



**Molly D. Shepard**  
CEO, *The Leader's Edge*

## Molly's Letter

In my unending quest to develop, inspire and prepare professional women for future roles, I have recently taken a greater interest in life after work—the incredible, albeit a bit terrifying, time in a woman's life called retirement! Every day for the next 19 years an estimated 5,000 women in the United States will turn 65, according to the Pew Research Center. Baby Boomer women have been working, planning and saving for decades to reach this exciting and scary moment in their lives. While it may seem dark and daunting, retirement is actually one of the most opportune and life-changing times in your life. Reminiscent of a blank canvas, just waiting for you to make your mark, your retirement is the opportunity for you to live in your prime! But are you prepared?

Retirement planning requires your time, energy and attention NOW, while your career and personal life are in full swing. Planning for your 'prime time' is not as complicated as you might think, however. It is important that you consider all aspects of the change you are about to make. (Continued Page 3)

## Building, Connecting and Delivering: How New SVP, Client Services, Shelley Potente is Energizing Our Company

by Susannah Cobb



**Shelley Potente**

*The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design* recently celebrated our 10th anniversary with clients, colleagues and friends, and are proud of the growth we have achieved over the last ten years in our leadership development, executive coaching and change management work. We always look for new and exciting opportunities to expand our footprint, introduce ourselves to potential new clients and increase our repertoire of leadership development offerings. Enter Shelley Potente.

It is easy to see why Shelley Potente has earned the reputation of being a 'connector.' Her warm personality and enthusiastic approach to meeting new people make spending time with her more like grabbing coffee with an old friend. Her passion for helping people and championing leadership development initiatives only adds to the reasons she is a perfect fit for the next stage of growth at *The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design*. As I interviewed her, I learned a lot more about how Shelley is energizing this firm.

**Cobb:** Shelley, we're so glad to have you at *The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design*. What part of joining this firm are you most excited about?

**Potente:** I'm most excited about being a part of a firm that's built an incredible brand for women's leadership, executive development and diversity programs, and is recognized for its high-quality of delivery, research and expertise in a variety of areas in the sphere of leadership development.

**Cobb:** And more specifically, what part of your new role as Senior Vice President, Client Services are you most passionate about?

**Potente:** I'm joining a team of exceptional leaders where I have been given the opportunity to share ideas I have about new programs and processes that our clients are requesting. I look forward to spending time developing the visibility of our brand and making new connections in the New York and Washington DC metro regions. Expanding my network and building new relationships and partnerships is something I delight in. I'm passionate about our work and want to share the incredible successes going on at *The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design*! (Continued Page 3)

## The Leader's Edge/Leader's By Design Chicago office Sponsors the Athena Leadership Awards Luncheon

Tracey Cantarutti, Ph.D., Regional Vice President, Midwest, along with Stephanie McCray and Rosemary Geisler, Senior Consultants, attended the Chicago ATHENA Leadership Awards luncheon on January 27, 2011 in Chicago. Over 300 professional women and men attended the 6th annual award luncheon event. ATHENA International, a professional women's leadership organization headquartered in Chicago, was founded nearly 30 years ago with the mission to support, develop and honor women leaders through the programs it administers. *The Leader's Edge/Leader's By Design* was a Silver Sponsor of the event.



Five exemplary leaders were named ATHENA Leadership Award Recipients and honored at the luncheon. Anne Pramaggiore, President and Chief Operating Officer, ComEd and Anne Ladky, Executive Director, Women Employed, received the ATHENA Leadership Award in the Corporate and Service Sectors. Dorri McWhorter, Partner, Crowe Horwath, and Isa Ellis, Board Member, Chicago Foundation for Women, were honored with the ATHENA Young Professional Leadership Award in the Corporate and Service Sectors. Connie Lindsey, Executive Vice President and Head of Corporate Social Responsibility, Northern Trust, was named the recipient of the ATHENA Organizational Leadership Award.

