelter, we board up our windows, we stock up on food. The hurricane becomes the “future we are living into,” and it drives how the world is occurring for us in the present. Further, it becomes the umbrella for the conversations we have. All this can happen even when the sky is still blue.

It’s the same in the corporate world. Without *Rewriting the Future*, the default future is the umbrella for all the conversations people have. They attempt to force change without first addressing the “the future people are living into.” The New Zealand Steel story starts with the company's leaders—both union and management—exploring the
default future of their company, their relationships, and the small community where they all lived. People found that vision distasteful, and so committed—using the generative language to which Law #3 refers—to creating an inspiring new future in which the concerns of all parties would be fulfilled. And the result was the inspiring changes that so impressed our class.

The payoff of *Rewriting the Future* is what it suggests executives can do differently. Using applications from the three laws, people will see ways to really listen to how the world occurs to other people. They’ll also notice leverage points where they can shift how the world occurs for people in ways that naturally elevate performance.

The major leverage point is language. Changing another’s behavior is hard, as any manager, friend, parent or married person knows. Most people say they will change if the other changes first, and so they are all caught in a stalemate. The laws of *Rewriting the Future* move past this impasse by shifting how the world occurs for people—just as knowledge of a coming hurricane changes how a beautiful day occurs. As we’ve seen, people’s actions always correlate to how the world occurs.

In addition, laws #2 and #3 say there is a potent relationship between the way the world occurs for someone and the future they have in front of them. The real future is uncertain. As a result, people fill in the uncertainty with their expectations, fears, wants, hopes, and predictions from the past.

The process New Zealand Steel used is far different from classic visioning exercises. The engagement fully explored the default future and came up with the leadership’s view of what would happen unless something shifted. They imagined their lives in this future, the state of the mine. Once both groups—labor and management—saw that the default future coming at them like the hurricane was driving how the world occurred to people in the present, they realized the possible results: an unprofitable operation, a probable closing of the plant, unemployment, a loss of community.

Once they were willing rewrite the future, and used the power of generative language to craft a new vision that would impact how the company occurred for people,
the new future became the umbrella for a new set of conversations.

This point about conversations is critical in *Rewriting the Future*. There are many ways of looking at an organization: its assets, strategies, talent, market capitalization, and so on. From the three laws, the most useful perspective is to see an organization as a network of conversations. (“Conversations” here is used in the broadest sense and includes reports, e-mail, meetings, voice mail, hallway chatter, and so on.) As law #2 says, the way the world occurs is constituted in language—in the network of conversations that get us all through the day. Thus, with a new future, the network of conversations shifts, and the way the world occurs for people is altered. As law #1 says, people’s actions then naturally shift, as well.

Apply the three laws to management and it becomes clear that a manager’s primary job is to lead conversations that create new futures and thus shift how the world occurs for people.

This process is a radical departure from how consultants and executives equipped with the current toolbox usually lead change. Normally, top executives decide on a new strategy in concert with the consultants, and all this often happens at an offsite retreat. The executives then travel around and attempt to achieve understanding and employee buy-in with a flashy PowerPoint presentation. This is the usual approach and it does *nothing* to shift the network of conversations. Therefore, it cannot lead to any real change. What happens instead is that people talk about the strategy. Nothing fundamental has shifted, because the network of conversations is the same as before. Further, the default future is the same, and it overwhelms the executives’ best intentions and efforts.

All the applications in *Rewriting the Future* stem from a single question: “What conversations need to be created, or ended, such that the way the world occurs for people leaves them inspired, with a correlative elevation in performance?”

The next question becomes, “What are people committed to?” We have never seen a company where managers and employees, deep down, aren’t really committed to
the same thing: No matter how skeptical we are, we all really want to work as part of a
great, engaged team for a prosperous company. Now, what are projects that would bring
that future about? One would be a project to impact productivity. Another would go
after better pay and benefits. Ask the right questions, spark the right conversations and,
working together, employees and executives could craft an approach that would design
initiatives to bring their new future to life. This is the secret, the potential of Rewriting
the Future.

With new projects in place, how work occurs to people will shift to cooperative
and empowering. As a union representative in the New Zealand Steel case said, “My job
is the same—same people, same tools—but everything is different.” Specifically, how
work occurs is different, even though it is the same group of people, working in the same
place and producing the same product. Despite all that, New Zealand Steel is by any
objective standards, a completely different company.

