



Guttman Insights

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Charlie Jacobs is chief executive officer, Delaware North's Boston Holdings and the Boston Bruins Hockey Club. As a member of the senior leadership team for all Delaware North Companies' global operations, a major lifestyle and hospitality company with 60,000 employees, he guides the strategic efforts for the family and company holdings in Boston. These include the Boston Bruins, TD Garden, Delaware North's strategic real estate interests, and the company's ownership share in the New England Sports Network, which broadcasts to 7 million homes.

What's the management structure of Delaware North?

We have an Office of the CEO, which includes my two brothers and me. My brothers are based in Buffalo and I'm based in Boston. My dad remains active as chairman.

Can you describe the leadership transition process of Delaware North?

For the past several years, we've been transitioning the leadership from the company chairman, who is also our father, to the next generation, my two brothers and me. It was a very conscious process, which involved my brothers, independent directors, and consultants.

Was the chairman involved in the transition process?

We've had limited discussions with the chairman. That was by design. He wanted to test the waters to see how well we work together. In fact, my two brothers and I held a series of alignment sessions, which my father never attended. "You guys figure it out among yourselves," was his advice, which I think was very wise.

In this issue, Charlie Jacobs, chief executive officer of Delaware North's Boston Holdings and the Boston Bruins Hockey Club, discusses executive transition and what it takes to win on and off the ice.

Howard M. Guttman ventures into the troubled waters of U.S. electoral politics to offer advice on selecting the next president. And GDS's Associate Senior Consultant, June Halper opens her consultant's notebook to discuss turning around the performance of a nonassertive leader and a dysfunctional team. All this in a five-minute read.

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Leader's Corner: Building a Winning Team—On and Off the Ice

What was greatest challenge you faced in the transition—and how did you deal with it?

In any family business, leadership transition has its fair share of challenges. The high-performance alignment process was very helpful during this period. At the corporate level, we held a series of alignment sessions that began about eight years ago for my brothers and me. Then, the circle grew to our senior leaders and eventually expanded further, to their direct reports. We used a similar alignment process in Boston.

When did you and your top team in Boston go through a team alignment?

It was probably around 2013. At first, there was skepticism from some of the members of my leadership team. "What's this, another new flavor of the month?" they wanted to know. I assured everyone that I had been through the alignment process several times over the years, and it worked very well, but there are always doubters

So, how did you get buy-in to the alignment process?

It's a funny story. I knew I had buy-in from one member of the team, who is president of one of our major business units. She's highly skilled and respected and had been through an alignment process previously. Turns out, about a month prior to the alignment of my leadership team in Boston, I had a heated exchange with that business-unit president over a business issue. Four-letter words flew. We each fought the good fight, gained agreement, dusted ourselves off, and walked away better for the honest exchange. So we said, "Why don't we do a blow-by-blow reenactment of our exchange, salty language and all, in front of the team?"

It will demonstrate the power of the core elements of high-performance behavior: honesty, transparency, and managing conflict. And that's what we did. The team's reaction: "Wow!" People walked away convinced—and committed

Boston is the ultimate sports city, with many great teams. Branding is a tough challenge. How do you go about gaining share of heart for your Boston Bruins?

In addition to the Boston Bruins, there are three other professional sports franchises in Boston market: the Boston Celtics, the Boston Red Sox, and the New England Patriots. Back in 2002, the Boston Bruins were at the bottom, in terms of recognition, awareness, and being seen as embedded in the fabric of the community. We're much better today!

What did you do to change the brand image of the Bruins?

The best way to win over hearts is to win on the ice. That was very important. In 2004, we also started the Boston Bruins Foundation, which identifies charities that enhance the well-being of our community. To date, we've given over \$25 million to the greater Boston community. Also, we had to reset attitudes to let people know that we really care about the community. Back in the day, I think we were viewed as the big, bad company based in Buffalo that overcharged for beer and hot dogs. We have worked hard to position ourselves as a company that puts our fans first, one that likes to say yes — whether it's solving a customer issue or fulfilling special requests to enhance fans' experience.

One of the things you've done recently that earned much praise was to renovate the TD Garden, which hosts many events, including Boston Bruins' games. What were your objectives?

