

# Editor's letter

**A**n important purpose of my “Editor’s letters” is to introduce the authors of each issue to readers of *Strategy & Leadership* and to highlight some of the provocative, eye-opening insights these distinguished academics and practitioners have to offer. Think of it as a “Who’s Who . . . Said What?!”

In his latest guide “**Learning to be a leader,**” Robert J. Allio explains how to detect and dodge the hype of the leadership training industry and instead follow a personal learning quest to become an effective leader. He explains, “**Although leadership cannot be taught, paradoxically, leadership can be learned.**” A previous Allio *S&L* article “Leaders and leadership – many theories, but what advice is reliable?” is a reader favorite (Vol. 41 No. 1, 2012). He now directs the Brown University executive course on Developing Effective Leadership.

Stephen Denning reports on his site visits to leading corporations discover how they are implementing radical management reinvention in “**How to make the whole organization ‘Agile.’**” The author of *The Leader’s Guide to Radical Management*, he is leading the Learning Consortium for the Creative Economy, a research arm of the Scrum Alliance. “**The Learning Consortium observed large firms learning how to become Agile at scale, with Agile implementations involving hundreds of teams and thousands of individuals.**”

Taking a leap into the future three IBM consultants imagine the transformation process involved in “**A four-step blueprint for digital reinvention.**” Digital strategy experts Saul J. Berman, Peter J. Korsten and Anthony Marshall explain that “**Digital reinvention involves rethinking customer and partner relationships from a perspective of fundamental customer need, use or aspiration . . . to create unique, compelling experiences for their customers, partners, employees and other stakeholders.**”

A wise advisory from three senior strategists at the Boston Consulting Group offers “**Four best practices for strategic planning.**” Nicolas Kachaner, Kermit King and Sam Stewart suggest “**By focusing a standard process on new questions, the strategic dialogue will remain rich, because participants will have new analyses to consider and fundamentally different ideas to discuss . . . So strategists – and business leaders – have to learn the ‘art of questioning.’**”

In Contributing Editor Brian Leavy’s interview “**Lord John Browne: Beyond CSR – Why business needs to engage more radically with society,**” the former CEO of British Petroleum, now executive chairman of L1 Energy, warns, “**Connected leadership means integrating societal and environmental considerations into core business strategy at every level of the company.**” Prof. Leavy is an award-winning educator and author.

A new methodology for evaluating innovative business models could be popping up one day soon in a PowerPoint presentation in your office. Professors Vladyslav Biloshapka, Oleksiy Osiyevskyy and Marc Meyer explain the concept and how it works in “**The value matrix: a tool for assessing the future of a business model.**” Prof. Biloshapka teaches at Kyiv National Economic University, Ukraine and Professors Osiyevskyy and Meyer are at Northeastern University, Boston “**A firm can have a great customer value proposition that simply makes no money . . . Conversely, it can squeeze profits from customers for only so long until they realize they are being used. Juxtaposing these two dimensions yields the Value Matrix (Givers, Takers, Winners, Losers) – a practical tool for diagnosing the current state of the affairs in the firm’s business model.**”

Those of us who grew up hearing about the Depression and then lived through the Great Recession will have many “aha” moments reading Stephen M. Millett’s review of the bestselling Robert J. Gordon book, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth: The U.S.*

*Standard of Living Since the Civil War* (Princeton University Press, 2016). In his column, "The headwinds of pessimism," Millett urges "strategists who read this book to think in terms of a set of possible scenarios, not just two outcomes, one optimistic and one (Prof. Gordon's) pessimistic." By the way, Millett has a new book hot off the press, *American Ways: A Behavioral History of the United States with Expectations for the Future*.

Good reading!

**Robert M. Randall**

*Editor*