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## WHY SHOULD THE BOSS LISTEN TO YOU?

The 7 Disciplines of the Trusted Strategic Advisor

By James E. Lukaszewski

Jossey Bass/ Wiley (February 2008)

Softcover; 184 pages; \$16.47 from amazon.com

PR counselor Jim Lukaszewski has advised a countless number of CEOs during times of corporate crisis.

The No. 2 person is the target of his new book, "Why Should the Boss Listen to You? The 7 Disciplines of the Trusted Strategic Advisor." Those targets are staffers in PR, accounting, advertising, human resources, IT, marketing, law and strategy.

Lukaszewski outlines his vision on how to influence the boss via seven common sense disciplines. They are:

**Be trustworthy** - That is the foundation on which a relationship between boss and advisor must be based. Trust is one of the important reasons that people get promoted. The five ingredients of trust are candor, credibility, competence, integrity and loyalty.

**Become a verbal visionary** - Verbal skill is where the true strategic advisor's real power lies. Managers and leaders know that the best ideas sometimes come from confrontation, a clash of ideas. Be ready to rumble. Lukaszewski believes this is the toughest test of all since most advisors tend to be peacemakers, consensus builders and momentum generators.

**Develop a management perspective** - The trusted advisor asks constructive questions that help broaden understanding and move processes and decision-making to the next level. Rather than worrying about the media, PR people are better off focusing on the management issues at hand.

**Think strategically** - Becoming a strategist means committing to a mental approach that out-thinks the competition, opposition, critics and produces a distinctive or unique approach, series of steps, solution options or choices of direction. Strategy is always positive and future-focused. A strategist applies focus and intensity to the most critical parts of a problem or opportunity using fact-finding, truth seeking and reality testing.

**Be a window to tomorrow** - Understand and use the powers of patterns. Leadership always benefits from useful, sensible suggestions about what the next steps or increments might be. This is among the greatest contributions trusted strategic advisors can make. Pattern analysis is another key tool for advising the boss about what to do next.

**Advise constructively** - Talk to time. Be brief. Avoid excessive talking. Brevity is important because concentrated, well-structured information presented verbally or in writing is powerful and more likely to be assimilated and owned by others. Executives based decisions on experience and intuition and facts harvested through brief interactions with colleagues.

Show the boss how to use the advice - Focus on tomorrow and take from yesterday only the positive, useful, constructive elements and ideas that can move the process forward promptly. Outcome focus saves precious time, reduces mistakes and misunderstandings, and acts as a positive force for moving ahead.

Lukaszewski believes the most important step to becoming a trusted advisor is making a personal commitment to becoming one.

He takes aim at the bromide about PR's goal about "getting a seat at the management table."

To Lukaszewski, the trusted strategic advisor "is" the table, which becomes full when he or she enters the room.

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