The TD Garden was built in 1995; it needed a major overhaul to keep up with the times. We tore down the structure, right to the studs. We put in Wi-Fi, redid every concession, re-engineered point-of-sale systems, streamlined how we cook and deliver at our food stands. Our objective was to create a best-in-class sports and entertainment experience: everything from when event-goers park their car to when they leave the venue. The building is well lit. You'll spend less time waiting to be served, because there are so many more points of sale and greater efficiency in facilitating transactions. If you're connected, go ahead and use Apple Pay. We redid the ventilation, so you can actually see the food being prepared. It adds to the theater experience. Portable food stations are rolled in when we're at capacity, which is 17,565 event-goers, so everyone gets fed in the 17 minutes between periods at hockey games

The Boston Bruins won the Stanley Cup in 2011. What's the magic of a championship team?

I wish I had a magic formula. Winning has a lot to do with maturity and accountability—and not necessarily in that order. In 2011, we had a great team, no question. One of the best teams we ever had was our 2013 team. We ultimately lost in the finals, but that team was great because of the players' maturity and accountability to one another. Skill is a given; luck is always nice to have. But the real winners are the ones who are accountable to one another—they are at stake for one another's success—and that takes a lot of maturity

So, what's your prediction for winning a Stanley Cup in 2017?

IWe'll have a strong team. I am always an optimist.

What do you look for in determining your best draft picks?

The most heated arguments can develop over selecting who is going to be a Boston Bruin. It's a tough decision because you're assessing 17- or 18-year-old young men and attempting to predict their performance three or four years out. Character is very important; it's at least as important as skill, if not more so.

Can you give me an example of how the high-performance team model has helped you operate more effectively?

We were recently selected as the vendor that will work with the city of Boston to develop City Hall Plaza. It's a big and important undertaking for the city. The entire team pulled together to respond to the RFP issued by City Hall—people from Boston Garden Development, the Boston Bruins, TD Garden, Sports Service, and an individual from one of our subsidiaries—to draft the winning bid. We couldn't have done this if we had played in a siloed environment. There's less siloed thinking now and more accountability for the entire enterprise.

What other results have you seen?

We've consistently beat our business plan for the past two years, and there is greater responsibility for the success of the enterprise, regardless of which subsidiary writes your paycheck. In addition to the alignment work, we have moved to develop our leadership skills in active listening, influencing, and conflict management. For me personally, active listening has had a significant impact. I now have a greater ability to listen to what people's concerns are, to identify what the real issue is, and to then cut quickly to resolution.

What's your biggest take away from your high-performance team journey?

To build a championship team, accountability is key. 



The 2016 Presidential Election: Who Is the High-Performance Leader?

by Howard M. Guttman

Welcome to the 2016 presidential race. If you've been channel surfing during the last several months, looking for the latest political updates, you've probably been disappointed by the level of political discourse. The election process has become quite a spectacle, with all the personal attacks and back-and-forth mudslinging. It's time to take a deep breath, step back, and calmly reflect on what attributes to look for in selecting the next CEO of the U.S.A. Many of the attributes of horizontal, high-performance leadership are instructive here. While neither Donald Trump nor Hillary Clinton might be the ideal model of high-performance leadership, the question that voters should be asking themselves is: Which of the two candidates comes closest to the mark?

Before you decide, consider these five political leadership factors:

1. Vision. "Where there is no vision, the people perish." It's a biblical injunction that presidential candidates ignore at their peril. High-impact presidents have articulated clear, compelling world safe for democracy; President Franklin Roosevelt championed the New Deal; President Kennedy beckoned us to the New Frontier. President Reagan invited us to climb to that Shining City on the Hill. These were aspirational, yet highly tactile end states. Voters could touch them.

In the corporate world, high-performance leaders articulate a clear, effective vision or strategy that goes beyond puffery to address fundamental questions: Why are we in business? What's our competitive advantage? What products do we want to offer and to which markets? What capabilities must we acquire, nurture, and retain? What are our growth and financial expectations?

Translated into the political context, think about the vision of this year's candidates for the presidency in terms of these questions: What does America stand for? What makes us exceptional? What kind of government do we want, specifically in terms of what it does and does not do and in terms of which people it serves—and excludes? What should we do, if anything, with regard to protecting, nurturing, and developing those we serve? What's the promised ROV—Return on Our Vote—and where will this take us as a nation?

"It's time to take a deep breath, step back, and calmly reflect on what attributes to look for in selecting the next CEO of the U.S.A."

