

Gagen
MacDonald
Presents

LET GO & LEAD

LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION GUIDE



CHARTING NEW PATHS
FOR CONTRIBUTION

Perspectives from Educational Trailblazer
STEPHANIE PACE MARSHALL

Ideas for Application

In conjunction with the video clips from the conversation with Stephanie at letgoandlead.com, you can use this guide to spark thinking on leaders' role in:

- Organizational learning and development
- Innovation
- Systems design
- Organization design and restructurings
- Employee engagement

Instructions

This guide was developed to complement the Let Go & Lead™ interview with Stephanie Pace Marshall and encourage learning on the individual, team, and organizational level.

- Use the Questions for Individual Reflection for yourself or as pre-work before your team comes together for the Group Exercise.
- The Group Exercise can be tailored to the needs of your organization and team, but is meant to encourage deep conversation around new ways of thinking about and acting on leadership.

Questions for Individual Reflection

On Learning in an Independent World

Think about your career, describe the moments where you felt you were learning the most. How were those experiences different than traditional methods of teaching that you grew up with?

On The New Learning Model

Why is a new model necessary? What would the benefits of working and learning in a “living system” be to you?

On Our Abundant Potential

How does it make you feel when you consider that our brains are in fact “plastic?” In what ways will you consider “re-wiring” the current pathways in your brain to capture your abundant potential?

On Fostering Innovation

When are at your most creative? What triggers your creativity? What leadership practices will foster this type of creativity and innovation?

On Leadership

What are the qualities, behaviors, values, beliefs that are most authentic to you? How does that influence how you lead?

On The Power to Choose

How can paradox be the seed of a new paradigm? How can it help you create new choices?

Group Exercise

Materials Needed: Flip Chart or White Board, Markers, Tape

1. As pre-work, ask your team to watch the Stephanie Pace Marshall videos on letgoandlead.com and answer the Questions for Reflection.
2. Open the discussion by asking, *After watching the videos, what resonated most with you?* (5-10 minutes)
3. Group Brainstorm: List all of the ways we measure our success or ROI – track ideas on flip chart. (10 minutes)
4. Turn to the person next to you and discuss how these measures could in fact limit our potential. (5 minutes)
5. Ask each pair to report out on their discussion or “Ah ha!” moments.
6. Turn back to your partner and discuss how we might use Stephanie’s concept of “paradox” to change the way we think about our work and the organization to open up choices and tap into our abundant potential for innovation and creativity. (5-10 minutes)
7. Ask each pair to report out – track ideas on flip chart.
8. Acknowledge and summarize the brainstorm, then discuss as a group what commitments we can make to improve our working relationships to contribute to the organization.
9. Summarize the discussion and share next steps.

How to Take This Further

Now that you’ve explored the lessons from Stephanie’s interview from the perspectives of your own personal leadership and your team, take some time to consider the implications for your business...

- How does the new research on how people learn influence the way your organization thinks about career development?
- If organizations are just collections of people with a shared purpose, and people have abundant potential, how will your company tap into that on an individual level and translate it to help the organization deliver on its purpose? What needs to change? (Think about the parallels between organizations and living systems.)
- How can leaders use the concept of paradox to improve how we communicate difficult news and increase the likelihood of a positive, resilient, innovative response from employees? What learning opportunities do we need to provide employees to help them authentically communicate a different story in new ways?

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About Let Go & Lead

letgoandlead.com

Let Go & Lead is an online project to explore leadership in the 21st Century. Maril MacDonald, CEO of Gagen MacDonald, has engaged thought leaders from different walks of life for conversations on what it means to “let go” and lead people to create meaningful, sustainable change. Video highlights from each conversation are posted for you to view and share your comments and perspective.

Most of all, Let Go & Lead is a community. It is a celebration of diversity and a genuine embrace of different points of view in an attempt to come to an unprecedented understanding of how the most powerful ideas come to life within the most complex environments and systems.

About Gagen MacDonald

gagenmacdonald.com

Gagen MacDonald is a firm founded on a big idea: We want to make the world a better place, transforming one company at a time.

Since 51 of the world’s 100 largest economies are corporations (not countries, as one might expect), it’s a worthy pursuit. We help clients find ways to bring their employees’ passions, talents and sense of purpose to bear on the business strategy. Working collaboratively from the corporate office to the front line, we use an organization’s brand, culture, vision and history to motivate and align employees behind accomplishing meaningful and sustainable results.

Want to learn more about how Gagen MacDonald can help develop and align your leadership team to inspire exceptional performance?



Our team has extensive and proven experience helping companies develop leaders, engage employees and build high-performance cultures that support the business strategy. Contact Meg Wheaton for more information on how Gagen MacDonald can help you.

Gagen MacDonald

35 East Wacker Drive
Suite 2350
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Meg Wheaton

P 312 673 7315
E m.wheaton@gagenmac.com