Jim Clemmer's Leader Letter

JIM CLEMMER
Practical Leadership:
From Inspiration to Application

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EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

When I moved down the street from a grocery store job to a career in sales that eventually led me into this field, the president of the company made a comment that became a career goal and life beacon for me: **"When you love what you're doing, you never have to work again."**

This came to mind as I prepared this month's issue and realized this is the start of my ninth year writing *The Leader Letter* (first published in April 2003.) *Most of the time* the twice weekly blogs that become the following month's *Leader Letter* is more pleasurable than "real work." **I hope that you've found my blog posts are worth far more than you're paying for them!** Since each month's blog posts are roughly the length of my average book chapter, **you're reading the equivalent of a book a year with twelve monthly issues of *The Leader Letter*.**

All back issues of *The Leader Letter* are archived on our web site at Jim Clemmer's *Leader Letter*. In that archive you'll find an index of **over 30 topics under headings of General, Organization Improvement, Self Leadership, and Leading Others**. That same index is used for the more than 300 short articles available on our site.

American cartoonist, Doug Larson, once observed, **"spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush."** Having spent most of February in a hot Australian summer, then back to Canada for some more winter featuring our biggest snow storm in four years, I do feel like whistling as the snow disappears and spring arrives. But **if we didn't have cold snowy Canadian winters, spring wouldn't be so pleasant.**

There's some uncertainty about the origins of the name for the month of April. **The roots of the month's name are often traced to the Latin "*aperire*" which means "to open."** This refers to the time of year in the Northern Hemisphere when trees and flowers open and **renew their growth cycle.** However, April Fool's Day (be ready for it tomorrow!) just might fall in this month because of the tricks Mother Nature loves to play on us! One day it's warm spring and the next day winter is back with a vengeance.

I hope you've found the past few blogs on fear and stress helped you avoid being an April Fool (or any time of the year) and fall into the traps of our emotional dark side. **As the clever and well used acronym for fear reminds us: False Expectations Appearing Real.**
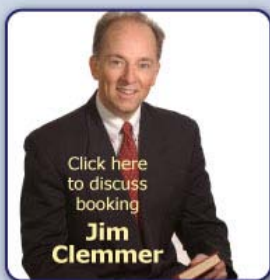
May your shoes stay dry and your fears diminish as **you open your mind and boost your growth in April!**

TOP 30 WORLD'S LEADERSHIP GURUS: I AM HONORED TO BE IN SUCH COMPANY

Last month I awoke to a pleasant surprise in my e-mail. I've been included on a list of the world's "top 30 most influential leadership gurus." I am especially honored to be in the company of leaders that I've learned so much from, such as **Warren Bennis, Tom Peters, Ken Blanchard, Jim Collins, Stephen Covey, Marshall Goldsmith, and Rosabeth Moss Kanter.** It brings to mind the words of English philosopher and mathematician, Issac Newton, "If I have been able to see further than others, it's because I have stood on the shoulders of giants."

Top 30 Most Influential Leadership Gurus

You can see the full list at [Top 30 World's Leadership Professionals for 2011](). Here's part of the criteria for compiling the list:

"Our research came from e-mails sent to 22,000 business people, consultants, academics and MBA's around the world for nominations and our public opinion poll. We shortlisted 60 names then did a Google search for ranking.

The criteria for judging the TOP 30 focused on: Originality of ideas, practicality of ideas, presentation style, international outlook, impact of ideas, quality of publications and writings, dispersion of publications and writings, public opinion, and guru factor."

So I got to thinking, **what exactly is a "*guru*?"** My research showed that the origins, meaning, and use of the word are quite varied. Most early references to "guru" are in Indian religions. The Upanishads (philosophical texts that were the early source of Hinduism) composed the word from *gu* **meaning shadow or darkness and** *ru* **signifying a disperser of darkness.** So a guru is a wise and knowledgeable spiritual guide who helps to disperse the darkness.