2. Trust. Where to start on this arguably most important leadership quality? Both candidates are trust challenged. On the one hand, there is Benghazi, the Clinton Foundation, and the private e-mail server issue. On the other hand, there is Trump U, no public accounting of income-tax returns, and controversial public statements and misstatements. How best to assess the trust factor as it relates to both candidates? In September's issue of GI, I discussed the Four "A's" of trust building. With a little modification, these can be used to help assess the trust factor in this election.

Here are four questions to ask of each candidate:

- **Able**—Can the candidate do it? Does he/she have the skills and experience to perform or the vulnerability to ask for assistance when needed?
- **Authentic**—Is the candidate transparent? How candid, straight, and honest is the candidate; which one has the greater integrity of action and word to say what is meant and mean what is said?
- **At stake**—Which candidate goes beyond narrow self- or party-interest to be at stake for the common good? Which one holds fast to the shared belief that we are all in "this" together, and we can depend on each other to achieve a common purpose?

- **Accountable**—Does the candidate deliver on promises? Which one always does what he or she says will be done, and, if not, will fess up and then recontract when a promise cannot be met?

3. Crisis leadership. It's 3:00 a.m. and the dreaded emergency call comes into the White House. Whom do you want to answer it? It's the question that Hillary Clinton famously asked in an ad when she ran against President Obama. It's a fair question and raises the broader question: What makes for a good leader in a crisis situation?

Certainly "grace under pressure," to use Hemingway's definition of greatness, is an important attribute. In other words, which candidate would be more likely to be calm, deliberate, and fact based when that red phone rings? Think President Kennedy during the Cuban missile crisis.

Which candidate would be more likely to quickly marshal the necessary resources to meet the challenge? Think President George W. Bush and Desert Storm.

Which one would lay out a strategy and realistic implementation plan and move smartly to action mode? Think President Roosevelt and the New Deal.

If, as the Chinese proverb goes, "A crisis is an opportunity riding the dangerous wind," which candidate is more adept at capitalizing on a crisis? Think President Lyndon Johnson, who turned the tragedy of an assassinated president into significant congressional wins for civil rights and "The Great Society."

4. Team Builder. Why do we need teams anyway? For one, no one is smart enough to go it alone. There's just too much data coming in every day! (Today, at least 2.5 quintillion bytes of data are produced every day. And data produced in 2020 is estimated to be more than 44 times greater than today.) Teams also give leaders leverage. Even Jesus needed a team of apostles to spread the word and carry on after his death! Teams help translate vision into action.

Which candidate would be the best team builder? Readers of this column and *Great Business Teams* are well aware of my take on the attributes of a high-performing, horizontal team. Which candidate is more likely to build a high-performing White House staff and Cabinet? It takes a leader who can ignite passion and engagement, recognize that he or she can't go it alone, subordinate ego to achieve collective results, encourage transparency and open discussion and disagreement, and accept and give honest feedback.

In the context of the Washington scene, the ability to manage conflict within a team—never mind conflict among the three branches of government—is crucial. Cabinet members are typically drawn from the ranks of very successful business executives and government officials, two groups not known for wilted egos and weak opinions. Especially in Washington, managing conflict is the price you pay for attracting excellence. President Lincoln's Cabinet represented the extreme. He selected a "team of rivals," who were free to disagree with one another—and with Lincoln. And they often did. Lincoln favored talent and ability over consensus. But it took a leader as shrewd, self-confident, honest, and capable as our 16th president to pull it off.

So, which candidate comes closest to Lincoln? It's unfair to expect anyone to measure up to the Lincoln gold standard of presidential leadership. But it is fair to ask: Which candidate is more likely to be a high-performance leader capable of building great teams?

5. Political Savvy. Which candidate has the political chops to be president? The American political system is among the most complex in the world. It was designed that way by our founding fathers, who feared the concentration of power. They divided power in multiple ways, making gridlock among competing interest groups a foregone conclusion. In such an environment, the ability to influence rather than command becomes crucial. President Johnson, for example, plied his vaunted "Johnson treatment" to move his agenda. He would lean into people; rub their elbows; coax, threaten, and plead with senators and congressmen in order to co-opt them to work on his behalf. No doubt, LBJ had a high EQ.

Willingness to compromise is also important. Ronald Reagan came to Washington with an ambitious agenda, one he knew required cooperation from Democrats. The relationship between President Reagan and House Speaker Tip O'Neill is a well-told story. As John Heubusch, executive director of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation, once pointed out, President Reagan would ask Mr. O'Neill "for more than he expected to get and was willing to settle for less than the whole loaf." Finesse and a soft touch work better than a heavy hand.

