

Foreword by  
**Edward J. Ludwig,**  
BD Chairman  
and CEO

“...When leaders master the art of teaching, they’ve laid  
a powerful foundation for an enduring great company.”

—JIM COLLINS, *Good to Great*

# LEADERS AS TEACHERS

*Unlock the Teaching  
Potential of Your Company’s  
Best and Brightest*



**EDWARD BETOF**

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## More Praise for *Leaders as Teachers*

“There is a gigantic difference between great individual leaders and leaders who build great companies. It’s one thing to make brilliant individual decisions, yet entirely another to cultivate a brilliant culture composed of wave upon wave of leaders who then teach generation upon generation of new leaders. When leaders master the art of teaching, they’ve laid a powerful foundation for an enduring great company.”

Jim Collins

Author, *Good to Great*

Co-author, *Built to Last*

“Ed Betof has redefined a standard for excellence in leadership development! *Leaders as Teachers* establishes the business case and provides the guide for other organizations to release the untapped potential of their own leaders. In today’s volatile business environment, using leaders as teachers is not just a good idea; it is a strategic business imperative.”

Paul Erdahl

Vice President, Global Leadership & Talent Development

Medtronic

“A breakthrough way to improve your talent and business! This treasure trove of practices will enhance any leadership development effort by leveraging the resident skills and knowledge of your organization’s leaders as they develop themselves and others. This book clearly demonstrates what I believe to be the most effective and efficient way to maximize talent investments! I would recommend this book to all senior executives seeking new ways to drive business results through teaching and learning initiatives.”

Alan Todd

Chairman, Corporate University Xchange

“Betof’s book makes a strong case for leaders as teachers. As a road map for success it is as good a GPS as I have seen.”

Gordon Peters  
Chairman and CEO, The Institute for Management Studies

“Leading for most managers does not come naturally. It must be learned, and who better to instill it than an organization’s current leaders? Based on this wise premise, Ed Betof’s *Leaders as Teachers* offers the comprehensive roadmap for building from within a complete and compelling leadership development program.”

Michael Useem  
Professor of Management and Director  
of the Center for Leadership and Change  
Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania  
Author, *The Leadership Moment*

“Ed Betof is a pioneer in promoting the concept of leaders as teachers. His strategies can revolutionize the way you think about and plan how to create a learning organization that is collaborative and dynamic. I strongly recommend this book to learning professionals and business executives, regardless of where they serve.”

Mel Silberman  
Author, *Active Training*  
Editor, *The Handbook of Experiential Learning*

“The idea that we should leverage executives to help teach and train others in the organization has long been an important and sensible goal. *Leaders as Teachers* offers a hands-on guide for doing just that based on the transformation of one of our leading companies.”

Peter Cappelli  
George W. Taylor Professor of Management  
Director, Center for Human Resources  
Editor, *Academy of Management Perspectives*

“While it has been recognized that leaders’ teaching and modeling skills will give tremendous credibility to training efforts there are many challenges to pulling it off in an organization. Ed Betof gives you a systematic, comprehensive approach to making this stick and becoming part of the fabric of your company.”

Marty Seldman  
Author, *Executive Stamina*

“Today’s business environment requires organizations to develop their leaders and build a strong bench. Organizations whose leaders teach are best-in-class examples of what it takes to build a learning culture; engage employees; effectively communicate up, down, and across the company; and ultimately drive organizational success. Ed Betof and his team were pioneers in using leaders as teachers, were recognized by ASTD and other leading organizations for their success, and have written about it so that we can all learn from their experience. *Leaders as Teachers: Unlock the Teaching Potential of Your Company’s Best and Brightest* is a must read for those with any interest in developing leaders at any level within an organization.”

Tony Bingham  
President and CEO, American Society for Training & Development



# **Leaders as Teachers**

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of Your Company's  
Best and Brightest**



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Best and Brightest**

Edward Betof



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17 16 15 14 1 2 3 4 5 6

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**ASTD Press** is an internationally renowned source of insightful and practical information on workplace learning and performance topics, including training basics, evaluation and return on investment, instructional systems development, e-learning, leadership, and career development.

