

4-2016

## Uplifting Leadership: How Organizations, Teams and Communities Raise Performance, by Andy Hargreaves, Alan Boyle, & Alma Harris

Stephen B. Moll  
*Florida International University, North Miami*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jacl>

---

### Recommended Citation

Moll, Stephen B. (2016) "Uplifting Leadership: How Organizations, Teams and Communities Raise Performance, by Andy Hargreaves, Alan Boyle, & Alma Harris," *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*: Vol. 10: No. 1, 82-83.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/jacl/vol10/iss1/8>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Applied Christian Leadership by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact [repository@andrews.edu](mailto:repository@andrews.edu).

# BOOK REVIEWS

## **UPLIFTING LEADERSHIP: HOW ORGANIZATIONS, TEAMS, AND COMMUNITIES RAISE PERFORMANCE**

*By Andy Hargreaves, Alan Boyle,  
& Alma Harris  
San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass (2014)  
Hardcover, 240 pages*

*Reviewed by STEPHEN B. MOLL*

Why should you read *Uplifting Leadership*? Because authors Hargreaves, Boyle and Harris have created a template for executing top quality leadership. As a Vice Provost of Florida International University, the fourth largest university (enrollment-wise) in America, I was so impressed by their new view of leadership that I purchased a dozen copies of the book to share with my colleagues. My colleagues have all raved at the organization and insight the authors share with the audience.

The purpose of the book, as stated in the introduction, is to explain and demonstrate the concept of “uplift” that encapsulates the authors’ research conducted in “fifteen organ-

izations and systems in business, sports, and public education from 2007 to 2012” (p. 2) that experienced success in spite of disadvantages and challenges. Each of the six chapters enlists the experts in the particular field addressed in the chapter to assist in the communication of these major ideas, all of which have practical implications for leadership.

One of the historical tenets of leadership is having a meaningful dream. The first chapter, “Dreaming With Determination,” begins to build the concept of uplift by addressing the implementation of creative thought, showing one how to dare to dream, uplifting others by bringing that dream alive, being neither fearful nor fearless, acknowledging others’ fears, and fighting for what is right. The following chapter, titled “Creativity and Counter-Flow,” gives the reader pragmatic techniques by which to accomplish the tasks necessary to be successful. It encourages and instructs the reader to use surprise tactics. The authors also encourage one to, as they put it, “trail your errors”—to be persistent in journaling, and learning from successes and errors through this intentional reflection. “Collaboration With Competition” is added as a major life lesson for all who aspire to lead with the aim of making a difference. This chapter suggests that the leader be generous, not stingy, with ideas. Positive competition assumes collaboration that is encouraged by lifting up competitors, which helps make one a better performer by demonstrating respect even for rivals. Chapter Three ends by showing the reader how to seek higher common ground by benchmarking relentlessly.

The yin and yang of the book is embraced in “Pushing and Pulling.” This chapter, the fourth, suggests that leaders get to know those they

lead by showing value and respect for them and accentuating the strengths of their team to help offset their own weaknesses, thus emphasizing the positive rather than the negative. Emphasizing weaknesses makes people feel poorly and drains energy and productivity. The authors suggest that leaders stay grounded and avoid embracing cliques and elitist behavior, which tend to alienate followers and ultimately reduce productivity. Finally they encourage the leader to conduct difficult conversations with dignity rather than power-based confrontations aimed at punishment or compliance.

The last two chapters address essential management elements that contribute to uplift. “Measuring With Meaning” requires that one needs to measure that which is valued in order to be successful. If the leader shares the mission targets and projects transparency, it is possible to intelligently interpret the evidence collected and make metrics meaningful. It also infers that the measurements should be reflective of what is commonly determined by both leader and followers as valued. In other words, if leaders let others know how they will be evaluated, they will typically be more effective in achieving a positive evaluation.

This element is followed in the final chapter with the recommendation to pursue “Sustainable Success”—that is, keep the mission consistent with available resources. Readers are advised not to make promises or build expectations that they cannot deliver upon. To the extent that an organization can grow from within, it should build those resources to meet that mission. Growth should be sustainable and performed at a reasonable rate. Finally, the *raison d’être* of any organization is its mission statement.

Everything that is done should be related to this mission.

My take-away from this book is that leaders who keep these concepts in mind are more likely to be effective in helping to achieve organizational goals. By applying the uplift elements presented in this outstanding book, a culture may be developed that provides the necessary lift at all levels of the organization, resulting in success.

STEPHEN B. MOLL is Vice Provost of Florida International University in North Miami, Florida.

### **RELATIONAL LEADING: PRACTICES FOR DIALOGICALLY BASED COLLABORATION**

*By Lone Hersted & Kenneth J. Gergen  
Chagrin Falls, OH: Taos Institute  
Publications (2013)  
Kindle edition, 197 pages*

*Reviewed by STANLEY E.  
PATTERSON*

The Taos Institute and the authors have made a valuable contribution to the leadership community by providing not only a theoretical base for relational leadership but also a description of a practical application of the concept. The model is explored primarily in the corporate management context where “new and highly complex problems require linking many different kinds of knowledge; cooperation across cultural borders is increasingly necessary; work teams are needed to supply continuous innovation. Successful collaboration originates in dialogic process” (loc 128). It is in this context that the authors suggest that effective leadership is today a matter of conversation rather than command. “Successful dialogue is crucial” (loc 128).