The ability to communicate is a core attribute of an effective political player. One thinks of the superior communication skills of presidents Kennedy, Reagan, and Clinton. It's a terrific political asset, especially when the soft touch doesn't work, and a president must work around Congress to galvanize the support of the nation.

No doubt about it, the domestic and global challenges facing the next president will be significant. Getting things done will put the leadership ability of the next president to an extreme test. It will require high-performance political leadership at its best.

It's time now to return to my initial question and press you to answer it: Which candidate comes closest to the mark of a high-performance leader? Let's hope we all choose wisely. 🍌

Learn How GSK Consumer Healthcare Is Beating the M&A Odds

Join Brian McNamara, Region Head, Europe Americas, GSK Consumer Healthcare and Howard M. Guttman, principal, GDS, for a ringside seat in a highly interactive discussion focusing on "lessons learned" from the significant, complex change effort at the new GSK Consumer Healthcare. Here's your opportunity to experience "How GSK Consumer Healthcare Is Beating the M&A Odds."

For more information and to register, [click here](#)



From a Consultant's Notebook

June Halper

Here are the field notes from an intervention led by Guttman Associate Senior Consultant June Halper.

Presenting Situation

The director of global government and public affairs for a multi-national medical-device company led a team in disarray....Two key players, one a regional executive, the other head of policy, locked in an ongoing, conflict with one another....Both strong willed....Conflict ran deep, from directional disagreement to lack of responsiveness to each another's requests to differences in personal styleLeader had been in place for many years – nonassertive and didn't set clear ground rules for the team....Little trust and transparency; conflict management nonexistent, not only between the two warring executives, but also among other team members.....Everyone unsure as to team's joint priorities and where they needed to collaborate....Team members saw themselves as siloed, with little concern for overall team success....Classic "Stage 1" behavior....Although leader nonassertive, realized the team was dysfunctional and was open to change.

Charter for Guttman

Team leader wanted to reframe team behavior, as well her own. Intrigued by a trusted team member's suggestion to move to a horizontal, high-performance approach...Team leader super nervous about resistance from her team but realized that business as usual was not an option: Conflicts needed to be resolved; the team needed to act more cohesively and be less siloed; accountability was a big issue; and the team needed to show up to internal customers more powerfully: less as order takers and more as partners.... Team leader realized she had to shift her own behavior from "worker bee" to high-performance leader.

Process

Team alignment sessions held....Data collected revealed that team members held their leader in high esteem. Believed she got "the raw end of the deal," had to deal with numerous senior players causing constant shifting in team priorities....Team members wanted leader to be more directive with the stakeholders and with them....Everyone wanted the conflict among two key players on the team to stop and candor to increase....First question raised with the team during first alignment session: What role do you play in the team's dysfunction?....This helped to unload the baggage and create awareness....Team itself, not just the leader and two

warring team members, were enablers....Also, team realized that as long as it permitted dysfunctional behavior and allowed issues to go unresolved, it would be stuck in Stage 1....Deep dive made into: "What do you own?" "What would it look like if you played as a high-performance team?" And then, "What do we have to do differently?" Other issues involving "stories," trust, priorities, levels of accountability, the team's role, and conflict management addressed.

Results

Scope and role of team defined....Clarity gained on what each team member was mutually accountable for: What, specifically, do we own as a team, in terms of the overall business/strategy, the organization and people?...Criteria for setting priorities set, rankings established, and sub-teams assigned to key priorities.... Protocols for decision making established, and conflict management ground rules agreed upon....Giving and getting feedback was depersonalized, without the usual "heat"....Facilitated a rapprochement between the two warring executives....Could now work together more effectively....Team's climate much different.... More unified, heightened "we" accountability, greater candor, especially on leader's part....She became more assertive vis-à-vis the team, but continued to work on being more assertive with *her* leader....Team leader removed those players who chose not to "get" high-performance behaviors.

Key Insights

Achieving significant team behavior change is not an event but an integrated process that combines data collection, alignment sessions, coaching, and leadership skills transfer. Also, the leader must be strongly coached, comfortable with the direction of the change, and accountable for drawing a line in the sand: "No more! There is a better way—and getting there is not optional." ●