Before LEBD started its work at New Zealand Steel, the network of conversations
at every level within the company was dominated by pessimism, resentment, and
cynicism. LEBD’s work with the company enabled both management and labor to
replace this set of conversations with another—a conversation based upon trust, which
opened up a future full of promise, and which drove a commitment to one another’s
success. As this happened, people’s knee jerk behavior toward both the work and one
another changed to action in service of a prosperous company with great, engaged
people—leading to remarkable business results. Management hit their targets, and in
several cases, wildly exceeds them. Union leaders became full partners in the process.
Injury rates fell. Job satisfaction rose. Absenteeism declined. Investors made a lot of
money.

That result demonstrates that everyone, every company is capable of Rewriting
the Future.
Chapter 1: An Impossible Situation

Two hours northwest of Johannesburg, just off the Platinum Highway, is an abandoned archeological dig with a sign carrying the words, “Birthplace of Humanity.” Nearby are the communities that are home to the platinum mining operations of UK-owned Lonmin Plc., the world’s third largest producer of the precious metal. These nine communities and five squatter camps are also where we find many people fighting for Nelson Mandela’s vision of a new South Africa. One such person is Laolang Phiri, an employee of Lonmin in the community called Marikana.

Laolang looks like a first-string running back for a college football team. He has bright eyes and a proud bearing. His open spirit stands in sharp contrast to his origins, a shantytown where, even today, 40 percent of the population in his community is unemployed and 80 percent live in shacks.

When the company opened these mines decades ago, it needed more workers than the local population could supply, so it recruited from other countries—Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Zambia. Even today, these foreign workers leave their families for months at a time and 30 percent of the mine's laborers live in single-sex hostels—often spending the daylight hours 3500 feet underground in the dark, returning to the surface at dusk.

Many men are away from their families for long periods of time with little to do, and resort to drugs and alcohol, and visits to the local prostitutes. Some men have multiple wives, a common practice in some tribes. Until recently, the government took no effective action against AIDS, and the disease is now rampant, with 25 percent of Lonmin employees testing positive for HIV and sixty-seven people from its workforce dying of AIDS-related diseases in 2005.

As Westerners, descending underground into Laolang’s world creates a mixture of claustrophobia and humility. We hop on what look like bicycle chairs on a ski lift.
Instead of carting us up ski runs, these move down at a 30 degree angle into the earth. As we go deeper, the darkness takes over. Behind us is a string of workers, one per chair, visible only by the lights on their miners’ hardhats. The air is hot from blasting and wet from the water that cools the drills, with a sticky residue of explosives. The area is lit by strings of bare bulbs, casting just enough light so workers don’t trip on the machinery that lines the passageways. This is Laolang’s world.

Some workers suffer from exposure to chemicals, and noise-induced hearing loss from the three-foot drills that bore slots into the rock faces to hold explosive charges. Several times a day, the workers are moved to safe areas and explosive experts set off the blasts. Then the miners swarm back in and bulldoze the platinum-rich ore to conveyor belts that grind their way to the surface. “Platinum rich” is three grams of precious metal per ton of rock, meaning the average man’s wedding ring requires blasting, lifting, and processing 10 tons of ore.

Think of doing this day-in/day-out with your family far away for years at a time and it’s not surprising that Laolang, like many of his fellow workers, was frustrated and angry about the quality of his life, and blamed the mine management.

“The union thought that management sees them only as tools,” he told us in his accent that is a blend of British, Dutch, and German, with grammar showing that English is not his native tongue. “We didn’t feel like people, but something that they brought in to do the work, that’s replaceable. The managers were like, ‘We own this mine, and we’re not going to be pushed around by the tools.’”

“It was blacks versus whites, all the time,” he continued. “If you’re black, you must be a worker. If you’re in a senior position, you’re white. And if somehow a black person ends up as a manager, they sell out and turn white,” he laughed. Lonmin has three active unions, the largest being the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), which represents mostly black employees, including Laolang. The two others are UASA (United Association of South Africa), which represents mostly senior-level whites, and Solidarity, which represents managers and line supervisors.
“We felt UASA and Solidarity got whatever they demanded, and we really had a problem with that,” he said, with his signature smile fading a bit. Laolang paused, clenched his teeth and then summarized: “I was angry all the time. I knew the future would be a constant fight.” Laolang channeled his feelings into action by becoming a NUM representative.

Laolang wasn’t alone in his anger. In 2004, a local university team of researchers studied perceptions about Lonmin throughout the communities that surround it and concluded the mine was a ticking time bomb of public rage.