In today's realm of personal, team, and organizational leadership **a "darkness disperser"** is a pretty appealing description for what I see as my life work. I won't be putting that term in my signature line, but **I do aspire to help shine the light of optimism, emotional intelligence, personal growth, team development, organization effectiveness, and unleashing human potential at home and at work.**

My research also uncovered the concept of **"the inner guru."** This is **often our unconscious and intuitive source of infinite strength, wisdom, illumination, guidance, and happiness.** It's our inner voice. **Finding and listening to our inner voice is key to dispersing the darkness** of pessimism, fear, and worry that cause us so much stress and to lose sight of our path.

We can look to others who we might even call gurus for insights, experience, and guidance. But **we need to find and develop our inner guru for lasting personal, team, and organizational success.** So I could reword my life purpose as **helping individuals, teams, and organizations continuously develop their inner guru**. Now there's a signature line!

ST. PATRICK'S DAY: DRIVING OUT THE SNAKES OF FEAR IN TURBULENT TIMES

Given the huge and lingering disaster in Japan, unrest in the Middle East, and shaky stock markets, we especially need to nurture our "inner guru" (see the above item) to dispense the darkness of pessimism, fear, and worry. **Perhaps the positive energy and celebration of St. Patrick's Day last month gave you just the reminder you needed.**

One of the myths of St. Patrick is that he drove the snakes from Ireland. That's considered highly unlikely because there probably weren't any there to begin with. This idea is believed to have originated from his zeal and success in converting the Irish to Christianity. So **he chased the "serpents" of devils, demons, and paganism from the land.** He was a "guru" or darkness disperser.

In the depths of the Great Depression, U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt famously declared in his first inaugural address in 1933, **"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."** It's hard to truly comprehend what a powerfully negative force fear is in our lives. **Fear emanates from the dark side.** Fear is at the root of hatred and evil. **Fear is the source of stress and worry**. Fear keeps us from speaking up. **Fear causes us to pull back and give up.** Fear reduces our field of awareness. Fear floods our thoughts with bleak fantasies of failure and destruction. **Fear sets up dark energy fields attracting to us that which we most fear.**

Fear feeds mistrust and destroys relationships. Fear drives abuse and cruelty. Fear erects walls and closes ears. Fear craves power and demands compliance. Fear fosters bullying and abuse of position power. **Fear is afraid of participation, transparency, and openness.** Fear does not own up to mistakes. **Fear shuts down learning.** Fear creates the zero-sum thinking that leads to a scarcity mentality. A scarcity mentality leads to greed and hoarding. **Fear breeds conflict.** Wallowers live in fear.

My sixth book, *Moose on the Table: A Novel Approach to Communications @ Work*, centered on a fictional character, Pete Leonard, as **he allowed fear to seep deep into his life and slowly choke his effectiveness and happiness.** Eventually, he found the steps leading out of the slippery pits of fear to soar high above the "getting-by line" to the heights of success.

Like a black hole in space, the gravitational pull of fear can be an incredibly powerful force sucking us into its crushing depths. Canadian pollster Allan Greg has found that **a majority of people give in to worry and fear far too easily:** "...of all the questions I have posed in polling throughout the years, perhaps my favorite is: 'If someone told you something was safe and someone else told you it was unsafe, which one would you believe?' A very small minority (10 percent) reported they would believe that this (undefined) something was safe, and 22 percent had the common sense to declare that it would depend on who was doing the telling and what they were talking about. **But the vast majority - fully 68 percent - would accept the message of doom and gloom.** That gives us a penetrating insight into the nature of fear and our reaction to the possibilities of exposure to risk."

So let's nurture our inner guru and use the light of leadership to follow in St. Patrick's fabled path to drive out the snakes of fear!

THOUGHTS THAT MAKE YOU GO HMMM ON… THE DESTRUCTIVE POWER OF FEAR

Fear does have a place in our lives. The motivational power of fear can even be crucial to our survival. If we're physically attacked, fear can jolt us with the adrenalin and motivation we need for fight or flight. Fear is like fire. It can be a life-giving energy source or it can badly burn or destroy life.