The ATHENA Awards recognize individuals and organizations across professional sectors that demonstrate the highest levels of professional excellence, service to the community, and active assistance to women to achieve their full leadership potential. Its emphasis on mentorship of women and international scope are what make the ATHENA Awards unique and amongst the most prestigious leadership awards of their kind. *The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design* is proud to be a Leadership Circle Founding Member of Athena International.

Want to learn more about our work in the Greater Chicago area? Contact Regional Vice President, Tracey Cantarutti at [tcantarutti@the-leaders-edge.com](mailto:tcantarutti@the-leaders-edge.com) for more information.

## Building Leadership for Yourself and Your Team: Coaching for Success

On April 11th, *The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design* principals Molly D. Shepard, CEO and Nila G. Betof, COO, were the featured pre-conference workshop speakers at the prestigious Conference Board Women's Leadership Conference in New York City. This is an annual event held by The Conference Board that focuses on providing executives with new insight on how to "inspire, influence and innovate" for those they lead. Molly and Nila joined several other prominent speakers for the conference including: Douglas R. Conant, President and Chief Executive Officer at Campbell Soup Company; Jan Combopiano, Vice President & Chief Knowledge Officer at Catalyst; and Marie Hartung, Diversity Manager at Microsoft.

Dozens of senior women took part in the TLE/LBD interactive, half-day workshop on Building Leadership for Yourself and Your Team: Coaching for Success. As experts in the field of leadership development, Molly and Nila began their workshop by citing the research that demonstrates the return on investment of coaching (found to be 529% by MetrixGlobal) and further elaborated on the intangible benefits of being coached. Some of these unique benefits include:

- Receiving candid feedback from confidential and discreet interviewing
- Gaining new information from select personality and leadership assessment instruments
- Creating new and more effective strategies for addressing day-to-day challenges
- Developing techniques, styles or approaches to handling a variety of situations

The four major types of coaching in which participants developed skills are: leadership development (to enhance a senior executive's behavior and style); developmental (for an employee who is not performing to his/her potential); career reappraisal coaching (for an employee who needs to reassess his/her career opportunities); and new leader coaching (for a newly promoted or hired individual to accelerate assimilation and contributions).

After attendees had a full understanding of their current coaching ability and an appreciation for the different categories of coaching, attendees were paired off for role playing. Guided by the coaching process shared by Molly and Nila, participants actively engaged in the role play and were able to further evaluate and hone their own skills and strengths. Participants left the workshop with a greater understanding of coaching as a way to lead and motivate their employees and action steps to continue their own development as leaders.

If you are interested in having *The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design* deliver a workshop at your organization, visit our website for topic areas at [www.the-leaders-edge.com](http://www.the-leaders-edge.com) or contact Susannah Cobb at [scobb@the-leaders-edge.com](mailto:scobb@the-leaders-edge.com).

## Building, Connecting and Delivering: How New SVP, Client Services, Shelley Potente is Energizing Our Company

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**Cobb:** Sounds like you have a lot on your plate already! What do you consider to be some of the key strengths you bring to this organization?

**Potente:** I bring to the firm a fresh set of eyes based on over ten years of experience working in the talent and career management space for a global, well-respected firm. My prior background in psychology and counseling was followed by a career in sales, which I loved because it gave me the opportunity to meet new and interesting people in the corporate setting every day. I also pride myself on execution and bring energy and drive to my work because I'm passionate about what I'm doing—building trusted relationships and connecting people for their mutual benefit. This often leads to making valued introductions and knowledge sharing that clients really appreciate.

**Cobb:** What do you hope to accomplish in the next few years here at *The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design*?

**Potente:** Leadership development will continue to be a critical need, particularly as companies focus more on recruiting, engaging and retaining top talent in this extremely competitive global environment. I hope to increase the number of women's leadership, executive development and diversity programs throughout organizations by making decision makers more aware of the significance and impact of these kinds of leadership development offerings to their brand. The work of *The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design* is so crucial because woman and people with diverse backgrounds constitute over half of the workforce and there's compelling research that shows that companies cannot afford to lose this talented population of leaders. My hope is to continue to help companies build strong leaders and diverse leadership teams in order to poise organizations for a more successful future.

