



Liz on Leadership

Are You Controlling Your Reputation? Or Is It Controlling You?

Pick up the Wall Street Journal any day of the week, scan the front page, and you will immediately find stories of brands tarnished and reputations squandered. Companies losing the confidence of their customer base. Business partners severing the relationship. Key investors pulling out with little to no warning. They simply don't want the association—or the risk.

The fact is, it doesn't take much to seriously damage a brand. There are countless ways to lose the trust of your key stakeholders and you needn't be the CEO of Equifax, Wells Fargo or Volkswagen to experience profound, even career-ending, reputational damage. Never forget, as a leader, you've got a lot of people watching you and continually making judgments about your integrity, approach, and effectiveness. The same level of scrutiny applies to your team and your business. Judgments are made, opinions shared, perceptions influenced. And in today's world of instant information sharing and the 24/7 news cycle, reputations are built or broken with the click of a mouse.

As a business leader, it's essential that you pay attention to your brand. There are three elements of reputation that should always be on your radar: personal, team, and company. Pause to reflect on each. Ask a diverse group of others for input. Then decide: is my brand exceptional, mixed, declining, or poor? And what must I do right away to solidify personal, team, and company repute?

Consider the following:

Personal brand:

- *How am I viewed by my boss, peers, direct reports, and business partners?*
- *How do my customers and clients perceive and talk about me?*
- *What do my contacts in relevant regulatory agencies think of me? Do they trust me? Respect me?*
- *Does the Board give me freedom to make decisions without undue interference?*
- *Do my employees and industry peers view me as an exemplar and a visionary? The kind of leader who values employees, puts customers first, drives innovation, and is poised to lead the company to an extraordinary future?*

Team brand:

- *How is my team typically described by others?*
- *Are we viewed as reliable, trustworthy, direct, professional, inclusive, communicative, strategic, future-focused, collaborative, creative, etc.?*
- *Do others want to join the team?*
- *Are my top performers consistently being approached by others to partner, mentor, join their team, or provide a value-added point of view?*

Company brand:

- *How is the company portrayed in the press?*
- *What do customers and employees say about us on social media?*
- *Do our clients consistently rave about us?*
- *Do we get frequent and enthusiastic recommendations and referrals?*
- *Are we seen as an employer of choice?*
- *Is our stock price increasing?*
- *Are investors raising their hands to get a piece of the action?*
- *Do regulatory agencies trust us?*
- *Are we being pursued for exciting collaborations and partnerships?*
- *Are we seen as having a bright future?*
- *Do we stand out as industry leaders?*
- *Are we receiving meaningful recognition and awards?*

Amid the daily pressures of leadership, rapid decision-making, and too-frequent fires, it can be a challenge to focus on building an outstanding brand. But at the end of the day, it's pretty simple: be the leader who generates confidence, trust, loyalty, and rave reviews. It's the foundation of success for you, your team, and your company—not to mention the customers, partners, and investors who look to you to lead an exceptional organization.

Did you miss my last newsletter?

Slow Down to Speed Up: How to Succeed Today and Thrive Tomorrow

September has always been one of my favorite months. The weather in the Northeast US is lovely. The foliage begins to change, displaying a dynamic array of colors. The air becomes crisp and the mornings cool. On a personal note, I get to enjoy another birthday, which somehow remains a treat well beyond childhood.

This year marks a milestone for me. As I reflect on my upcoming birthday, I feel incredibly fortunate to find myself enjoying good health and surrounded by a wonderful family, extraordinary clients, and a business that continues to evolve, grow, and reward in myriad ways.

My greatest challenge lies in maintaining balance and consistently applying a strategic mindset throughout my busy days. Amid the hectic pace of business and personal commitments, I must be especially thoughtful about how I spend my time, set priorities, make decisions, and position myself for the future.

I see the same phenomenon with my executive clients. Jammed calendars, competing priorities, and the ongoing challenge of balancing short-term pressures with long-term goals make it difficult to remain consistently strategic and get the right things done.

If this sounds familiar, take the following steps to ensure you're leading an organization that favors proactivity over reactivity, strategy over tactics, and calm over chaos.

1. Slow Down. Yes, it may sound like an impossible feat. After all, there are decisions to be made, actions to be taken, targets to be reached. But let's be clear. Running as fast as you can will not get you the best possible outcomes. On the contrary, going too fast paves the way to poor decisions and repeated errors that can seriously set you back.

2. Foster a thoughtful workplace. Tell your team what you expect and have them help you cascade it throughout the organization: *We are going to think before reacting, strategize before we execute, communicate before forging ahead, and look to the future rather than striving only to survive the day.*

3. Maintain a laser focus on priorities. Short-term challenges can easily distract you from the long-term vision. Don't let it happen. Instead, launch your day, week, quarter, and year with a strategic view of top priorities. If your short-term actions don't support long-term growth, they're probably not true priorities. While you can't walk away from all the pressing items, you should certainly say *no* to some. Ask yourself: *Do I do this now/later/never?* (This framework and many others can be found in my new book, [*Slow Down to Speed Up: Lead, Succeed and Thrive in a 24/7 World.*](#))

Slow down, think, prioritize. Remember these straightforward ways to create your own "slow down to speed up" organization: one that is fully prepared to succeed today, adapt to the unexpected, and thrive well into the future.