A core message of _Growing @ the Speed of Change_ is **strengthening our leadership skills to disperse the darkness of fear**, pessimism, and negativity that change -- especially during tough times -- can bring.

> **"The most destructive element in the human mind is fear. Fear creates aggressiveness….fear grows in darkness; if you think there's a bogeyman around, turn on the light….only when we are no longer afraid do we begin to live."**
> - Dorothy Thompson (1893 - 1961), American journalist

> **"Only fear can defeat life… it goes for your weakest spot, which it finds with unerring ease. It begins in your mind, always… nestles in your memory like a gangrene: it seeks to rot everything, even the words with which to speak of it… if your fear becomes a wordless darkness that you avoid, perhaps even manage to forget, you open yourself to further attacks of fear because you never truly fought the opponent who defeated you."**
> - Yann Martel (1963 -), Canadian author, _Life of Pi_, winner of Man Booker Prize

> **"I don't like being afraid. It scares me."**
> - Major Margaret J. "Hot Lips" Houlihan, fictional character in the American TV show M*A*S*H

> **"Nothing is more despicable than respect based on fear."**
> - Albert Camus (1913 - 1960), Algeria-born French author, philosopher, and Nobel Prize-winning journalist

> **"Collective fear stimulates herd instinct, and tends to produce ferocity toward those who are not regarded as members of the herd."**
> - Bertrand Russell (1872 - 1970), British philosopher, logician, mathematician, and historian

> **"All of us are born with a set of instinctive fears - of falling, of the dark, of lobsters, of falling on lobsters in the dark, or speaking before a Rotary Club, and of the words, 'Some Assembly Required'."**
> - Dave Barry (1947 -), American author and columnist

LEADERSHIP IN THESE TURBULENT TIMES IS MORE CRITICAL THAN EVER

Turbulence, uncertainty, and lightning quick shifts sure are rocking our world these days! Leading in these turbulent times -- and dealing with fear and stress -- is on my mind lately as we prepare for my only **public workshop** this year, *Leading @ the Speed of Change: Navigating Turbulent Times*.

The CLEMMER Group is in the business of providing customized keynotes, workshops, retreats, and leadership/culture development programs and systems tailored for internal use to each Client's needs, objectives, and situation. But it's becoming an annual June tradition now for me to put together this two-day **public workshop** here in my hometown of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada (45 minutes west of the Toronto airport.) Participants are a broad mix of public and private sector from medium and large organizations.

In preparing for this workshop, I've really come to enjoy this annual stepping back and looking at the new approaches, materials, exercises, videos, applications, and the like that we've found especially effective in our Client work over the past year. This is a rare and enjoyable opportunity to condense what we've been evolving and learning into **two intensive days.**

In following the news these days it's clear that **we're in a time of both great peril and enormous potential.** And **the faster things change, the more we need leadership**. But we're constantly seeing that personal, team, and organizational leadership is **easy to talk about and very tough to do**. And today it's as critical as ever. **How we lead ourselves and others through change determines our career -- and life -- effectiveness.**

I was talking with a conference and seminar organizer the other day. She said they're finding **leadership has become THE hot topic of new books, conferences, and training programs.** After that conversation I went to Amazon and searched "leadership" books. There are 57,605 available! A Google search on "leadership" nets 199,000,000 hits!

Leadership is clearly THE key to success. That's why it's such a popular topic. But despite all the talk about leadership and change, **many "change fatigued" people are still struggling with how to strengthen their leadership and how to help their teams/organizations successfully navigate change.** That means we need to get personal. Our leadership of others reflects our self-leadership. **Leadership is an inside job.**

Once again I am working to pack each day of this year's *Leading @ the Speed of Change* workshop with *practical* guidelines, powerful systems, and personal growth strategies for leaders 'on the grow.' My goal is to have participants leave with an extensive set of **practical tips, tools, and techniques to align people, processes, and personal effectiveness for continuous success.**

If you're thinking of attending and perhaps bringing your team, visit *Leading @ the Speed of Change: Navigating Turbulent Times* to check it out. There are team discounts and "early bird savings." You likely don't want worms, but you can save by registering now!