**Ordering information:** Books published by ASTD Press can be purchased by visiting our website at [store.astd.org](http://store.astd.org) or by calling 800.628.2783 or 703.683.8100.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014934633

ISBN-10: 1-56286-930-2

ISBN-13: 978-1-56286-930-4

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Printed by Data Reproductions Corporation,  
Auburn Hills, MI, [www.dataarepro.com](http://www.dataarepro.com)

To my wife and life partner, Nila, with whom I have shared love and family and from whom I have learned for more than 40 years.

To my late Mom and Dad, Jean and Martin Betof, who taught me essential lessons throughout their lives and when I needed them the most.

To our son, Ari, our daughter, Allison, and our daughter-in-law, Shauna, whose goals, dreams, and zest for life will benefit so many others.

To my granddaughters, Anya Anne and Kayla Grace, who are blessed with parents and family who love them and who are helping them to become all they will choose to be.

To Ed Ludwig and the hundreds of leader-teachers throughout the world at BD as well as my BD University and talent management colleagues and teammates, who have fueled the leaders-as-teachers process since 2000.



# Contents

Foreword by <i>Edward J. Ludwig, chairman and chief executive officer, BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company)</i> .....	xiii
Acknowledgments.....	xvii
<b>1 Leaders as Teachers: Unlocking the Teaching Potential of Your Best and Brightest .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Why the Leaders-as-Teachers Approach Works: Six Strategic Organizational Benefits .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>3 A Role for Every Leader: Dozens of Ways Leaders Can Teach.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>4 Yes, Where You Work! Why Leaders Want to Teach and Come Back for More.....</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>5 Defying Gravity: Orchestrating a Leaders-as-Teachers Change Process .....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>6 Help Your Leaders Be Stars: The Four Principles for Recruiting and Preparing Leaders to Teach .....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>7 Make Learning Content Come Alive: Helping Leaders Spark Active Learning Experiences.....</b>	<b>127</b>
<b>8 Marine Boot Camp Tight: Answering Nine Key Questions to Ensure Successful Operations .....</b>	<b>159</b>
<b>9 Wrapping Up and Getting Started .....</b>	<b>173</b>
Appendix: Content of the BD Leadership Development Program.....	193
References and Sources.....	197

Additional Resources .....	199
About the Author .....	203
Index .....	205
About the American Society for Training & Development.....	211

## Foreword

*Leaders as Teachers: Unlock the Teaching Potential of Your Company's Best and Brightest* is a book that any company serious about becoming great should embrace. This book invites executives and leaders into the classroom and will help them contribute to their company's growth in very important ways. The book can help business and functional leaders teach, facilitate, and coach others for real business results. For learning and development professionals, the book can serve as an in-depth implementation guide with hundreds of proven and practical suggestions. I am proud that BD's experience of becoming a benchmark company and effectively implementing the leaders-as-teachers approach on a global basis serves as part of the backdrop of the book.

I became president of BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company) in 1999, CEO in 2000, and chairman of the board in 2002. One of the first things I did as CEO was an organizational profile to find out from our associates what was getting in the way of BD becoming a great company. One of the things we learned was that not everyone knew where we were going. And we received a strong message that we had to spend more time developing people.

That strengthened my conviction that we had to extend and formalize our leadership and associate development process. Our ability to get to where we're going is powered by skillful, adaptable, engaged people.

We wanted more than traditional training—we'd been through many cycles of that, bringing in experts from schools like Harvard and Stanford once a year and moving from idea to idea. Further, in the absence

of a strategically aligned process for training and development on a corporate-wide basis, our businesses around the globe were coming up with their own programs, and some of them were teaching management skills and behaviors that we felt were less than ideal. We wanted to promote the “BD Orthodoxy”—things BD believes to be true about the way we’re running the company and what we expect from our leaders and associates.

