

# Applied Wisdom

FOR THE

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**NONPROFIT**

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**SECTOR**

Eight Practical Insights for Leaders

**JAMES C. MORGAN**

Special Edition

## **Praise for *Applied Wisdom for the Nonprofit Sector***

“At the Silicon Valley Leadership Group we are focused on catalyzing change around diversity, equity, and inclusion, from the boardroom to the C-suites and beyond. *Applied Wisdom for the Nonprofit Sector* helps to inform both our practice and structured execution on this key business imperative.”

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CEO, Silicon Valley Leadership Group

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“Applied Wisdom for the Nonprofit Sector is proving to be an effective tool in our work championing public education and developing tomorrow’s leaders.”

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County Superintendent of Schools, Santa Clara County Office of Education

“Foundation trustees need help effectively allocating their funding. This booklet offers countless insights for those investing in nonprofits as well as the nonprofits themselves. Jim’s combined experience as a successful businessman, nonprofit board leader and philanthropist offers deep understanding from all three worlds.”

— **Matson Sewell**  
Co-trustee and Grants Manager, Arata Brothers Trust

“This booklet delivers on its promise. This easy-to-read but powerful collection of leadership principles provides real value, not just for chief executives, but for the board members who lead with them. The practical wisdom, and especially the collection of questions for board discussion, are excellent resources for any nonprofit board committed to truly advancing their nonprofit’s mission.”

— **Mary Hiland, Ph.D.**  
Nonprofit Leadership Consultant

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Special Edition  
for Disaster Ready and Nonprofit Ready



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## A Note from Jim Morgan

I began working at our family business, Morgan & Sons Canning, at a young age. As I look back, I realize how fortunate I was that my father and grandfather set an example about how to be ethical and effective in business and in life. They taught me about managing people and the importance of treating everyone with respect.

I got a great education at Cornell University, then served two meaningful years in the U.S. Army, followed by several years in high-tech business and investing. In 1976 I joined Applied Materials, a semiconductor equipment manufacturer, and ran it for nearly three decades. The company was near bankruptcy when I joined; when I retired in 2003, Applied Materials was a multi-billion-dollar global leader employing over 15,000 people in 18 countries. Since that time, I've committed myself to nonprofit board service and philanthropic work, working with dozens of nonprofits, both large and small.

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### Developing My Management Insights

Learning about leadership and management has been a lifelong passion. In the process, I've discovered many valuable lessons that have impacted my professional career, community work, and personal life. I realized how my early experiences in the cannery connected to other challenges and opportunities in business; many of those experiences became the basis of ideas that I would talk about on the job. At some point, members of my Applied Materials team started calling them "Morganisms."

In my 2016 autobiography *Applied Wisdom: Bad News Is Good News If You Do Something About It*, I documented over 100 of these Morganisms. Some of my friends commented that they have benefited from using the Morganisms in their personal lives. I've used them as a management tool when advising executives, staff, and boards of global and local nonprofits. They work regardless of the size or domain of an organization. The concepts have become a shared language, increasing understanding and trust among and between staff and board and even donors. And I rely on them when I consider where to volunteer and where to give money.

For this booklet, I've focused on eight simple insights that have consistently delivered the best results. I hope that these can help support the nonprofit sector in three specific ways.

First, that they can help individuals develop their abilities as leaders and managers; and make them more effective and increase their productivity.

Second, that they can help organizations strengthen the capacity and adaptability of their diverse staff and board teams to lead them through complexity and change.

Finally, that they can help donors understand how unrestricted dollars are vital to achieving an organization's strategic goals and mission.

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### **Success Requires Effective Leadership**

It's been said that the one constant in life is change. But the basic demands and challenges of management have not changed much since my days in the cannery. Running an organization demands leadership and management. While closely related, these are not the same nor are they interchangeable. As Peter Drucker, the leader of modern management theory, once proclaimed, "Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things."

All organizations face challenges in managing people. The best managers empower their people and help them maximize their potential. Unlocking and encouraging excellence in others has been the most satisfying aspect of my career. I believe that every person, regardless of education, training, or current position, is capable of improving their leadership and management skills, whether in a global company or a nonprofit filled with passion but limited in resources.

To your success....

***Jim Morgan***

Chair, Morgan Family Foundation

Co-Founder, The Northern Sierra Partnership

Chairman Emeritus, Applied Materials, Inc.



## How to Use this Booklet

There are eight chapters in this booklet, each built around my management insights and focused on the three pillars of a successful organization — culture, planning, and implementation. But the insights don't only apply to those realms. They can be used across a broad spectrum of organizational practices. I've included some personal stories and examples to reinforce how these ideas apply in different settings.

