

# *The Hidden Power of Informal Leadership*

*From the book: Informal Leadership: What you need to know to Identify Hidden Leaders, Build Trust, Inspire Action and Get Results, by Marcia Smart, Ph.D.*

With many Fortune 1000 companies restructuring and downsizing, as well as ongoing economic setbacks facing state and local governments, formal leaders and managers are desperately looking for innovative ways to maximize their resources. The first decade of the Twenty-First Century has brought challenging economic times, resulting in heavy workforce reductions, budget cutbacks and decreased levels of middle management. Despite this managers are being forced to maintain or exceed results. In short: They have to do more with less. Are you desperately asking: "What else is out there? How can I increase production with what I currently have? How much more can I squeeze from my people? What else can I do – right now?"

If you are asking yourself these questions, then the time is right. This book is for you. Leaders and managers are absolutely ready for the shortest, most effective route to mobilize their people and deliver outstanding results. You are sitting on a hidden gold mine of talent and skills, and it is imperative you be informed and educated about this source of human capital that currently exists within your reach.

Whether you are looking for creative ways to improve your team's performance, or you need to work harder, smarter, or produce more with the same or fewer resources, this book will appeal to you. It will help you realize there is a huge source of untapped potential within your group. It will help awaken an excitement about another side of your organization you suspect exists, but have not had the inside knowledge to identify and use effectively. Do you have an open management style and:

- Want to continue to increase the performance of your team, but these days budget restrictions make it very tough to do?
- Are eager to learn about something that may make you more successful?
- Desire to work more effectively and efficiently to get things done and stay ahead of the game?
- Dislike being blindsided and wish you had a better handle on what the people on the team were really up to?
- Want to do the right thing, make positive, high-impact changes, and increase business results on your own watch?

Then I invite you to read on. I have always been fascinated by the company behind the formal organizational charts—the people who really get the jobs done in organizations. My interest in what goes on in the subculture of groups and organizations has led me to study the field of informal leadership extensively. A veteran of leadership and business development, I have been in the trenches as an informal leader working inside the informal organization, successfully creating informal and employee networks. I have experienced both sides of the fence—the challenges, hardships and celebrations that are associated with these roles.

This book is designed to generate awareness of and provide detailed information on how leaders and managers can tap into a hidden resource called informal leaders. They are a valuable asset that can be harnessed to improve productivity. This book will reveal that outside the boundaries of formal authority is a phenomenon wherein leadership is driven by a network of people who get things done—primarily through power and influence. Typically, about 80 to 90 percent of an organization is non-management, and there are individuals within this large group who have the power and influence to impact the bottom line. This book will clearly identify who these informal leaders are, and define the variety of ways they make themselves known within an organization.

Although informal leadership has been recognized within organizational development and structure, there is limited information available on the topic beyond references to informal leadership in groups and work team environments. Increasingly, informal leaders are taking on the role of transformational leadership, which was previously held by formal leaders. Transformational leaders:

- See themselves as change agents
- Are prudent risk takers
- Believe in people
- Display sensitivity to others' needs
- Are open to learning from experience
- Use their intuition to develop a sense of vision, and
- Are able to exercise disciplined reasoning.

You were inspired to pick this up for a reason. Perhaps your group or organization

is growing and delivering results, and you know there are many things going on behind the scenes, but you are curious as to how these things are getting done. Or, maybe your organization is downsizing again and you are wondering how you will deliver your goals and objectives with less staff. Or, the morale of your team is low. They are not opening up to you, and are delivering just enough work to meet expectations. Whatever your environment and reason, I want to let you know you have an untapped asset hidden in your organization that can greatly assist you to be more successful. They are the Informal Leaders—untapped human capital—and they want to partner with you.

As you read this book you may find some things that have always lurked in the background suddenly come into focus. You may experience lot of “ah-hah” and “Yes!” moments. I invite you to note those moments and record the ideas generated from them. They will feel exciting and give you a fresh and more empowering perspective of your organization. You will probably be inspired and be filled with a sense of urgency to identify your informal leaders. Please refrain from doing so now... it is critical you understand informal leaders at a more personal level. There are reasons why they are so successful and certain circumstances that allow them to do what they do. It is important to understand these reasons.

In the following pages, you will be given insights that will arm you to better manage and leverage the contributions informal leaders bring to your organizations. By the way, it must be said that one of the biggest fears of informal leaders is to be formally recognized as an informal leader in front of their peers and informal network. The reasons for this will be explained later, but this is a critical piece of information you need to know right now.

***Welcome to the World of Informal Leadership. Enjoy the Journey.***



Dr. Marcia Smart is an Author, Inspirational Speaker and Leadership Strategist. Her book, *The Hidden Power of Informal Leadership* is available at [www.informalleadership.com](http://www.informalleadership.com). Contact her at (208) 867-0034, Email: [marcia@informalleadership.com](mailto:marcia@informalleadership.com). For discussions go to LinkedIn group Informal Leadership at <http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=2965827>