To prepare for BD’s next 100 years, we had to develop new skills, abilities, and approaches. And we believed that the best ways to do this was through a combination of challenging new roles, adding “stretch” to current assignments, including selected customized developmental assignments, a strong formalized curriculum, and leaders serving as teachers around the world. All this thinking led to the formation of BD University in 2000. In the years since 2000, our company’s leaders-as-teachers approach has become an integral part of our business agenda. It has been vital to our leadership development efforts and has helped us continuously strengthen our culture and communications across the company. Our leaders-as-teachers approach was led by Ed Betof, our former vice president for talent management and chief learning officer. Our company has been honored with an ASTD Best Award in 2007, and the leaders-as-teachers approach has been the subject of numerous professional articles and presentations, and a best practices educational video.

Serving as a leader-teacher is very important to me, as it is to hundreds of other leaders in our company. Teaching gives me the opportunity to speak directly to people about where we are going, and about our journey to become a great company. Initially, teaching sessions made me understand that we needed to increase our communication substantially. I began to travel more; to make videos for employees; to hold conference calls; and to conduct town meetings to describe our purpose, our goals, our values, and our directions. I have taught in dozens of leadership programs and have also personally benefited in many ways. Teaching is one of the methods I use to try to stay in touch and to keep my finger on the pulse of the company. In my teaching role, I answer a lot of questions,

and that's helped me clarify my own ideas about where the company should be going. I learn from teaching, and I think it has made me a better communicator of our strategies.

Frankly, I don't think the role of teacher is optional for a CEO in today's complex, multifunctional, multinational, technology-driven organizations. It's part of the job. And it's a fun part. I believe that the education in which we participate contributes to making the company grow faster, become more profitable, and achieve higher levels of customer satisfaction. It is also a vital complement to our associate engagement efforts.

When we recruit, we definitely want people to know that teaching will be part of their success at BD. They will be expected to take time to teach, coach, and develop people as well as to get into a formal training mode.

One of the things I'd like to be remembered for—and I hope this goes toward the top of the list—is that on my watch, the development of people became embedded in the organization's culture. I believe the maxim that a company's only sustainable competitive advantage is the ability to innovate, adapt, learn, and create new value for its customers. When leaders serve as teachers, this is all the more likely to occur. I am pleased that our ability to learn, teach, and grow has developed into an organizational flywheel. These efforts must keep going. If it does, we will have done something very important for the next generation.

I recommend *Leaders as Teachers* to your organization. It is a treasure trove for teaching and learning organizations.

Edward J. Ludwig  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer  
Becton, Dickinson and Company  
April 2009



# Acknowledgments

I wish to extend my gratitude to the following individuals for their suggestions and encouragement in the preparation, review, and editing of this book:

Nila Betof, PhD, partner and chief operating officer of the Leaders Edge, whose ongoing support and ideas solidified my commitment to write this book.

Tora Estep, a senior associate editor with ASTD Press. Tora's final editing and management of the process from proofs through publication and distribution enabled the project to cross the finish line on time and in a high-quality manner. Her guidance in the final stages of the editing process has been invaluable to me.

Alfred Imhoff, who provided superb copy-editing that came just at the right time and helped me to complete the manuscript in a timely manner.

Jim Jerbasi, Jean-Marc Dageville, and Donna Boles to whom I reported in succession as they led the global BD human resources function since the late 1990s. Their support was instrumental in helping our efforts to establish the leaders-as-teachers approach and the creation and growth of BD University.

Donna McNamara, PhD, who implemented a very successful leaders-as-teachers process during her years as the leader of the learning function at the Colgate-Palmolive Company. Donna's feedback and ideas always proved useful as the manuscript evolved.

## Acknowledgments

Mark Morrow, manager of acquisitions and author relations, ASTD Press, who provided invaluable support, encouragement, and editing throughout the writing project. Mark was available whenever I needed him, and I could not have completed this project without his input.

Cindy Scalice, training coordinator at BD, who assisted me in dozens of ways for more than five years in my role at the company and was ever responsive to answer questions and to help me locate documents and resources as I wrote the manuscript for this book.

Thomas Ruddy, PhD, who currently serves as vice president and leads the talent management and learning function at BD. Tom's support and timely review and approval of the manuscript allowed this project to be completed on time.