To gain the most value from this booklet, let me suggest a few ways to approach the material.

While you can open the booklet to any insight that piques your interest, I would encourage you to read the entire booklet from start to finish. It will only take 20 to 30 minutes — perfect for a short train commute or a flight. Each time you reread the booklet you'll obtain more from it. If you prefer listening to the text while taking a walk or driving, go to **AppliedWisdomforNonprofits.org** where you can download the audiobook. You might consider reading the booklet and then also listening to it as a way to deepen your understanding of the concepts.

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## Reflecting on Applied Wisdom

After your initial read (or listen), think about a current situation where one of the insights may be helpful. Why not discuss this management insight at your next staff or board meeting or share it in conversation with friends.

To help stimulate your thinking, at the end of each chapter you will find a set of “Conversation Starters” for chief executives, staff team members, board members, individual donors, and institutional philanthropies. While you may identify with just one or two roles, I encourage you to read the full set of prompts to gain diverse perspectives about how others might think about the insights.

After you've read this booklet, please visit our new Applied Wisdom for Nonprofits Leadership Course. This self-paced online course is delivered in short videos with accompanying exercises to challenge your thinking, strengthen your leadership skills, and increase your impact. Visit **[appliedwisdomfornonprofits.org/course/](https://appliedwisdomfornonprofits.org/course/)**.

While you're immersing yourself in this material, start to think about different sayings, maxims, and phrases that have caught your attention as your career has developed. Now is an excellent time to start recording them, to create your own Applied Wisdom (see page 53 for more information).

Let's dig in....



**Culture is built upon your nonprofit's values.**

And those values must include respect and trust as well as other types of caring behaviors within the organization. Nonprofits are in the business of tackling the world's tough challenges, but they need also to look within, and recognize that "bad news is good news" if they do something about it.

1

## Cultivating Culture

Culture matters. It's a core organizational asset.

The role of leadership is to build a strong organizational culture based on a nonprofit's purpose, mission, vision, and values. You want people at every level of your enterprise to have a clear sense of its purpose as well as its immediate and long-term goals, and to feel a sense of belonging and respect. An exceptional culture will attract great employees and volunteers, board members, and supportive donors who can propel your mission forward.

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### **A Values-Based Culture**

To lead a nonprofit through changing times, remember why the organization exists and what it stands for. Be conscious of the culture that you want and use every opportunity to create and nurture it.

Culture is built upon your nonprofit's values. Your staff and board must articulate and embrace those values. If you don't develop processes collaboratively by inviting input from all stakeholders, your culture may become plagued by simmering resentments. Many unproductive attitudes can infect an organization that does not pay close attention to its mission, vision, and values. A culture that promotes and rewards respect and trust will be healthy and productive.

To build an energetic environment and culture, you have to be explicit about the behaviors that you value. Reward the behaviors that reinforce the culture you're striving for, aligned with policies and practices. Seek a clear understanding of why staff and volunteers stay or why they leave the organization; and what this might say about your operation.

Your constituents' needs change, staff and boards come and go, new tools emerge, and economies shift. In a dynamic work environment, you will never be "done" putting management systems and processes into effect. But through it all, the quality of the workplace experience is defined by the consistency of the values that you consciously cultivate and communicate.

Your culture is also visible externally to all of your constituents, volunteers, donors, patrons, and government contract funders. Clearly communicating and promoting your nonprofit's impact and being transparent about the effective stewardship of

resources serve as inspiration for your supporters to engage with, contribute to, and advocate for your mission.

I like to think that at Applied Materials we hired the right people and listened to them carefully. We supported their efforts with the required resources and encouragement, even in tough, cyclical times. In return, all of those elements produced a culture where work was valued and where people worked hard for success.

When things are going well, it's easy to take your culture for granted. When things aren't going well, many managers will focus on some quality that they believe is deficient. They might suddenly decide, "we need to change the culture" or "we need to bring in a consultant." Catchy slogans are developed and printed on mugs and t-shirts, an offsite is scheduled, and the topic of "culture" is suddenly on the agenda of every meeting.

But you will never change an organization's culture just by telling employees that the culture needs to change. An offsite discussion might help you reach agreement about what is out of alignment, but it won't create permanent change. You must do something, take deliberate action. Make real changes and communicate them — not just once, but repeatedly and consistently.