When we met Laolang, he was gearing up for the next round of union-management negotiations that were six months away, which he and many people knew would be nasty, costly, and maybe even violent.

A Surprising Turn of Events
In 2004, Laolang’s life intersected with someone from a different world: the CEO of Lonmin, Brad Mills. A direct descendant of the Vanderbilt family, he was determined to make his own mark in the world. After studying geology and economics at Stanford, he became an exploration geologist in search of ores in remote parts of the world, and some compared him to Indiana Jones. Now fifty-one, 6’2”, dark hair streaked with gray, his eyes gleam when he talks about Lonmin becoming a model for the transformation of South Africa.

Brad was concerned about the Laolangs in the community, about how local residents and tribal officials perceived the mine. He was troubled that the executive team had as many opinions about what should change as it had members. He feared that some of the unions, including Laolang’s, were going to take hard-line positions in upcoming negotiations. He was concerned about the company’s profitability in light of rising costs measured in an appreciating rand, and the fact the company sells platinum in dollars.

Brad’s strategy was to pull together all the diverse mining operations into a new identity and single brand—Lonmin—which would be compelling to people inside the
company and to outside investors. He brought in Six Sigma, restructured, implemented Du Pont’s safety technology, put in ERP. He also brought in LEBD to assess what could be done to transform a big group of issues. Brad had worked with Steve and LEBD in prior jobs with much success.

To assess the situation, LEBD personnel met with senior executives and managers, and many union representatives including Laolong, community leaders, tribal authorities, employees, and investors, to discuss the problems and opportunities. In general, people wanted the situation to change, but were understandably skeptical that it would, or even could.

There were so many problems that other CEOs might have quit on the spot. There were lots of silos and sub-silos, the 2004 LEBD report said, and almost no one thought in terms of the Lonmin brand. Overall business outcomes were in trouble. Leadership processes were missing. Teams and communication structures lacked rigor and consistency, made worse by the fact workers spoke six different languages. Community issues were, as the university study indicated, a ticking time bomb. The year before, sixteen people died in the mines. Absenteeism was on an upward trend. At many levels, the workers were filling in for each other without proper cross training because the union would have wanted more money if people learned multiple jobs. As a result, there were safety and cost issues, and morale was suffering everywhere.

Although they had never met, Brad and Laolong would solve each other’s problems.

**The Lonmin Stakeholder Meeting**

Brad and LEBD decided to take a risk—invite up to 100 critical stakeholders, regardless of their animosity or adversarial nature, to see if a dialogue could be established. Brad and his team invited leaders from the company, tribes, local and provincial government, unions, and the community to a two-day meeting.

Brad chose to hold the meeting where most of the stakeholders lived, in the
community of Wonderkop. His advisors strongly disagreed—fearing for their personal safety and his. As many residents of the community told us later, “The white executives have never come here.” Wonderkop houses 7,000 miners even though it was originally built to house only 1,100 inhabitants.

As the start time of the meeting neared, people from every segment of the company and community showed up. Some representatives from the unions came in miner’s clothes, others traditional African dress. Some locals were in blue jeans, others adorned in their best but well-worn finery. Executives in casual business clothes arrived in a bus, afraid to drive their cars into the community. A few politicians and some recently wealthy influential people drove up in expensive cars and walked the few steps of gravel driveway in spotless suits. Others arrived sweaty after walking miles to make this meeting. “There were times when we didn't know what was happening,” Brad said later. “I’d never seen anything like it.”

The only facility in the town large enough for the meeting was the town’s nightclub. Lonmin employees had papered over the disco lights, hung curtains over the bar, and set up a screen for a computer display. Power cords snaked across the ground to power the laptops and projectors. They cleaned up the bathrooms and brought in an air conditioner that failed within the first hour. In the summer African sun, the room was quickly over 100 degrees.

Brad introduced himself as the new CEO of Lonmin. “I know there’s a lot that’s broken,” he said, “and I want to listen to that, so we can fix it together,” he said his voice declarative but also stuttering with excitement. “But I’m really here as someone committed to your and your families’ success, alongside the success of our mining operation. A long time ago, I realized that I wanted to play in a game so big that would involve making a contribution that would go beyond my lifetime.”