If you're not planning to attend, you still might want to check out the workshop agenda for the **inner and outer dimensions of leadership we've found are the keys to successfully navigating change.**

What have you found are the most critical leadership skills we need to (re)learn in today's topsy-turvy world?

PERSONAL GROWTH TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

A reader responded to a blog question about executive teams I raised in a January post (*Executive Team Traps: Have you fallen and can't get up?*) with a story of how she has personally fallen, and is having trouble getting up. She leads a group of experts in a professional organization who are extremely disdainful of her and one of the directors reporting to her. She finds them intimidating and dismissive and struggles to find her voice with them. Her boss recently told her that most of them are disappointed in the vision she's established in the department and don't think she's a good leader.

She told me she wants to **grow in her position** and figure out how to **address her leadership gaps**. I commended her for reaching out for help and using this situation as a time for personal growth. **Too many people get defensive or withdraw** when faced with these sorts of learning opportunities.

When I wrote *Growing @ the Speed of Change* I tried to boil down core tips and techniques for personal growth. Here's some of what I came up with:

- **Find a personal coach** or counselor to guide your personal development. He or she can be a sounding board, gather feedback from those you work with, prod you to reach your goals, provide advice, and encourage you.
- **Reflect and plan, every day**. Read or listen to spiritual, inspiring, or educational material; write in your journal; daydream; review the previous day; set your priorities for the next day to sort out the urgent from the truly important; pray or meditate; and continue developing your vision, values, and purpose.
- Search Amazon to check out many of the **excellent books** available to inspire, instruct, and guide your personal, team, and organization improvement efforts. Many effective leaders are devoted readers.
- Try your hand at **writing articles** for your trade or association publications, local newspaper, or internal newsletter (many of these publications welcome such contributions.) You could prepare a paper to deliver at a conference. Or write internal articles, training steps, and the like to share your experience and provide reflective learning.
- My early career time working with Dale Carnegie Training clearly showed me just how powerful **developing public-speaking or verbal communication skills** can be in building self-confidence and leadership skills. You don't have to be on your feet speaking to a group, although that is a very effective way to stretch and grow. You can reflect on your experiences and talk about your improvement plans with team members, your manager, a personal coach or therapist, a close friend, or your spouse.
- Develop the habit of **continually stretching outside your comfort zone** a bit at a time. Daily or even just weekly stretches, however small, accumulate into powerful new habits and ever-stronger discipline muscles.

- Try to **cultivate a mentor relationship** with a senior manager or another seasoned person who would enjoy taking you under his or her wing. This could be an experienced HR or training professional or someone in a key technical or staff-support role. It could be anyone from whom you think you could learn.
- Search out local **personal growth or leadership development courses** available in your area. Online courses can be useful for some aspects of personal growth, but leading others requires live interactions and often practice with other learners who are all learning together and supporting each other's growth.

What have you found works best for your personal growth and leadership development? **How would you handle this situation?**

PUBLIC WORKSHOP: *LEADING @ THE SPEED OF CHANGE* - JUNE 14 - 15

We have extended early bird discounts for *Leading @ the Speed of Change* until **April 8**. Don't miss out -- spaces are limited. Teams save even more. You can find full details, discounts, and registration here.
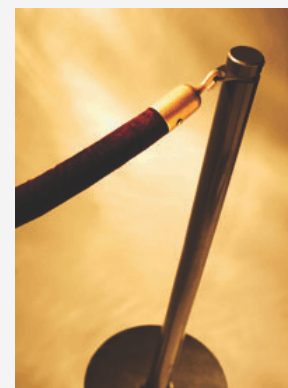
Each day is packed with practical guidelines, powerful systems, and personal growth strategies for leaders 'on the grow'. Participants leave with an extensive set of *practical* tips, tools, and techniques to align people, processes, and personal effectiveness for continuous success.

