

MOSAIC LEADER: Will be The Next Generation of Leaders

By Arturo Venecia II, MBA

The business landscape has been forever changed. Some American icons have faded away and others are teetering on the brink. Businesses are forced to produce more with fewer employees. Technological advances, especially the internet, have leveled the playing field. Changing customers' tastes require constant innovation.

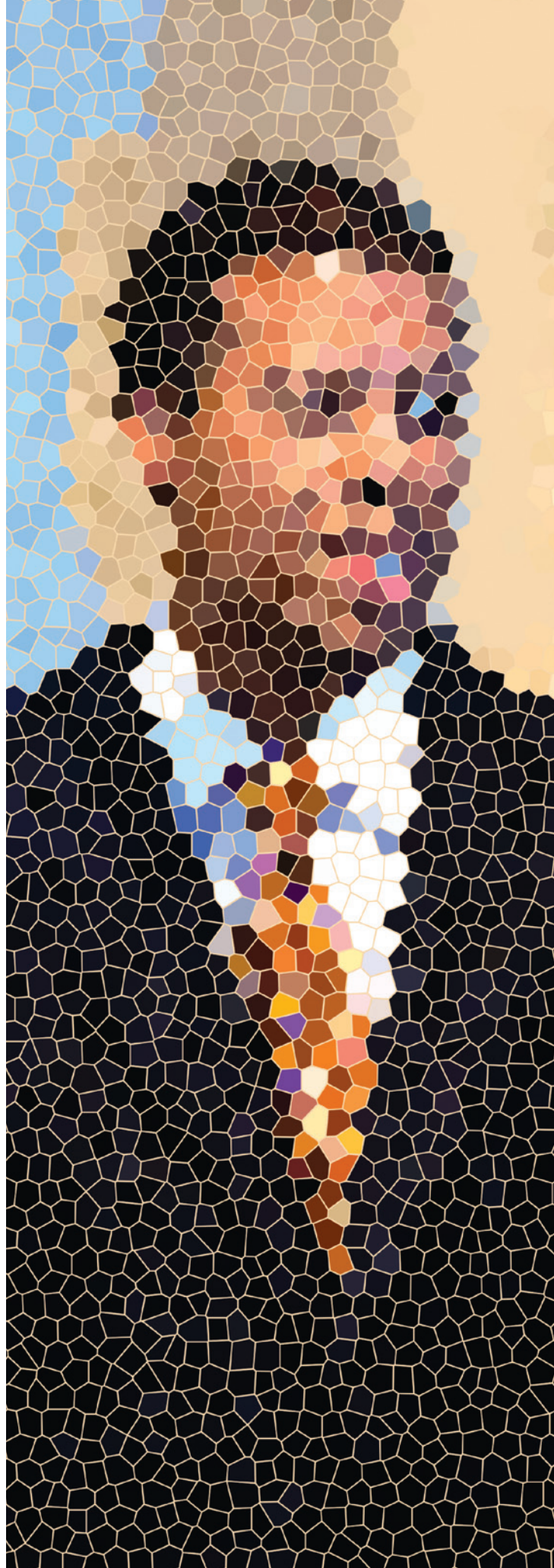
Who will lead us through this time of change? Who will harness the similarities and differences of our multi-generational, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual workforce? Who can navigate our global village of consumers and producers?

The new generation of leaders: The Mosaic Leader. This article will outline how a Mosaic Leader can transform your organization. The face of business and the face of leadership must be a composite of your workforce, customer base, communities, environment, and other stakeholders.

What is a Mosaic Leader? A person that can identify and leverage their peoples' unique aspects (both similarities and differences) to achieve organizational goals and individual development. The ultimate goal of the Mosaic Leader is to synchronize the achievement of organizational goals with personal development. One cannot exist without the other.

Why the term Mosaic Leader? First, a Mosaic is created by merging smaller pieces to form a larger picture, like how the company's employees makeup the organization. Second, the Leader must combine the essential characteristics of the individual elements into a cohesive and productive group. Therefore, these new Leaders are a composite of their people, organization, and environment. They seek to balance organizational goals, individual development, and environmental stewardship. Mosaic Leaders operate with the understanding: the sum is greater than its parts.