He continued: “I invited you to these two days to explore together what we could create if we all worked together in a new way. Obviously I’m American, working for a London company, and I’m not aware of all the difficulties you’ve had to deal with, but I
have read extensively about it. But I do know that we share one thing in common: our humanity. If we work together as human beings, we can work together to create something very exciting.”

He said that the companies he worked for before Lonmin had a made a difference for the people in and around the operations. He then said that, based on his prior experience, the first task was for people to listen and to learn about each other’s worlds. Once that was done, he said, people could see if they were committed to create something new, and if so, what it would take.

He then asked, “What is it you want me to know that’s not working?”

People brought up overcrowding, AIDS, violence, lack of lighting at night that made the streets unsafe, union anger at other unions, and how management doesn’t care about the workers.

One man walked forward to the microphone and said, “Brad, you know what would show us that you’re serious? Sleep in a hostel with twelve mine workers, so you know what it’s like for us.” Brad said, without a second of delay, “I promise you I’ll do that,” and wrote his promise on the chalkboard, the sound of his writing echoing. The walls of the nightclub shook with the applause from the crowd, although many in the room told us later they were certain he wouldn’t really do it. “No CEO had ever been here before, and no one would sleep here.”

That night, Lonmin hosted a dinner and party. As the participants danced and drank, several white executives said, “I never knew how bad it is here,” their eyes darting to run-down buildings with little light in the streets.

The second day began with people acknowledging Brad and Lonmin for demonstrating a new level of willingness to deal with what wasn’t working (including the same broken air conditioner). A gray-haired African woman, a resident of the community, said, “I really can’t believe that you’re here, and that you’re actually listening to us.” One of the white union representatives said, “I’m starting to realize that there may be some way we can work together.” One tall Londoner, a corporate
executive, shaking with emotion, said, “I realize I was living in a cocoon, unaware of what was going on here…and I’m committing to making this different in the future.”

"Let's move,” Brad said, “to what will happen if we don’t find a new way to work together.”

“How could we know what that future might hold?” Brad asked. “Just look to what happened in the past. Sixteen people died last year, so maybe we’ll get a little better and only fourteen will die,” he said and then added, “Seventy people will die of AIDS.” Others jumped in: “There will be a strike,” “There will be robbings and murders in the street,” and “The smelter will blow up again,” referring to the explosion shortly before the meeting that drove the stock price down. One of the executives said, based on the increasing expenses, the company would go out of business in five to seven years. One woman said: “my son will finish school and have no job.”

People nodded their agreement that the description accurately captured what would happen if nothing changed. Because the process involved people having to work together to create common ground, it started slowly, even laboriously. One man started to complain about what was happening, but another man shot back, “You have to get off it. Don't sabotage this!”

LEBD consultants then brought up, as the words filled the screen projected from a laptop, “the opportunities that can be seized if Lonmin, the surrounding communities, and the unions, commit to new powerful ways of working together.” People walked to the microphones and said, in turn: “100 percent literacy,” “Full employment,” “AIDS free community,” “Lonmin is recognized and is successful in the world stage.” The mood shift in the room was palpable, going from sober to excited, from imprisoned to free.

Part way through the process, one of the participants asked, “This future is worth creating—how do we do it?” Brad, with LEBD leaders, took the microphone. “First, this process is going to take many years, and will require long-term commitment from each and everyone in the room—and others not involved yet. Second, a series of initiatives could start in about two months, including a leadership program for all key stakeholders.”
Third, a process this complex—to transform a company of 25,000 employees and communities of 200,000 people—would require solving problems no one has even identified yet, and the only element that could take the group through those obstacles would be your on-going commitment.”

Brad ended the meeting by saying: “I’m committing myself and my organization to fulfilling this future that we’ve begun to articulate. I can’t do it by myself, and my organization can’t do it by itself, so we need you to match our commitment. If you are committed to creating this future together, we’re going to have large sheets of paper on the wall that have, at the top of them, ‘I’m committing myself to creating a new future for Lonmin and our communities.’ Sign your name on that sheet.” After thanking them for attending and participating, the meeting ended. All but two signed.

Brad told us later: “We were blown away by the response. I thought we would see some willingness for the process, but they were seriously on board!”

The CEO of the Desmond Tutu Peace Centre, an Anglican priest named Chris Ahrends, attended. Chris is a gentle intellectual who for years ran the “Truth and Reconciliation Process.” After the meeting, he said to Brad and the LEBD team, “If you can do 10 percent of what you're talking about, it will be revolutionary.” Most of the participants, including Laolang, were enthusiastic to go to the next step in two months—a leadership program for the entire stakeholder group including members of management, union and village leaders, local politicians, medical and social service personnel (many of whom weren't even Lonmin employees).