We have only **one public session** scheduled for 2011 (my sessions are usually customized, in-house workshops.) Please join me June 14-15 in my hometown, Kitchener, Ontario for an event that will inspire you and your colleagues to action, with practical 'how to' steps that dramatically boost personal, team, and organization results. There are special discounts for bringing colleagues along so you can learn and apply these principles together. **Register today!**

"BARRIERS" LIKE AGE ARE OFTEN SELF-CREATED

A reader recently sent me a lengthy e-mail raising questions dealing with **age and organizational culture**. Here's the essence of it:

> "My daughter is a youthful 29 years old (and short which doesn't help!) working in the financial services industry. Over the past four years she has done very well with a few promotions. Her biggest complaint is that no one takes her seriously or listens to her and she lacks the authority she needs to get the work done.
>
> The people she manages are much older than she is and seem to harbor some resentment at her position. She is a very hard worker (which is why she has been promoted), caring, with a good sense of humor, and has worked hard to win these people over. She feels frequently undermined by those she must deal with both directly and indirectly in other departments. She feels strongly that the age differential and her rapid rise and the conservative culture are barriers to her success in this position.

Jim, have you dealt with these types of issues in any of your previous work? Do you have any words of wisdom for her?"

I have to declare my bias in the age discussion. I was an assistant manager at age 17, a commissioned sales person at 18, sales manager at 19, and a sales trainer at 20. I had a baby face and was constantly greeted with "you're so young" -- like it was news to me! -- when meeting customers and others for the first time. At 24 I began my writing, training, and consulting career and become a paid professional speaker addressing CEOs and senior professionals of major companies before age 30. These experiences shaped my perspective that **"barriers" or "handicaps" like age or appearance (such as height) are largely self-created.**

Delivering results, meeting needs, showing competence, dependability, friendliness, positivity, and such, rapidly divert attention from "handicaps."How your daughter sees and accepts herself is a **critical lens through which others see her**. If she sees herself as young, resented, short, etc., she sets herself up to look for evidence that others see that in her too. A negative comment, lack of cooperation, competition, or signs of jealousy can be internalized as aimed at her because of her "handicap." She needs to **learn how to externalize** them to realize that they say more about the other person's issues and view of the world than about her.

Politics in a big organization can be very challenging to negotiate. **One key is to groom a mentor or two to help her**. She needs to actively seek out someone with more experience to help her navigate the organization.

Many people resent office politics. But whenever you get a few people or more together every day in one place, decisions and interactions are heavily tinged by trust levels, credibility, relationships, and other emotional factors. **Recognizing, controlling our own, and influencing the emotions of others are key skills**.

[Martin Seligman](#) has an **excellent web site dealing with Positive Psychology**. She should spend some time there and complete some of the assessment tools. His book, *Authentic Happiness* is outstanding. Our kids in their 20s have found it very helpful. Another excellent and extremely useful book is *Primal Leadership* dealing with Emotional Intelligence. Go to http://www.eiconsortium.org/bookstore.htm and scroll down toward the bottom of the page. With just a bit of bias (!), I'd also recommend my own latest book, *Growing @ the Speed of Change* for its focus on perceptions, self-leadership, and ongoing personal growth.

LEAN LEADERSHIP: BOOSTING OR BLOCKING LEAN/SIX SIGMA TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

A key element of my work in February with [Qantas Airways](#) in Australia involved **linking customer focus, employee engagement, and process management**. Last month I was engaged by a national insurance company to help their **executive team understand their role in implementing Lean/Six Sigma**.

"Major organization transformation efforts like this have a **failure rate** of **50 – 70%.**"

My experience with Lean/Six Sigma began in the late eighties with North America's burgeoning Total Quality Management (TQM) and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) movements. My second book, *Firing on All Cylinders: The Service/Quality System for High-Powered Corporate Performance*, outlined a broad framework **pulling together the**

strategies, skills, culture, and tools for a comprehensive approach. The process was very successfully used by dozens of international companies, such as American Express' global rebuilding of their company in the 1990s around balancing customer service, process improvement, and employee engagement.