Joseph Toto, who has served as director of leadership development and learning at BD University beginning in 2002. Joe's partnership, teaching, and skill in advancing the leaders-as-teachers process around the world added immeasurably to the program's success. Joe provided ideas and edits throughout the writing process that have been incorporated as important points in this book.

Wendy Witterschein who has traveled the world as a key member of BD University's leadership team. Wendy has been a superb and creative role model in the recruitment, training, and preparation of leader-teachers across the globe. Wendy's insights, feedback, and ideas have added unique perspectives to this book.

# Leaders as Teachers

## Unlocking the Teaching Potential of Your Best and Brightest

*Teaching is the highest form of understanding*

—Aristotle

*Setting an example is not the main means of influencing  
another; it is the only means.*

—Albert Einstein

The concept of using an organization’s leaders as a key component of a successful learning strategy might seem an obvious use of the many talented, dedicated leaders who work at all levels in every organization. Why not use the potential of these leaders to inspire, mentor, coach, and train other talented leaders, or even teams and team leaders, to enable them to reach their full potential? My goal in writing this book is to inspire those in other organizations to take this obvious leap and unlock the potential of leaders who are hungry to share their knowledge and experience with others.

In this book, I share what I have learned in my organization—BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company)—about how to design and implement strategically aligned and integrated leaders-as-teachers processes in business and organizational settings. The book is intended as both an informational guide and a practical implementation resource that will help you take this leap of

faith and build your own leaders-as-teachers program. To accomplish this mission, I have provided a detailed road map that includes dozens of tips, hints, and implementation suggestions, along with useful worksheets, training agendas, and other support material. All the suggestions and ideas in this book are supported by practical experience and underpinned by sound theory that allows for application to a wide range of organizations.

## **Who Should Read This Book?**

This book is primarily intended for learning and human resources leaders and professionals as well as business executives who wish to make teaching, coaching, and learning part of their formula for business and organizational success. Coaches who work with senior executives, including CEOs, will find this book a valuable resource. In addition, high-visibility leaders can use the concepts in this book to enhance their communication techniques.

## **Both a Strategic and Practical Guide**

As noted, this book is both a strategic and practical implementation guide. Each chapter begins with a short introduction titled “What’s Inside This Chapter.” The chapters end with one or more implementation activities. The book accomplishes its strategic and practical goals by emphasizing

- ◆ the alignment of program selection and content development processes with business strategy and goals
- ◆ a careful selection and preparation of leader-teachers
- ◆ effective and active or experiential teaching by leaders
- ◆ active participant learning with a high potential for application and impact
- ◆ implementation based on personal learning experiences that contribute to business, organizational, team, and individual success.

## **Origins of BD’s Success Story**

BD’s journey to a successful leaders-as-teachers program began in early 2000 when it took the first steps to establish BD University (BDU). Since then, more than 500 leaders have taught and served as the primary

faculty for BDU. More than 90 percent of the classroom teaching at BDU is done by BD leader-teachers, including BD's chairman and chief executive officer, Edward J. Ludwig. As the senior executive of the company, Ed's ability and willingness to be actively engaged as a leader-teacher have set the example and a high standard for others in the organization. He regularly teaches in BD's Leadership and Advanced Leadership Development programs, which are offered in many parts of the world. On those infrequent occasions when he cannot be physically present, without missing a beat, he has taught and conducted town meetings using videoconferencing and teleconferencing technologies. He is also a guest speaker in other programs and is a knowledge sharer and communicator by nature and by training.

### **The Results Are Evident**

The leaders-as-teachers approach has contributed in a variety of ways to BD's growth and its journey toward becoming a great company. During the eight years since the launch of BDU, BD has experienced strong and steady financial growth, outperformed many firms in its peer group, and more than doubled its worldwide sales and profitability. It has also been formally recognized as a great place to work by *Fortune* magazine and has been selected as an employer of choice in a number of states and countries. Through its science, technology, business practices, volunteerism, and philanthropy, BD continues to pursue its "Three Greats": great performance, great contributions to society, and being a great place to work. In addition to its many other business, philanthropic, social, and ethical accomplishments, BD has become a "best-in-class" example of how to deploy leaders and selected professionals as teachers. This approach to teaching and learning has become the foundation and "brand" of BDU.