**The Night in the Hostel**

Several weeks later, Brad and another executive overrode his advisors’ objections again and slept in the hostel, alongside the workers. When he woke up the next morning, it was to the sight of Zulu warriors guarding him. “I wasn’t just safe, I was the safest man in South Africa,” he remarked to us. At 4 a.m., he and the regional coordinator for the NUM unions, Victor Tseka, went to greet the workers arriving for their shift to
demonstrate his resolve. “People couldn’t believe I was the CEO,” Brad said later. “One of the workers went to the office and pulled out a copy of a company brochure with my picture before some of the men would believe us.”

For Brad, sleeping in this hostel was, in his words, “No big deal—it reminded me of college.” For the workers, however, his actions sent a message so strong it’s hard to capture in the pages of a book. “We couldn’t believe it,” one union representative said, “and we began to think we could actually trust this man.” Laolang said, “Brad gained so much trust that people were willing to try it his way and see if it could work.”

Getting the Word Out

After the stakeholder meeting, one of Laolang’s fellow union leaders asked Brad to talk to his people, who agreed to hold a general session for anyone interested in learning more about the process of transforming the mine. Brad thought a few hundred might show up. Eight thousand workers attended—so many that the venue was moved to a football stadium.

As in the stakeholder meeting, Brad mostly listened. One of the concerns that people raised was that being fired was a death sentence for those with AIDS, since they would lose health insurance and could no longer afford drugs, and the unemployment rate made it unlikely they would work again. On the spot, Brad announced a change that he had not considered until that moment: He declared that Lonmin would provide lifetime support for AIDS sufferers regardless of their employment with the company.

The applause in the stadium went on for minutes, with many wiping away tears—including Brad.

Brad said later in an e-mail to us, in an understated manner characteristic of his style, “This was one of the many actions that we took that helped build trust between the unions and the management.”

At the beginning of March 2005, the Lonmin Leadership program and other initiatives began. It was here that Laolang transformed in a way that many behavioral
scientists say is nearly impossible.

A Fork in the Road
Was this a case of a good CEO showing concern for his employees, or was there more? The argument of this book is that it’s more—a lot more.

Brad’s situation was more dire than what most CEOs face. He felt certain that everything needed to change at once—systems, compensation, strategy, organization, management style, even values. As he told us, “If we didn’t move on all fronts at once, the community wouldn’t tolerate us anymore.” Brad also promised the financial markets (Lonmin is publicly traded in London) that the situation would turn around, and the analysts and investors were watching closely. “We had to do it all at once,” he said, “even though most people said we couldn’t.” When change efforts have more modest goals, 73 percent of them fail, and 70 percent of new strategies do not meet their goals.

To make this level of change possible, Brad decided to add the one element that he believed would enable the others to succeed: he chose to involve a wide group of stakeholders (tribal leaders, elected officials, observers from the World Bank and the United Nations) in rewriting the future of Lonmin and its surrounding communities.

Why Brad Needed Something New
The question Brad asked—how Laolang and thousands like him could dramatically shift their performance in time to save the company—is almost impossible to answer without new thinking.

Harvard Business School Professor Emeritus Michael Jensen suggests business needs new mental models that do a better job of predicting how people perform. Current mental models say that people behave in accordance with their mental assets—skills, intelligence, emotions, beliefs, values, attitudes, and knowledge. It’s no wonder, then, that “employee development” (which companies spend billions on, about 1.6 percent of payroll) is almost synonymous with “skills and education,” with some money left over
for workplace counseling and coaching. The goal of this approach is to add mental assets—knowledge, skills and motivation—and remove unhelpful mental assets—anger and resentment.

Following this advice, Brad would make sure Laolang (and his 25,000 fellow workers) had the facts about the new enterprise-wide business targets, send him to counseling to vent his rage, and to train him in the right skills. Posters with catchy slogans would hang everywhere, and shifts might start with motivational speakers encouraging workers in their six different languages to put in extra effort. Brad, in short, would make every effort to add mental assets to Laolang until his behavior shifted.

Given the reality of Laolang’s mindset, and that of his fellow employees, these approaches will fail. Not only will they not achieve desired results, they will become more evidence for why management is manipulative, and thinks of employees only as tools.

