

Editor's letter

Most readers of *Strategy & Leadership* get their articles online so they miss the trumpeting fanfare of the six headlines on the cover of the print journal. And unless I provide them here, American online readers would miss the reference in the first headline to one of their most famous existential philosophers, Yogi Berra. So let these headlines be your introduction to an exciting issue. Its articles range from an ingenious methodology for making creative decisions to a masterclass on the opportunities to work in alignment with shapeholders, the powerful interest groups that can influence the future of your company's brand. The cover headlines:

- When you come to a fork in the road: apply integrative thinking methodology.
- Managing four different personality types of entrepreneurs.
- Supermarket wars: ALDI and other multinationals challenge Walmart.
- Steel industry case: POSCO wins with value-added differentiation.
- China's future growth: experts explain the rationales for optimism and pessimism.
- Shapeholders: powerful constituencies amplified by social media.

Jennifer Riel and Roger Martin offer a new and tested process leaders can use to devise a creative solution when confronted with two less than optimum alternatives: **"An integrative methodology for creatively exploring decision choices."** The challenge for Riel and Martin "Could the concept of integrative thinking be translated into a repeatable methodology, supported by a set of tools for thinking through difficult or 'wicked' problems, a process that offers a better chance of rejecting false choices and of finding a way through to an innovative alternative?"

Brian Leavy interviews Chris Kuenne and John Danner, authors of *Built for Growth: How Builder Personality Shapes Your Business, Your Team, and Your Ability to Win*: **"Drivers, explorers, crusaders and captains: identifying and nurturing four types of entrepreneurial business builders."** According to Kuenne and Danner "Using the 'Builder Personality Discovery' instrument, corporations can begin to recognize which types of potential entrepreneurs they have, and then how best to support and reward their efforts in creating new business value."

Sayan Chatterjee's case predicts supermarket wars: **"Two efficiency-driven networks on a collision course: ALDI's innovative grocery business model vs Walmart."** Professor Chatterjee summarizes ALDI's strategy: "Aldi decided to build a business model that allowed it to price its products at an order of magnitude below other grocers and also develop a reputation for private label quality that has ultimately enabled it to challenge leading discount grocers."

Amy Blitz's case demonstrates how a mature business instituted a comprehensive product and process innovation to hold its own against low-price rivals. **"Lessons from the steel industry: If you can't compete on price, innovate your way to value-added differentiation."** The battle plan for a Korean steel maker beset by Chinese competitors: "POSCO introduced new revenue-generating offerings as well as innovative cost-saving processes while also improving its environmental footprint."

Jonathan Brookfield dissects the rationale behind three expert's divergent expectations of China's growth rate: **"Three views of China's economic future."** Brookfield alerts practitioners "Taken together, a weak *renminbi*, low interest rates and restrained wage growth would signal efforts to maintain the viability of China's 'latecomer' economic model."

Oleksiy Osiyevskyy and Vladyslav Biloshapka offer a masterclass on how to manage those demanding outside interest groups that can be powerful scolds or antagonists when their voices are amplified by social media. **“Shapeholders: managing them as allies, partners and significant constituents.”** The authors counsel practitioners that “Shapeholders can create enormous opportunities for smart managers capable of effectively engaging with them.”

And don't miss Harvey Hornstein's charming review of *One Minute Mentoring: How to Find and Work with a Mentor – and Why You'll Benefit from Being One* by Ken Blanchard and Claire Diaz-Ortiz. **“Mentoring: lending and getting a helping hand.”**

You'll be able to brag that you know where the word “mentor” came from.

Good reading,

Robert M. Randall

Editor