Mosaic Leaders achieve this through a five step process: Identify, Assess, Align, Empower, and Review: They (1) Identify their people's strengths, (2) Assess the strengths, (3) Align these strengths with organization's goals and objectives and their people's career aspirations, (4) Empower their people with "Success tools", and (5) Review your people's progress with constructive feedback.



Phase 1: Identify

Identify your people's strengths through engagement:

Look: visit your people in their element, on their job. Observe how they interact in their environment. Ask yourself, what do they need to succeed? How can I create a conducive environment that supports employee productivity and innovation?

Listen: connect to your people by active listening. Spend time with them on the job; from start to finish. See the work through their eyes – be an “Undercover Boss”. How many times do we fail to see what the job is really like? Yes, we can review the spreadsheets, look at the numbers, and compare year to date. But what does all of that really mean? You do not need to go “under cover”, just plan to spend some time with your people on their turf.

Learn: working with the employee, you discover what is needed to do the job. Yes, we all have job descriptions. But when was the last time that information was time tested. Do not be surprised if it is out of dated and irrelevant.

Leverage: these new insights into creating an environment of innovation and productivity.

This firsthand knowledge obtained by the 4 L's (Look, Listen, Learn, & Leverage) will allow you to craft a strategy to “position your people for success”. Isn't that what Leaders is all about?

Phase 2: Assess

Assess your employees' strengths throughout the year. Often times we only look at our people during their annual performance evaluation. Let me ask, how can you correctly evaluate your people at this one point in time? Yes, we have the goals to compare year to date and year to year, but what is missing? Are employees' performances a linear matter that should be observed, evaluated, and corrected over time?

Also, how well do you know your people? The only way to assess someone is to get to know them. What are their personal interests? What do they do for fun? What is their personal involvement in their community?

Phase 3: Align

Align your employees' strengths with the organizational goals and objectives. Ask yourself, how can my people assist me in reaching my target market? Are

there individuals in my department that represent that market (ie ethnic group, gender, age, technology savvy....)? If so, can they provide me feedback and a better understanding on how to reach that group? Does anyone have a sphere of influence with that group?

It is important to realize your people have a role to play in assisting the company to reach its' goals and objectives. Oftentimes, we only look at their job description as the primary role they play. Why not broaden your perspective to see them as a partner in this process?

The best way to accomplish this objective is to incorporate their career goals into this equation. Your people want to be more valuable to the organization. Value is determined by their contributions. Thus increasing their value to the organization through career development increases their productivity.

Also, you want to retain the best talent, especially in this market. You retain the top talent by developing and rewarding them.

Old Employee Model was very linear

Recruit > Retain

Mosaic Leadership Employee Model

Recruit – very best talent.

Develop – individual into a partner who becomes invested with the organization.

Reward – individuals on what matters to them (extrinsic and intrinsic values).

Retain – individuals with opportunities/advancement, career planning, job design, flexible schedule (work/life balance), mentoring/coaching, & training.

Refer – your people will be the best recruiters for new talent.

Phase 4: Empower

Empower your people with “Success Tool”。“Success Tools” can include mentoring/coaching, training, new techniques, best practices, flexible schedule, virtual workplace, and others. Your people's success depends upon the feedback you provide. Feedback allows for us to correct our course. As Mosaic Leaders you need to provide constant feedback to your people. This feedback needs to be constructive, positive, and warranted.

Phase 5: Review

Employee review and feedback is essential for their development and the company's success. Instead of waiting for monthly meetings or annual reviews; take the time to provide this on a regular basis.

It is important to take the time to identify and develop candidates into Mosaic Leaders throughout your organization. This will result in bottom line results through (1) creating a competitive advantage and (2) developing a new set of core competencies for your people. [dMBA](#)

Arturo Venecia II, MBA is President of Human Capital Development Experts, Inc. a consulting and training firm. He was named to the 2009 Diversity MBA Magazine's “Top 100 under 50 Executive Leaders”. Also, Arturo is a Professor of Diversity Management at the Morris Graduate School of Management in Chicago, IL.