The success of BD's program has inspired other organizations as well. Employees of other companies regularly visit BD to benchmark BD's leaders-as-teachers approach and practices. And BD's efforts have been recognized by professional workplace learning and development societies as well as research and consulting groups such as ASTD, the Corporate University Exchange, Accenture Learning, and the Center for Creative Leadership. BD's success story has also been told in numerous articles,

staff presentations at professional conferences, and even a professional video documentary that tells BD's leaders-as-teachers story.

BD's leaders-as-teachers story is an important one. But in this book, it is simply a backdrop to enable the reader to gain a better understanding of the leaders-as-teachers approach. It is a paradigm of organizational practice from which other organizations can learn and which they can subsequently customize as they seek to develop what will work best in their context and culture. This book's approach can add tremendous value to a very wide range of organizations, yet it is culturally adaptable for each setting.

## **The Book's Design and Organization**

This book's design enables you to easily read and use it as a whole or to read just the content that applies to your particular situation. Alternatively, each of the nine chapters, and even parts of these chapters, can be used separately to meet specific performance or learning needs. Throughout the book, I try not only to communicate what I have learned but also to present it in such a way so that you can tailor the leaders-as-teachers approach to your organization on either a smaller or larger scale. For example, when implementing the ideas in this book, you could start with one or two small efforts where leaders teach. You might conclude that you wish to keep your organizational approach relatively small. You could also design your approach for significantly larger yet measured and incremental growth. Regardless of the size and scope, this book explains the "whats," the "whys," and the "hows" to help you get off to a great start and then to sustain your progress.

The book is organized in eight chapters in addition to this chapter. Here is a brief description of each chapter.

### **Chapter 2: Why the Leaders-as-Teachers Approach Works—Six Strategic Organizational Benefits**

Chapter 2 describes how the leaders-as-teachers approach supports an organization's business agenda. It includes a short case study of BD's implementation experience. You will also find an in-depth examination

of the six key business benefits of using the leaders-as-teachers approach, which include:

1. Helps drive business results
2. Stimulates the learning and development of leaders and associates
3. Improves the leadership skills of those who teach
4. Strengthens the organizational culture and communications
5. Promotes positive business and organizational change
6. Reduces costs by leveraging top talent.

In addition to providing the strategic rationale for the decision to adopt a leaders-as-teachers approach, this chapter sets the stage for the remainder of the book, which focuses on how to launch a leaders-as-teachers program in your organization.

### **Chapter 3: A Role for Every Leader—Dozens of Ways Leaders Can Teach**

Chapter 3 is organized around the five broad categories or approaches by which leaders teach, coach, and contribute to learning and training programs and, more broadly, to organizational learning. More than 50 specific leader-teacher methods are described. These methods are grouped and presented thematically in five broad categories:

1. Identification of learning needs and design of learning solutions and programs
2. Live teaching
3. Teaching through the use of media and technology
4. Preprogram and postprogram teaching and coaching to help ensure application and impact of learning
5. Recruiting, training, coaching, and mentoring leader-teachers.

### **Chapter 4: Yes, Where You Work! Why Leaders Want to Teach and Come Back for More**

Chapter 4 describes how to attract, engage, and retain leaders to serve as teachers and explores why these leaders want to serve. Drawing on principles and concepts of the leadership, career, and organizational experts Bernard

Haldane, Noel Tichy, and Tim Butler and Jim Waldroop, the book presents an integrated motivational model that reveals how to tap the energy, talent, and deeply embedded life interests that can be found in all organizations to drive your efforts to introduce a leaders-as-teachers approach.

### **Chapter 5: Defying Gravity—Orchestrating a Leaders-as-Teachers Change Process**

Chapter 5 further describes the critical change process that must be addressed in a leaders-as-teachers approach. Change and leadership concepts derived from Jim Collins, John Kotter, and other leading thinkers can be invaluable for implementing a leaders-as-teachers approach. This chapter explores the essential elements of leading change and *how* you can use these elements to champion the implementation of a leaders-as-teachers process. The importance of senior leader and high-influencer involvement, not just support, is emphasized. Examples from BD's experiences support the principles and serve as a model for implementation in your organization.

