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POWER PLAYERS > People in the know who you ought to know



Leader of the Pack

Kevin Cashman
changes companies
one manager
at a time

BY TODD MESSELT

When it comes to fine-tuning the dynamic balance of skills that it takes to make a winning leader or a stellar organization, sometimes it takes an overachiever.

Take Kevin Cashman, for example. If he's not out competing in a triathlon (he's been in more than 50) or teaching meditation (as he's done for more than 30 years), then he's off writing a best-selling business book (he's written a total of four) or hosting a local radio talk show (as he did for two years on KSTP-AM). Cashman also stands at the helm of the Minneapolis-based LeaderSource, an international firm that provides executive coaching, leadership development and "team effectiveness" training.

Featured as a top executive coach in the *Wall Street Journal* and on CNN, Cashman's list of accolades and accomplishments also includes being quoted by Oprah Winfrey on her show while holding up a copy of his book *Leadership from the Inside Out* (TCLG, Sept. 1998); and acting as contributing author (along with Warren Bennis, Stephen Covey and Marshall Goldsmith) on two books: *A New Paradigm of Leadership* (Executive Excellence Publishing, Sept. 1997) and *Partnering: The New Face of Leadership* (American Management Association, Nov. 2002). His most recent book, *Awakening the Leader Within* (Wiley, April 2003), is inspired by his experiences in executive coaching and teambuilding at LeaderSource.

Cashman founded LeaderSource in 1977 as a sole proprietorship, originally under the name MarketShare. "It started with an idea around coaching people in their careers," he says. "We took a marketing model and applied it to career transition."

Cashman formed the company after serving three years as the regional director of the Swiss-based World Plan Executive Council, where he did human development work for the U.S. Olympic Ski Team and the Minnesota Vikings. After that, he served two years as vice president of the Occupational Training Center (now Minnesota Diversified Industries), which provides vocational training to people with disabilities.

Power Player: Kevin Cashman

Title: CEO, LeaderSource Inc. ■

Age: 54 ■ **Hometown:** Edina ■

Education: B.S., Psychology, St. John's University (1973) ■ **Directorships:**

board member, Center For Ethical Business Cultures; senior fellow, Caux Roundtable; former board member, Youth Frontiers ■ **E-mail:**

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Today, Cashman and his team of 10 consultants at LeaderSource work with more than 120 companies annually and have a global reach that spans more than 50 countries. LeaderSource's clients include 3M, Avery Dennison, Carlson Companies, General Mills, Honeywell, Novartis and Thrivent.

The fee for LeaderSource's branded executive coaching services ranges from \$20,000 to \$60,000, while fees for group "team effectiveness" and leadership development programs might fall somewhere between \$30,000 and \$100,000. Last year, the privately held company's gross revenue was about \$4 million, Cashman says.

Ever since *Fast Company* magazine labeled one of LeaderSource's programs the "Mayo Clinic" of leadership development, it's been a metaphor Cashman has embraced for describing his interdisciplinary, holistic approach to executive coaching.

"The reason people come here literally from around the world is because they get to work with an integrated team of coaches," Cashman says. "They may be working with a great local coach in Europe somewhere, but they come here to work with an integrated team so they can really sort out what's going on and really put a plan together to optimize their effectiveness."

Some coaches help clients understand their personality's impact on an organization, while other coaches might help with interpersonal communications. Still others might help with management techniques or "purpose mastery" (LeaderSource's term for career development).

Whether it's at the group or individual level, Cashman's philosophy holds that improving human authenticity, trust and purpose is key to improving leadership. "When we're in a leadership role, all of who we are impacts the organization directly," Cashman says. "We're constantly impacting the culture, dynamics and atmosphere of the company, either creating a lot of value or a lot of unintended consequences." ■

Todd Messelt is a freelance writer.