Rewriting The Future’s First Law
There are three laws in this book. The first, the one we will discuss in this chapter, is that people’s behavior is “correlated” to how the world “occurs” to them. This apparently simple sentence contains several radical notions. The way people “experience” the world—the way the world “occurs” to them or “shows up” for them—is what’s critical to how they behave. While there is an objective physical reality, each person has their own unique way the world “occurs” for them, and their behavior correlates to this “occurring,” not to the “real world.” People experience this “occurring,” which is an interpretation of reality, as reality.

So while we would say that for Laolang and workers like him, the world “occurred” as hostile, filled with people who had power over them and thought of them only as tools, for them it was that way. Black executives were sell-outs. White executives were manipulative liars. In 2004, that world was so real that people killed because of it. Amnesty International has tracked dozens of murders to rival unions in
South Africa.

Law #1 asserts people’s actions and how the world occurs correlate, always. As long as the world occurred this way to the workers of Lonmin, their actions would be defensive and passively resistant at best, violent and homicidal at worst.

No amount of training, skills acquisition, or motivational posters will change how the world occurs. In fact, each of these things simply becomes more evidence for Laolang that the world is as he believes it to be.

With the first law in mind, Brad’s actions make a lot of sense. He knew that, before he even started, he occurred to the workers as a typical CEO—viewing employees as tools, not caring about their welfare, and out only for money. His change plans, he knew, occurred as management mumbo jumbo, that at best would have no impact on workers. At worst, the initiatives would ask them for more effort with nothing in exchange. If he didn’t change these factors, and fast, nothing he would do would make any impact.

The meeting in the nightclub was designed to change how the executives, and the change program he advocated, occurred to stakeholders. He made progress in this regard by listening so intently that people knew he heard them, that he got their issues. As people saw him listening—really listening—how he occurred to them shifted from an arrogant CEO to a person who at least cared enough to spend a day with them. When he announced the change in the healthcare policy in the football stadium, Lonmin’s occurring changed from a company that was only out for profits to an advocate for the health of the community. When Brad spent a night in the hostels, and welcomed workers at the 4 a.m. shift, he occurred to them as a fellow human being.

With Brad, his fellow executives, and the change programs now occurring in a different way, people’s behaviors shifted from resistant and angry, to open and even somewhat receptive. He was now ready to begin the next phase of changes, known as the March Initiatives, when the heavy lifting of *Rewriting the Future* will take place.
The March Lonmin Initiatives

The March Lonmin initiatives sought to shift action by transforming how the world occurs for about 100 people at a time. It did this through a systematic series of conversations between the program leaders from LEBD, and Lonmin executives, and the participants. Since how the world occurs and actions correlate, this shift made an immediate and tangible difference in people’s performance.

Three specific incidents illustrate why Laolang, and hundreds of other people, were so moved by the process. The first happened days into the process, when a white Lonmin executive named Antoinette made a point to the group and then sat down. As she did, an elderly community member stood up and shouted, “I am incomplete with you, Antoinette!” (“Incomplete,” the participants had learned, meant that some incident from past affected how the person occurred for them.) The woman, Selinah, explained why she had an issue with Antoinette (English not being her first language):

I’m talking to her on behalf of the African people. When I was twenty years old, they call us “mate,” so when [white Africans] come to your parents, they say, “We want a mate to come and work for a year.” So that year, you don’t get a cent. Your mom and your dad, they have to talk to those people and when they finish discussing how long are you going to work there, you just go from the first of January until the end of December…That’s why I’ve been hating [white African] people.

Antoinette responded:

I represent something with my blond hair and my blue eyes that caused so much pain in your life all those years ago then I don’t know, I don’t think I can ask you forgiveness to amend the mistakes we made… And I think we fortunately live in a country since 1994 where we can move forward and we can live together. [If] Selinah needs to go back to the lady she worked…I understand where this comes from. And we can go to that house and…I will go with her. And we can try that.

Both women started to cry—one elderly, poor and black, and one young, wealthy and white. Selinah said back: “Yes, I am willing to do that. Thank you very much. I hope our future can grow better than before.” The group cheered.

The second happened a day later, when people broke into groups representing
each of the unions, as well as management. Following the guidance of the program leaders, each identified the “games they play” in negotiating with the other groups. Management owned up to playing the “take it or leave it” card, crying poverty, using veiled threats, and reporting data selectively. NUM (Laolang’s union) acknowledged that it organizes sit-ins, uses wildcat strikes, burns property, and doesn’t tell management what it’s doing because, in their words, “we don’t trust them.” As people acknowledged these games to the entire group, they started to laugh—both at themselves, and, as they told us later, at the absurdity of playing games like this at all.