Learn more about Shelley Potente at [www.the-leaders-edge.com/our-team.html](http://www.the-leaders-edge.com/our-team.html).

## Molly's Letter (Continued)

Look at your life thus far—the choices you've made, the good and the bad—and use all the information gathered to help illuminate a retirement plan that will give you the opportunity to do the things that inspire you, fulfill you and meet your needs. Women often create a retirement scenario that is imaginative, fun and draws upon their most heartfelt dreams and aspirations as well as practical and realistic, especially if they need to earn an income during their retirement years.

In my upcoming book, **Prime Time: A Retirement Guide for Women Boomers**, I share some of the action steps women can take to create a retirement that's right for them. Women need to have a realistic picture of what their financial state will look like in retirement and whether or not they will need to work and if so, how much they will need to earn monthly. This first step is crucial to bringing your retirement dreams to fruition. Secondly, our research shows that while women often look forward to retirement, they are unclear about how they will spend their retirement days. It is important to identify the activities that will truly fulfill you in retirement. What you're doing today is not what will necessarily motivate, inspire or serve you appropriately like another one of your skills might during retirement. By working through the repertoire of assessments in the book, you can start to flush out what skills will serve you best.

After you've evaluated your financials and assessed your skills, we lay out how to strategically network with those in your inner and broader circles around creative retirement options. Being open to meeting with diverse and different people and being clear about what it is you're looking for, are two important pieces of effectively networking and getting ideas, information or the connections you need. Connecting with the right people will also help you take better stock of your retirement options such as volunteering with your favorite organization, consulting part-time, joining a board, starting a second career, being entrepreneurial or spending more time with family. Retirement truly can be a remarkable time in a woman's life and if she plans appropriately she can sculpt and mold a plan that exceeds her wildest dreams. Adequately preparing for this time of change is key to your very own happy ending. Learn more in my book, **Prime Time: A Retirement Guide for Women Boomers** due out this September.



## KUDOS to program graduates and friends on their recent achievements!

- **Martha Holler**, a KPMG Leadership Institute participant from Washington DC, has been promoted to Senior Vice President-Corporate Marketing and Communications for Sallie Mae.
- **Ginny Palmieri** has accepted a newly created role at Independent Blue Cross as the new Vice President Sales, Ancillary Business. This includes, but is not limited to, Pharmacy, Dental, Stop Loss and Vision products.
- **Yvonne Greenstreet** has accepted the position of Senior Vice President and Head of the Medicines Development Group with Pfizer.
- **Alisha Bellezza** has accepted the newly created position of Director, Corporate Planning and Development at FMC. Alisha joins the Corporate Planning and Development team from the Agricultural Products Group (APG), where she has most recently served as Area Controller.
- **Judith M. von Seldeneck**, Founder, Chairman and CEO of Diversified Search has recently become the exclusive U.S. partner of AltoPartners, the international alliance of independent search firms with offices in 26 countries worldwide.
- Congratulations to **Nila Betof**, COO, *The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design*, who was recently honored as one of SmartCEO magazine's 2011 SmartCOO Award winners!
- Congratulations to **Nilda Ruiz**, President & CEO, APM, on her feature piece in Philadelphia SmartCEO magazine's March issue!
- **Suzanne Carroll** has been named the Global Commercial Director for Dow Microbial Control where she will be responsible for delivering sales and profit for this business that focuses on solutions for sustainable microbial protection of all products and processes.
- The Philadelphia Bar Foundation, a nonprofit organization, has selected **Wendy Beetlestone** as president for a two-year term.
- The Alice Paul Institute, a non-profit organization dedicated to education the public about New Jersey suffragist Alice Stokes Paul, has elected **Michele Dorris** as chairwoman of the Board.
- **Greg Passanante** has been promoted to Clinical Director, Medical-Surgical Nursing, Penn Presbyterian Medical Center.
- **Tonya Johnson** has been promoted to Clinical Director, Pennsylvania Hospital.
- **Pam Power** has been promoted to Clinical Director, Pennsylvania Hospital.
- **Dan Wilson** had been promoted to Vice President, Allied Health and Ambulatory Services, Pennsylvania Hospital.

