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civil + structural ENGINEERING

CELEBRATING THE DESIGNERS OF THE WORLD AROUND US

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AWARD-WINNING PUBLICATION

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Louis Berger explores opportunities
and collaborations

Taking ownership of BIM
Thinking about reality capture
Restoring the Hoover-Mason Trestle
Residential rainwater harvesting
ABCs of rehabilitating I-95's bridges





LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

COMPANIES RISE AND FALL; sometimes they soar. It all comes down to leadership and teamwork. I have been fortunate to encounter many mentors. One of these great minds is Ed Friedrichs, an architect who joined a small San Francisco company called Gensler in 1969 and was instrumental in growing the company to one of the world's most respected and largest architectural practices, with 46 offices and more than 5,500 staff today. Ed has a stellar reputation for leading, inspiring, and shaping future leaders. His leadership ability continues into retirement. His handpicked leadership team has grown the company to twice its former size. This was all done without mergers or acquisitions. Great leaders multiply other leaders — the highest form of leadership you can attain. Here is some wisdom gained from knowing Ed:

- Focus on and maximize each person's strengths and encourage them to accept responsibility for achieving excellence in that role. No one person can do it all or have every leadership quality your firm needs. Let people excel at what they are good at.
- Understand that leaders exist to serve others — to make everyone's job easier by removing roadblocks and building an atmosphere of collaboration and teamwork.
- Understand and embrace that happy people are better team members. Foster an environment that nurtures a positive team spirit and pride in accomplishments.
- Reflect on goals, accomplishments, and failures on a regular basis. It's easy to spend all your time putting out fires and reacting to critical issues. Every leader needs time to reflect on what they really want to accomplish for the firm and how to get his or her team there. Give your leaders time to do that. Insist on it.

I would like to add to the list: Leaders must set an articulated vision and inspiring purpose of the organization. Leaders must attract passionate people who believe in their goals. Leaders must create exciting momentum and act fast. Leaders must set up the right strategies and actions to *win*. For me, *winning* is doing the right things for society, having right strategies, growing profitably, and sharing the profit with all involved. But profit cannot be the first priority. If we do the first two right, money follows. Often, if you only pursue money, you don't make much and it is not sustainable. If you are making an impact, inspiring, focusing on your passion and strength, and making difference, you will end up making more at the end.

Leadership is a journey on which I am learning every day, mainly from my failures. But mentors like Ed can show the shortest way to get there with fewer detours.

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Mentors can show you the shortest way to become a leader with fewer detours.