The third happened later that day. The facilitators posed the question, “What are you committed to in future negotiations?” After hours of debate, much of it passionate, the hundred people who came into the room a few days before as enemies left committed to more than a dozen points, including:

- Total transparency—full disclosure—total information
- Respect each other
- Create a future that is the context for problem solving bargaining
- Engage each other with integrity

Each of these incidents shows the shift in how the world occurred for the people in the room. For Selinah, all white women of a certain age occurred to her as oppressors. If she had met Antoinette in a different situation, this occurring would have drowned out anything Antoinette did or said, making it impossible for them to have a good working relationship. The future of their relationship was already written. By “completing” this issue (meaning to fully resolve it so that it no longer has any effect in how the world occurs to her), Antoinette, and all white women of this age, occurred differently to Selinah, and for the first time, it was possible to write a new future of their relationship. The occurring also shifted for the 100 other people watching, including Laolang. Laolang told us later that he felt his own views toward white people change at that moment. Until people got to this point, rewriting the future of this company and the people involved was impossible. Now, though, the future was, for the first time
something that they were fully committed and on the way to creating.

As people reported their “negotiation games,” people saw the other side as more like themselves than they would have thought possible just days before. More importantly, how unions occurred to management, and management to unions, began to shift—from opponents playing hardball to fellow human beings with the same virtues and weaknesses as themselves. People began to experience their old adversaries as allies, on the same side, partners in rewriting their future together.

Within the leadership program, people completed their issues with each other, unions completed issues with other unions, management completed issues with the workers, and company officials completed issues with the community leaders. People made this progress by seeing that the cost of their incomplete issues weren’t worth continuing to live with it, and that they could choose to be generous and find out what really happened.

With these issues now resolved, people who had been adversaries were able to work together on setting joint commitments—the seed of the new future. As dozens of people told us in interviews after the fact, this level of cooperation was only possible because how people saw the world, each other, and the company had changed. Once the world occurred differently, people moved beyond mere compliance to accountability, from merely doing their jobs to providing leadership. As the first law asserts, people’s actions and how the world occurs always correlate. As people began to rewrite their common future, their actions automatically fell in line with what they were creating.

Altering “How the World Occurred” to Laolang

As the program went on, Larry Pearson, one of the LEBD leaders, noticed a shift in Laolang. “What’s going on with you?” he asked. “I can’t live this way anymore,” Laolang replied. Larry tells the story of what happened next:

So I said, “What do you want to do?” And what he said sounded like something out of a movie. He said, “I want to be an agent of transformation.” I said, “For whom?” He said, “For my kids, for my family, and for my union.”
We asked what changed for Laolang as he completed his own issues with the union, management, and specific people. He said:

It was like a different South Africa after the program. I saw the possibility of changing the world itself, beyond a single company like Lonmin. It created a very big space with me, that this approach to transformation is everything. I understood very clearly that it takes individuals to put themselves in that space of committing. I take that as a rescue process for everyone in Lonmin and beyond.

What we noticed most of all is that the angry man who saw nothing but fighting in his future was replaced by a man who looked ten years younger, and who couldn’t stop smiling. He talked about white people, managers, and executives as being real people—not as the caricatures of evil and manipulation they had occurred to him before. He made good on his promise to Larry, and became an advocate for the commitments from the Lonmin leadership initiatives. Most remarkable is that the same shift happened to almost everyone who attended the leadership program. For the first time, they saw themselves as authors of their future.

**The Union-Management Negotiations**

After the March initiatives, Larry Pearson of LEBD worked with nine union leaders and a management team to hammer out the particulars of a type of new union-management agreement, based on the commitments from March.

Both sides recommitted to giving up the old games they played in the past. Management had to be willing to close the gap in wages, and as Larry told us, “that gap was huge.” He continued:

I had no problem with the union concerns, but I had a real problem with who they were being about the concerns. They kept saying, “We run the mine. We own this place.” The issues were housing, payment, conditions of work—not a problem for me in facilitating. What I had a problem with is that they were using these issues as a justification to wreak havoc.
Laolang was one of the leaders in the process. He told us: “By negotiating with integrity, we got more concessions from management in one year than we would have gotten in ten.” He and eight of his fellow union representatives negotiated what’s now known as the New Era Labor Union Agreement. It was a radical new long-term, five year labor agreement (one to three years is standard, five is unprecedented). The unions got a relatively small wage increase but a big upside gain share opportunity based on the workers’ increasing production, decreased costs, and elevated safety. This agreement was to be signed by all unions and management together, rather than each union negotiating its own deal with management.