## Recent & Upcoming Events

June 6, 2011

**KPMG Executive Institute for Women**

Chicago, IL

September 21, 2011

**KPMG Executive Institute for Women**

New York City, NY

November 17 & 18, 2011

**Women On Board Program**

Philadelphia, PA

February 2012

**Women of African Descent**

**Skills-Building Workshop**

New York City, NY

## Put Your Best Foot Forward: Summer Fashion Trends

*Tips for Enhancing Your Professional Image and Your Wardrobe - from the experts at SAKS Fifth Avenue*

Visit our website to learn more.



## Coaching Executives to Lead With a Healthy Ego and Empathy

By Peter J. Dean, Ph.D.

Today's executive leaders have tremendous pressure on them to perform financially for their organization. They are expected by others to be successful and place upon themselves the expectation to be successful in their leadership position. If you ask many executives how they are doing on any given day, they rate themselves as doing very well. If you ask the people that are impacted by these executives, how they are doing, the rating is usually not the same. It would typically be a lower rating than the executives give themselves.

Why this disconnect? The gap in these two perceptions is usually the result of an insecure and unhealthy ego building a façade to protect itself. It happens to the best of them. It is where an executive ego has gone awry. Where there is an inability to see the truth of their impact of their leadership and the people's perception of that impact. That unhealthy ego can metastasize into arrogant self-promotion, narcissism, and/or fearful self-preservation. Sounds completely unappealing, doesn't it? What is worse is that executives with an unhealthy ego do not know that they have fallen for their own cover story and they do not know how to break free from this toxic state of mind.

Because they don't know what to do, many barricade themselves behind this façade of false security and attempt to insure that their decision-making and actions are not challenged in order to assure the barricade is strong enough. Instead of introducing the knowledge and best-practices of leadership, those with unhealthy egos rely singularly on their own opinions and experiences to direct others. By extending their biases to the informal networks outside of work, they continue to add very little to their knowledge base since they are attracted to and associate only with like-minded people. This is a fear-based response of an unhealthy ego and it results in a false sense of competence.

Furthermore, all interactions begin and end with the objective of protecting the unhealthy ego at all costs. This adds even more momentum to the downward spiral from self-conceit

to excessive self-centeredness onward to possible unethical behaviors. All along this downward journey, a false sense of security is created. Real self-development is left behind and the false sense of "self" becomes the dominant voice inside the person. This is extreme egotism and is observed in attitude and behavior as follows:

- Confidence becomes arrogance;
- Our Way becomes My Way;
- We becomes Us vs. Them;
- WIFM (What's in it for me?) becomes the work ethic;
- Loyalty becomes blind; and
- Tolerance becomes indifference.

It is no surprise that this approach fosters indifference, lack of openness and lack of respect as others in the organization begin to emulate bad behaviors. Individuals believe that they can ascend the ladder without having to do the hard work or developing true leadership competencies. CEOs and other senior executives in this situation may find themselves surrounded by sycophantic executives who say what they think the CEO wants to hear.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Executives move toward being exemplar in leadership when they become aware that they ought to do something about their own egos in order to lead others properly. That is the first step in the right direction. The next step is more delicate.

The unhealthy ego, just by its nature, rejects and rebukes any attempt to monitor or manage it. After all, it is the unhealthy ego that tries to dominate all other egos. A direct approach to adjust an executive's ego will usually not work. So, what will work?