Slow Down to Speed Up:

Lead, Succeed and Thrive in a 24/7 World

I'm thrilled to announce that my forthcoming book, *Slow Down to Speed Up: Lead, Succeed and Thrive in a 24/7 World*, is officially in production! It's a highly actionable book, filled with pragmatic advice to help you, and your company, thrive in today's fast-paced world.

If you would like the book for yourself or a colleague, or if you want to submit a bulk pre-order, you can go directly to the [Business Expert Press](#) website. If you have any questions or would like to discuss ways to leverage the insights and tools in *Slow Down to Speed Up*, just send me an email: liz@bywaterconsultinggroup.com.

Stayed tuned for additional details and offers!

"Liz provides an in depth look at something we all struggle with. Finding the balance. These real life examples provide insight into some innovative new thinking around the pragmatism of finding high impact results in the middle of changing priorities and the constant search for overall effectiveness."

David and Esperanza Neu
Founders, Neu Center for Supportive Medicine and Cancer Survivorship

"I have worked with Liz and greatly benefitted from her advice and the tools she has developed over a long career of advising executives. She creates a very easy system to get you to Stop: reflect, reprioritize, and create a vision for personal and career success. I love having all the tools in one book. Having the toolkit to put your thoughts into action is invaluable."

Lorrie Vogel
Former VP, Nike Material Science and Innovation

Dr. Liz on Leadership: New Column and Special Offer

For more leadership advice from Dr. Liz, check out my new monthly column, exclusively in *Life Science Leader*!

Read the latest **Dr. Liz on Leadership**:

[Leaders: When You Talk, Is Anybody Listening? How To Become An Influential Communicator](#)

[Labor Day, Leadership, and Leveraging a Moment of Pause](#)

[Four Keys to Leading Transformation](#)



Dr. Liz on Leadership goes beyond healthcare, with pragmatic advice and tools every leader can use.

Targeted (free) access: If you'd like complimentary access to my monthly column and additional articles, subscribe [here](#).

Full (paid) subscription: For access to all of Life Science Leader's outstanding content, take advantage of an exclusive offer for my clients and readers. Subscribe [here](#) to receive an annual subscription for only \$49/year (regular subscription price is \$295/year).

- Benefits of the paid subscription include: Unrestricted access to the Life Science Leader website, including content from the current issue.
- Monthly magazine delivery plus special content-focused supplements (e.g., CRO, CMO).
- Weekly e-newsletters.
- Access to special whitepapers and reports.
- Access to Life Science Leader's digital edition archive.

[Subscribe today](#)

About Dr. Liz

Dr. Liz Bywater has been called a one-of-a-kind leadership expert. Working at the intersection of business and psychology, she brings together pragmatic experience, advising top executives across the Fortune 500, with an advanced degree in Psychology and a dynamic personal style to inspire, engage and counsel her clients.

For more than a decade, top global organizations have requested Liz's help in resolving issues such as creating extraordinary client relationships, increasing market persuasion, and driving productive collaborations in an increasingly complex world.

Liz advises senior leaders at some of the world's most successful companies, including Johnson & Johnson, Nike, Thomson Reuters, Bristol-Myers Squibb, AmerisourceBergen and more. She uses her expertise in human behavior to drive commercial success. She helps her clients propel innovation, exert influence and lead their organizations through change.

A thought leader in organizational excellence, Liz provides expert commentary for such publications as the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Fast Company and USA Today. She is on the editorial advisory board for **Life Science Leader** magazine and is a featured expert on such radio broadcasts as CBS Philadelphia's **Philadelphia Agenda** with Brad Segall and **Woman of the Week** with Marilyn Russell.

Liz earned her PhD in Psychology at the Derner Institute for Advanced Psychological Studies at Adelphi University. Her undergraduate degree is from

Cornell University, where she graduated Phi Beta Kappa and Cum Laude. She is a longstanding member of the American Psychological Association and the Society for the Advancement of Consulting.

She lives in Bucks County, PA, with her husband, teenage son, and a FaceTime away from her college freshman daughter.

Stay tuned for Liz's forthcoming book, ***Slow Down to Speed Up: Lead, Succeed and Thrive in a 24/7 World*** (Business Expert Press, November 2017).

Liz Bywater, PhD | Bywater Consulting Group | 215.805.5551 | liz@bywaterconsultinggroup.com
www.bywaterconsultinggroup.com

STAY CONNECTED



Visit our website