The Ecstasy and the Agony of Organizational Transformation

Lean/Six Sigma has been steadily growing in popularity because -- **if effectively implemented** -- it **can sharply lower** turnaround times, response rates, errors and rework, customer and employee turnover, and costs. It can also **drive dramatic spikes** in productivity, service and quality levels, customer satisfaction, employee engagement, safety performance, revenues, and profitability. **That's the ecstasy**.

The agony is that major organization transformation efforts like this one have **a failure rate of 50 - 70%.** There are many reasons for that. From decades of experience with hundreds of great, good, bad, and ugly change efforts, we've found these **Four Key Failure Factors** stand out:

- Partial and Piecemeal
- Bolt-on Programs versus Built-in Processes
- Culture Clash: Overly Focused on Tools and Techniques
- Leadership Lip Service

As the service/quality movement evolved into Lean/Six Sigma, I've spoken at conferences on the topic and the Toyota Production System across North America and facilitated Hoshin Kanri planning processes for Toyota's senior and middle management teams. Dozens of executive planning retreats and hundreds of workshops that I've facilitated have been on the underlying principles of [balancing management systems and leadership skills/practices](#) and our [Transformation Pathways](#) framework. You can read more about our experiences and services with these approaches at [Lean Leadership: Energize Lean, Six Sigma, and other Quality/Productivity Improvement Initiatives](#).

For Further Reading:

- See [Lean Manufacturing](#) and [Six Sigma](#) for comprehensive descriptions of these approaches
- [Lasting Culture Change Means Going Beyond Passionate Lip Service to Involved Leadership](#)
- [Bolt-on Programs versus Built-in Culture Change](#)

TWEET READING: RECOMMENDED ONLINE RESOURCES

This section summarizes last month's LinkedIn Updates and Twitter Tweets sent about online articles or blog posts that I've flagged as worth reading. These are usually posted on weekends when I am doing much of my reading for research, learning, or leisure.

My original tweet commenting on the article precedes each title and descriptor from the original source:

Most **organizations are managed from an inside out perspective** pushing (often called marketing) their priorities at customers/Clients. **[Let's Celebrate Dilbert-Style Management? Huh? - Steve Denning](#)** http://blogs.forbes.com

"Among the twelve things that a 'good boss' believes, any concern for the people for whom the work is being done is completely absent. The omission of any concern for the customer in the '12 beliefs of a good boss' reflects the natural habitat of hierarchical bureaucracy. This is a world that operates from an inside-out perspective…"

Yet more evidence that the learnable skills and habits of **optimism and positivity have huge payoffs** to our health and well being. **Happiness improves health and lengthens life, review finds** http://www.sciencedaily.com

"A review of more than 160 studies of human and animal subjects has found 'clear and compelling evidence' that -- all else being equal -- happy people tend to live longer and experience better health than their unhappy peers'."

Too many organizations **bolt-on change/improvement programs** rather than **build-in the approaches and tools needed** to sustain cultural shift.
Uniting the Religions of Process Improvement - **Brad Power** http://blogs.hbr.org

"When they set out to turn around processes that have become woefully inefficient or ineffective, most companies choose one of four process improvement 'religions': Lean, Six Sigma, Business Reengineering or Business Process Management (BPM)."

MANAGEMENT PRACTICES TO REDUCE WORKPLACE STRESS

An e-mail from Philip, a student working on a senior thesis on **"management practices that can help reduce stress in the work environment,"** provoked me to think further and review some of my writing on this growing epidemic.

Below are Philip's questions and my responses. **Stress is a classic symptom or result of many underlying - and often complex interconnected - root causes.** My responses provide links for a deeper look at the multi-facetted issue of stress.

How important is it for managers to be familiar with practices that can help reduce stress in the workplace?

It is vital. It is critical. It is **absolutely essential to building higher performing and healthy workplaces**. It gets to the very heart of leadership.