In my research at *The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design*, reported in the book entitled, *The Coachable Leader: What Future Executives Need to Know Today* available in *(Continued Page 6)*

## Coaching Executives to Lead With a Healthy Ego and Empathy

(Continued)

August 2011, I have found that adding empathy skills to the executive's leadership repertoire of best practices does decrease the practice of unhealthy ego and allows the executive's ego to arrive at a more balanced, healthy ego. It is as if the more empathy, the ability to pick up on the thinking and feelings of others and know it from their point of view, is increased, the more the unhealthy ego is decreased.

This learning comes about from the recognition of the vital importance of using empathy to help keep in balance the healthy ego. If one's ego is balanced with the practice of empathy, people will perceive reasonableness and authenticity in the leader. The practice of empathy brings the ego within a healthy zone which leaves the executive more open and respectful of other's ideas and input. Others will see a leader they can trust and follow. Also, individuals with healthy egos are open to continuous self-development. That is, they are 'coachable'. This is an upward spiral. Healthy egos guide good and great leaders to show humility, and bring out the best in everyone and release positive energy throughout an organization.

Learn more about how *The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design* can help your organization succeed in their leadership practices. Visit our Consulting & Customized Services page.

Let Us Give You the Skills to Get on Board!

Join us for

**Women On Board™**

November 17-18, 2011!

It's now harder than ever for women to get on for profit boards. There is very little turnover on boards at present and since the economic crisis, boards have generally shrunk smaller. The retirement age for board directors has recently been raised to 75 by the SEC and boards still want CEOs - both of these factors continue to put women at a disadvantage. In most cases, boards want public corporate experience, a global perspective and financial expertise. The newest skills in demand are knowledge of social media and international experience. It is more important than ever that if women want to get on a public board, they expand their repertoire of experience and skills, get on several non profits, rise to leadership roles and advance their reputations and visibility in their industry.

On November 17th & 18th, 2011, The Leader's Edge/Leaders By Design, in partnership with Diversified Search, the largest women-owned executive search firm in the country, will once again be hosting our exclusive Women On Board program in Philadelphia, PA. Women On Board is a two-day program that provides information, tools and strategies to senior women who wish to participate on a board and subsequently benefits her organization by preparing her for further leadership roles and opportunities. This program helps women develop a realistic understanding of the skills and experience needed by boards today and positions them for marketability amongst boards of interest. Additionally, a senior consultant works one-on-one with each participant to help create an action plan for pursuing a board of director opportunity. Visit our Women On Board page for more information or contact Monica Warner at [mwarner@the-leaders-edge.com](mailto:mwarner@the-leaders-edge.com).

## The Leader's Edge / Leaders By Design

### Leadership Consulting and Development for Executive and High-Potential Women and Men

- Molly D. Shepard, *President & CEO*
- Nila G. Betof, Ph.D., *Chief Operating Officer*
- Peter J. Dean, Ph.D., *President, Leaders By Design*
- Elizabeth Reeder, *Regional Vice President, NJ*
- Mary Jane Reed, *Regional Vice President, DC & MD*
- Tracey Cantarutti, *Regional Vice President, Midwest*
- Lisa Aronson, *Vice President, Quality & Delivery*
- Shelley Potente, *Senior Vice President, Client Services*
- Monica Warner, *Director of Marketing*
- Susannah Cobb, *Director of Operations*

#### Philadelphia:

Two Bala Plaza  
Suite 300  
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004  
Tel: 610-660-6684

#### New York:

286 Madison Ave  
New York, NY 10017  
Tel: 212- 687-6075

#### New Jersey :

P.O. Box 1547  
Burlington, NJ 08016  
Tel: 609-499-5511

#### Washington DC:

1600 Tysons Boulevard  
Suite 800  
McLean, VA 22102  
Tel: 703-245-1110

#### Chicago:

509 West Main Street  
Barrington, IL 60010  
Tel: 847-705-7648