

Positive Leadership in Project Management¹

Impact Leaders and Leadership Trends for 2022²

By Frank Saladis, PMP, PMI Fellow

"High impact leaders say no to the status quo while others hate to see it go." ~ Mack Story

The topic of leadership continues to bring forth new concepts about how an organization's leaders can become more effective, enhance the loyalty of their employees, and delight their clients and customers. The pandemic has also forced leaders to make radical changes in their processes and procedures and how they manage their workforce.

The term "Impact Leader" may have been around for a while but I just discovered it recently while reading about leadership trends for 2022. The quote above is from a book by Mack Story entitled "10 Values of High Impact Leaders, [Store | Top Story Leadership](#)."

Something that many leaders may be aware of is that, according to Mack Story, there are sublevels or subgroups of people who are described as "leaders." These subgroups consist of "low level leaders" and "high impact leaders."

The low level leader attracts lower level followers. They rely on "accidental growth" and are focused on success. They "get things done. The high impact leader focuses on developing new leaders, is passionate and committed to intentional growth, emphasizes significance, and makes things happen. According to Story, a low level leader directly leads their followers. A high impact leader directly and indirectly leads their followers.

As the world business environment evolves and changes as a result of the pandemic and other factors, today's leaders and those who are aspiring to become "impact leaders must continuously adapt to new challenges that seem to appear almost daily.

In the article "7 Traits of High Impact Leaders" [7 Traits of High Impact Leaders \(linkedin.com\)](#) Mack Story describes the key factors that drive the High Impact Leader:

1. Continuously develop yourself – Focus on learning new things. Ask questions.

¹This article is one in a series on Positive Leadership in Project Management by Frank Saladis, PMP, PMI Fellow, popular speaker and author of books on leadership in project management published by Wiley and IIL in the United States. Frank is widely known as the originator of the International Project Management Day, the annual celebrations and educational events conducted each November by PMI members, chapters and organizations around the world. Learn more in his profile at the end of this article.

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2. Continuously invest in their top leaders - Create leadership development programs
3. Create and maintain an internal leadership program – Leverage the strengths of the leadership team. Plan for leadership continuity, not just succession planning.
4. Do not treat leaders the same – This is interesting. It's about acknowledging leaders who make a difference. High impact leaders shine the light on the behaviors they want to see in other leaders.
5. Focus on Strengths – Position leaders where their strengths will best serve the organization and its stakeholders
6. Make time for their leaders – Spend time with your leaders, especially those who are making a noticeable, positive difference.
7. Give leaders more responsibility – Stretch them beyond their current areas

These traits may be familiar to, and some may be practiced by, many leaders, but they serve as very good reminders of what leaders must do to have a significant effect within their organizations. I remember a quote I heard at a PMI Symposium many years ago:

“When you leave this earth, will you leave a vacancy or a void?”

High impact leaders will leave a void, a noticeable impression, within their organization and will be an inspiration to others who desire to make an impact.

Today's leaders must also be aware of the trends and latest hot topics that are shaping the near future.

Topics leaders should be aware of include:

Employee wellbeing – The leaders' concern and support for employee wellbeing will continue to be crucial in the coming year, especially as a top driver of retention.

Reskilling – The pandemic has required leaders to revisit skills such as communication, motivating, engaging, especially in the virtual context.

Technology and Digital Transformation - People-centricity is clearly a major factor with any technologies that are sought out to more effectively manage an organization and enhance the employee and customer experience

In addition, there are some trends emerging as the world adjusts to new forms of doing business in a much more diverse and virtual environment.

According to REAL-LEADERS®, many organizational leaders will be required to build a “digital equivalent” to something that took decades to develop and refine. Advanced digital workplaces that, through new leadership practices, will create trusting, collaborative teams that work together and drive innovation and productivity.

Many corporations are becoming more active in the area of social wellbeing and are more vocal and supportive of efforts to resolve perceived injustices.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is now a common thread connecting many organizations.

Impactful leaders have realized the need to create new and dynamic structures that work for diverse teams with a greater consideration for people who experience physical and social impediments. www.Real-leaders.com

As leaders move their organizations forward, the need for upskilling will continue to grow in importance. Whether it's an old or a new term, Impact Leadership is, and will remain for the foreseeable future, a key factor in achieving organizational success and leaving the void that will let future generations know you did make a difference.

About the Author



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Frank P. Saladis, PMP, PMI Fellow is the Owner/Founder of Blue Marble Enterprizes Inc. and Project Imaginers. Frank is an accomplished leader and contributor in the discipline of project management. He is the author of 12 published books, the past editor of the All PM Newsletter and the author of over 160 project management articles. Frank provides training and consulting internationally and has educated and entertained countless audiences with a special blend of project management knowledge and tasteful humor. He is also an experienced and well-known project management instructor and consultant and a member of the PMI ® Seminars World team of trainers. Mr. Saladis' 35 year career includes 28.5 years with AT&T, 3 years with Cisco Systems, and more than 25 years as a professional trainer, facilitator, mentor and keynote speaker.

Frank is the Originator/Founder of International Project Management Day which launched in 2004 and has been growing in recognition yearly. The goal of International Project Management Day is the worldwide recognition of the many project managers and project teams in every industry including nonprofit organizations and health care who contribute their time, energy, creativity, innovation, and countless hours to deliver

products, services, facilities, and provide emergency and disaster recovery services in every city and community around the world.

Frank was PMI's 2006 Person of the Year. Frank is a Project Management Professional, a graduate from the PMI Leadership Institute Master's class, and has contributed significantly to the organization's growth and knowledge base for more than 20 years. His leadership activity within PMI included the position of President of the New York City PMI chapter from 1991-2001, President of the Assembly of Chapter Presidents, and Chair of the Education and Training Specific Interest Group. He received the high honor of the "PMI Fellow Award" in October 2013 and received the very prestigious "PMI Distinguished Contribution Award" in October 2015.

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