



# Lead and live big: Become the ultimate executive

BY LISA MARTIN

What does it take to thrive at the top levels of business?

When I say “thrive,” I mean something beyond mere success and survival. I’m talking about living up to your biggest potential at work and in life.

Most people who reach executive status make a single strategic error that limits their excellence. They rely on the old, tried-and-true talents that brought them to glory in the first place.

As a top gun you need to do something radical: you need to let go of some of your most prized talents so you can focus on new, executive-level functions.

Does this seem obvious? Simple?

Maybe so. But an extraordinary number of executives cling to old behaviours and work patterns. And they’re usually fully unaware they’re doing it.

Being an executive means having the luxury — and responsibility — to be a long-term, visionary thinker. A strategist. You get to step beyond the everyday nuts and bolts of the business and play in the realm of

ideas and possibility. Because of this, your impact has the potential to extend beyond the reaches of your company, to your community and industry. And, if your ideas are grand enough, your impact can stretch to all corners of the globe.

“Being an executive is about exercising emotional intelligence, letting others shine, and making the biggest contribution you can within your company and beyond.”

Soak that in. With this level of influence you can do great good for those around you, or you can do great harm. Weigh this with every choice you make, and be aware of the legacy you want leave.

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After 15 years of leadership coaching, I can tell you with certainty that people who get shunted to the bench, demoted or fired from executive jobs are those who are unwilling to embark the major personal change it takes to excel at this level.

Don’t let this be you.

Executives that thrive are conscious of their impact on other people. They are caring about their community and the world, and dedicated to their organization and its people. They are respectful of other people’s skills, talents and autonomy. And finally, they are aware of when to speak and when to listen.

Ask yourself if you’ve truly mastered executive-level skills. Do you know how to dance with time? Create a coaching culture? Think expansively? Plan for greatness?

As a member of the Women’s Leadership Circle Advisory Council, a signature program of **The Vancouver Board of Trade**, I’ll be sharing a series of articles about maximizing your performance as an executive to help further our mandate to elevate women in business. I hope you’ll join us over the course of the next few months.



Lisa Martin

*Lisa Martin has made it her mission to help companies keep and cultivate rising leaders. She is the creator of the Lead + Live Better™ programs, a leadership coach, speaker, and bestselling author of Briefcase Moms. Her latest book Lead Advanced: 6 Skills to Be The Ultimate Executive will be available in June.*

## WLC Member Spotlight

Laurence Lemay, Senior Manager, Market Development, Ferus Inc.

### How do you define success?

I define success as a continuous balancing act between your professional goals and personal ambitions.

### What do you like most about your business/profession? What do you like the least?

My role primarily consists of being a catalyst for change in the energy industry by bringing natural gas to the mainstream. It is extremely stimulating being part of this transformation and working with passionate individuals. However, when you are at the forefront of change, it may occur at a pace slower than you would like it to be.



Laurence Lemay

### Are you currently working on any unique projects?

In collaboration with our partners, we are offering natural gas solutions to companies in the rail, mining, marine and oil and gas sectors, and building Canada’s largest LNG Merchant plant.

### What advice do you have for others in business?

“You never know...”

Never underestimate or overlook a business card – you never know how you can be helpful to someone and vice-versa. Successful deals often happen with connections that may seem irrelevant at first. Some people call it karma, others

luck...I call it good business practice.

### Who is your role model and why?

I have had the privilege to be mentored and coached by outstanding individuals from whom I learned a great deal. But learning more about exceptional women, such as **Madeleine Albright** and **Louise Arbour**, both fearless pioneers and driven individuals, has also been a source of inspiration.

### What has been your favorite experience with The Vancouver Board of Trade and the Women’s Leadership Circle?

Having the opportunity to sit at the same table alongside some of Vancouver’s most influential and inspiring women through the WLC Advisory Board and various WLC conferences.



## Mining 4 Everyone

Wednesday, May 14, 2014 | Vancouver Convention Centre, West  
11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.



### Karina Briño

President and Chief Executive Officer, Mining Association of B.C.

Join us on Wednesday May 14, as the Mining Association of British Columbia’s President and CEO, Karina Briño, delivers her address. As part of BC Mining Week 2014, Briño will speak to CIM delegates and Vancouver’s business leaders about the important role of the mining industry on the economy and B.C. communities.

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