### **Chapter 6: Help Your Leaders Be Stars—The Four Principles for Recruiting and Preparing Leaders to Teach**

Recruiting and preparation are two of the keys to a successful program. Chapter 6 focuses on how to recruit leader-teachers and how to help them become stars. You will find many practical examples of techniques. Organized around four overarching principles or truths about leader-teacher recruitment and preparation, this chapter emphasizes the importance of:

- ◆ Matching leaders' background, expertise, responsibilities, and teaching interests with program content and teaching assignments
- ◆ Teaching confidence based on preparation
- ◆ Teaching readiness
- ◆ Using active teaching and training methods in program design.

## **Chapter 7: Make Learning Content Come Alive—Helping Leaders Spark Active Learning Experiences**

Learning content, structure, and approach are essential to helping leaders spark an active and meaningful learning experience. Chapter 7 describes active teaching and active learning methodologies and provides practical answers to common questions about this approach to learning. In addition, a baker's dozen of active teaching methods for leaders as teachers is offered. These multipurpose teaching and facilitation methods can be adapted and used for many content areas and programs and are applicable for many cultural settings around the world. To help you design your program, the Three-Level Program Design Model is offered and a case example is provided. This model is a practical framework for actively involving program participants in their own learning. The model can also be used to increase learning retention and encourage follow-through and application by the learner.

## **Chapter 8: Marine Boot Camp Tight: Answering Nine Key Questions to Ensure Successful Operations**

Every successful program needs a solid administrative and operational framework and the infrastructure mechanisms and processes to efficiently support a leaders-as-teachers approach. Chapter 8 helps you create a hassle-free administrative environment by exploring these topics:

- ◆ How does governance affect the leaders-as-teachers process?
- ◆ What role do learning professionals play in the success of the leaders-as-teachers approach?
- ◆ How are the logistics of programs best handled?
- ◆ Why is advanced and reliable scheduling important?
- ◆ Why is it important to contract with leader-teachers for the session they have agreed to teach?
- ◆ What are the factors to consider when matching instructor teams?
- ◆ Program champions have a unique role. How do they help the leaders-as-teachers approach?

- ◆ What is the role of scorecards, dashboards, and “State of the Union” reports?
- ◆ How can you best manage vendor selection and relationships?

## **Chapter 9: Wrapping Up and Getting Started**

The capstone of chapter 9 is the implementation activity titled “Your 12-Month Road Map—Implementing the Leaders-as-Teachers Approach in Your Organization.” Though the chapter sums up the previous chapters, it also offers implementation signposts in the form of “Twelve Quick Reminders to Keep You on Track” and a useful recap of the questions presented in this book about the key issues that have challenged leaders and colleagues pursuing teachers-as-leaders programs, including:

1. What are the reasons for a company to implement a leaders-as-teachers approach?
2. What are the different ways in which leaders can teach and contribute to individual and organizational learning?
3. How do we get our senior leaders and other leaders on board?
4. What is the best way to recruit leader-teachers?
5. What is the best way to prepare leaders to teach?
6. How can program and curriculum design help leaders become effective and exciting teachers?
7. How do we get started, and what should be our first steps? How do we build momentum once we get started?
8. Should leader-teachers be “certified” to teach?
9. Should we “decertify” leaders if they are ineffective teachers, and if so, how do we do it?
10. How can an organization’s administrative and operating processes as well as infrastructure best support the leaders-as-teachers process?

## Sources

The references cited and sources used in writing the book, along with additional resources, are listed at the end of the book.

## See Leaders as Teachers in Action

If you would like to see firsthand how a leaders-as-teachers program works and feel the excitement it brings to organizational learning, go to [www.astd.org/leadersasteachers](http://www.astd.org/leadersasteachers) or to [www.corpu.com/leadersasteachers](http://www.corpu.com/leadersasteachers), where you will find a link to *The People Factor: Leaders as Teachers at BD*, a 23-minute film produced by the Corporate University Exchange that vividly describes the leaders-as-teachers process at BD.

**Buy This Book**