The people who led this process had to explain to their members, and other union leadership, why this new agreement was worth it, both for them and for the company. In doing so, Laolang had to face the cynicism and resignation of how the world occurred for others, not unlike the cynicism and resignation he once had shared.

What Has Changed
Besides a stronger, more collaborative culture, a stronger bond between union and management had been built. In addition to gain sharing opportunities, a Joint Union Management Problem Solving (JUMPS) bargaining committee was set up to monitor working together over the term of the agreement.

Brad’s set of initiatives are also accelerating their successes. The integration plans are all going well, and so far, Lonmin has escaped the strikes that are paralyzing other mines throughout the country. The stock price has more than doubled.

The real accomplishment has been altering how the world occurs for thousands of people, and as this has happened, their actions have shifted accordingly. The proof of people’s newfound power is the New Labor Agreement, diverse mining operations now functioning as “one Lonmin.” Productivity is up, injuries are down, and for the first time, the community is actively supporting the company. Not only are people rewriting their future, but the present shows evidence that they achieve it.
If Lonmin and the community can alter how the world occurs for the 500,000 people who live in the surrounding communities, this organizational transformation effort will be, by any measure, the most successful in history.
The Authors

Both Dave Logan and Steve Zaffron are members of the “Barbados Group,” a seventeen-member think tank of academics, corporate executives and consultants. The group originally came together to examine cases of companies where transformation efforts surpassed all reasonable expectations, were repeatable, scalable, and had sticking power. The result of these discussions, many of them focused on LEBD engagements over the past fifteen years, inspired and informed the development of this book. *Rewriting the Future* is written with the full support of the group, and the authors acknowledge the members for their many contributions to its development.

Steve Zaffron

Steve Zaffron is the CEO of Landmark Education Business Development (LEBD). LEBD has consulted with more than 300 companies and organizations in seventeen countries including Lockheed Martin, Apple, GE, Morgan Stanley, Accenture, IBM, Office Depot, Merck, Disney, Johnson & Johnson, Reebok, NASA, Northrop Grumman, BHP-Billiton Ltd., Petrobras, Telemar Brazil, Polus Group Japan, and the U.S. Department of Defense.

Over the past twenty-seven years, Steve has personally consulted top executives and led programs and seminars for over 100,000 people. Steve has been a guest lecturer at the Harvard Business School, the business schools at the University of Rochester, Ohio State University, and University of Southern California.

Steve is uniquely qualified to be involved with a book of this scope and importance. In addition to his role with LEBD, he is also a senior executive and board member with Landmark Education, which focuses on transformational programs for the general public. For fifteen years, Steve was responsible for the training and development of the company’s “Landmark Forum Leaders,’’ the elite group that runs the flagship Landmark Education courses. He still serves as the head of the Research and Development team that produces Landmark Education’s new courses, and he led the
design of “The Landmark Forum,” which, with more than one million attendees in twenty-three countries, is the most successful personal development course in the world.

Dave Logan, Ph.D.

Dave Logan is on the faculty at the University of Southern California’s Marshall School of Business, where he served four years as Associate Dean of Executive Education. He has written extensively about large-scale organizational change efforts. He is also on the faculty at the Foundation for Medical Excellence, along with former Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber; and teaches in the International Center for Leadership in Finance (ICLIF) in Kuala Lumpur, which was endowed by the former Prime Minister of Malaysia.

At USC, he has pioneered new graduate courses in executive leadership (for the Executive MBA program), management consulting, and negotiation. He also developed the Master of Medical Management, a degree program for mid-career medical doctors which will graduate its sixth class in 2007. He has written over two-dozen business cases used in universities around the world, dozens of training programs and numerous articles for journals such as the Sloan Management Review. He is author or co-author of three books: Reinventing Your Career (1995, Business Week/McGraw-Hill), The Coaching Revolution (2000, Adams Media) and Tribal Leadership (2007, HarperCollins).

In 1999, Dave wrote the first major case on LEBD. Since then, he and Steve have taught courses and presented papers together at the USC Marshall School of Business, and the Fisher College of Business at the Ohio State University.