Read more about the American Psychological Association's research on the huge size of this problem, their five core elements of a psychologically healthy workplace, and a humorous take on how King Henry VIII ruled the anti-health workplace at **Building Healthy Workplaces: Learning from Good and Bad Examples (like King Henry VIII)**

What are some practices managers can use to help reduce stress (for employees) in the workplace?

The first step is recognizing the extent of the problem. Morale, climate, or engagement surveys can be a big help in scoping out the problem and pointing toward ways of reducing workplace stress. A highly simplified quiz at **Do You Have a Dysfunctional, Average, or High-Performing Culture?**shows some team or organization culture dimensions of this complex issue.

What are ways managers can implement these practices?

Implementation approaches need to be tailored to the causes of stress, a manager's style/skills, and the team or organization's culture. A 10 minute podcast linked at **Leadership for a Healthier and Safer Workplace - Podcast Now Available** identifies a few broad approaches.

Another part of recognizing the extent of the problem is for a manager to get honest and unvarnished feedback on whether he or she is adding to or reducing workplace stress. The concept of Multipliers or Diminishers described and linked at Genius or Genius Maker: Do You Multiply or Diminish Intelligence Around You? provides a very helpful look at this issue.

How can a manager handle his/her own stress in the workplace while still administering the company's employees?

The starting point is recognizing the 'glasses' or frameworks we wear at work -- and in life. We need to be thinking about our thinking. As we deal with changes, setbacks, and crisis we have a choice whether to lead, follow, or wallow. You can read more about the three choices and some steps toward leading at **Five Resolutions to Lead, Not Follow or Wallow in 2010**.

A critical stress management skill is whether we allow ourselves to fall into the frantic busyness and acceleration traps. As our world spins ever faster we need to learn how to focus, set priorities, and slow down. Slowing down not only reduces our stress, it actually can help us advance faster toward our goals. You can read more about this at:

- **The Acceleration Trap: Frantic Busyness and Priority Overload is Overwhelming Way Too Many Teams and Organizations**
- **Reader Reflections on Frantic Busyness, Priority Overload, and The Acceleration Trap**
- **Another Study on Slowing Down to Speed Up**.
- **Slow Down to Increase Your Speed**
- **Multitasking Dumbs Us Down and Ups Our Stress**

Is there anything else that you feel is important for managing stress in the workplace?

Connected to, and part of, the busyness trap is how we handle electronic communications like texting, social media, and e-mail. The E-Beast is out of control and driving up stress in way too many workplaces - and personal lives. See **The E-mail Beast Grows Ever Larger** for perspectives on the problem and a quiz on **Measuring the E-mail Beast**. There's also good advice on it at **Thoughts That Make You Go Hmmmm... on Taming the E-Mail Beast**.

Shameless Plug! **Many of these personal, team, and organizational leadership issues are what we'll cover in my** *[Leading @ the Speed of Change: Navigating Turbulent Times](#)* workshop on June 14 and 15 **right here in the center of the universe - my hometown of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada. It's the only public or open workshop I'll be doing this year.**

READ IT HERE OR HOT OFF MY BLOG

The items in each month's issue of *The Leader Letter* are first published in my [blog](#) (updated twice per week) the previous month. You can wait to read it all together each month in *The Leader Letter* or you can read each item as a [blog](#) post and have them sent directly to you hot off my computer by signing up at http://www.jimclemmer.com/blog/. Just enter your e-mail address in the upper left corner box under "Sign up for E-mail Blog Notification."

FEEDBACK AND FOLLOW-UP

I am always delighted to hear from readers of *The Leader Letter* with feedback, reflections, suggestions, or differing points of view. Nobody is ever identified in *The Leader Letter* without their permission. I am also happy to explore customized, in-house adaptations of any of my material for your team or organization. Drop me an e-mail at Jim.Clemmer@Clemmer.net.

Keep learning, laughing, loving, and leading – living life just for the L of it!!

Jim