If you want to build a certain kind of culture, or you want to rebuild a failing culture, you need the right structure, processes, and people. Analyze your operations for gaps or misalignment. Make sure your managers are accountable for prioritizing change, and that your team is as skilled and focused as possible. If you do these things properly, your culture will change over time. It's every team member's job to "walk the talk" and commit to building a great enterprise.

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## Tone at the Top

A board's responsibility includes the oversight of a healthy internal culture. While your board has limited exposure to your nonprofit's day-to-day operation, it must ensure that the chief executive is articulating the organization's values and cultivating culture at every level.

Boards should also be aligned with the values of the organization. When board members behave courteously and respectfully toward each other and management, they set an example for staff to emulate. The culture of the board is part of the "tone at the top."

As it's so often said, culture eats strategy for breakfast. Culture matters. It's your core organizational asset and establishes whether your nonprofit is just good — or if it becomes great.

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## Conversation Starters

### *For Chief Executives*

1. How do your actions and behaviors help to cultivate your desired culture? What three actions or behaviors can you commit to improving?
2. What processes do you have in place to seek feedback about your culture from all stakeholders? How do you address any misalignments between the real and perceived culture of your organization?

### *For Staff Team Members*

1. Describe your nonprofit's purpose and values; how do your daily actions and behaviors align with those values? What could help you bring them into greater alignment?
2. In what ways does your workplace reflect a healthy culture? (In what ways does it not?) What three ideas do you have that could strengthen your organization's culture?

### *For Board Members*

1. How does the board ensure that the chief executive is cultivating a healthy culture?
2. Thinking about the board's decision-making processes, actions and behaviors, how would you describe the culture of your board? How well does the board's culture align with the organization's broader culture and values?

### *For Individual Donors*

1. What can you tell about an organization's culture and values from looking at its website, annual report, promotional materials or donation appeals?
2. What impact might an organization's culture have on its ability to deliver on its mission?

### *For Institutional Philanthropies*

1. To what degree do the values of your grantees align with your institution's values? How could greater alignment benefit both you and your grantees?
2. How do you assess a nonprofit's culture? Why might it be important for you to consider that culture as part of your due diligence process?

2

## Respect and Trust Your People

Respecting and trusting your people  
is the foundation of all good management.

To successfully lead you must paint a vision of where your nonprofit is headed and what behaviors and attitudes you will value on the journey. You need to establish the qualities of your leadership and the character of the organization. Your tone and behavior should show regard for every employee's strengths, contributions, and cultural background, as well as their health, workplace comfort, and psychological safety. If you are disrespectful of your employees or you disregard their dignity, you undermine trust.

As a leader, you are constantly being evaluated by your team as to whether you treat people with respect and trust. You hire the best people you can and then you trust them to use their judgment to do the right thing. If you don't respect and trust an employee, then you should question why they are still working for you.

Cultivate a supportive organizational culture that moves your nonprofit toward its goals while promoting a respectful workplace where people can contribute their best. Trust is born of respect.

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## Caring and Collaboration

A key element of respect is encouraging personal discipline and healthy habits so that you and your teams have the stamina and energy to enjoy long-term success. First, take care of your health and fitness. Pay attention to the physical dimensions of your workspace. I encourage people to wear comfortable shoes to work so that they can periodically get up and take a walking break. Moving around during the day keeps the mind sharp and the body relaxed. Establish policies that promote a reasonable work-life balance for employees. Prioritizing and scheduling time for personal relationships, family life, and hobbies is equally important for your mental and emotional health and will help you balance your life and perform better.

Encourage other types of caring behaviors within the organization. Look around and observe how your staff team members interact and care for one another. It's important to prioritize building human connections—they are an important key to success and fundamental to forming trusting relationships. Connections start with conversations. I often scheduled "walking meetings" with people I needed to speak to



one-on-one. It pays dividends to plan offsite meetings where your staff can socialize and build rapport, and where boards can engage in deeper generative discussions.

Building positive relations between your people — staff and board — also helps develop your team's ability to work together better. I encourage people to approach all teamwork with a collaborative mindset, where you treat your partner's success as equal to your own. That applies to internal relationships, external partnerships, and donors.

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### **Hire Deliberately**

An organization committed to excellence deliberately focuses on building strong teams. It's critical to identify and recruit a diversity of people who share a commitment to your mission and are willing to learn and adapt as your nonprofit's needs change. Hire for purpose and potential first, for skills second. Before making an employment offer, listen for at least two potential shortcomings that you are willing to live with.

Hiring high-caliber people is always the aim; competence is not sufficient. By high-caliber, I mean people who are resilient, intelligent, and problem solvers. You'll benefit from assembling a diverse and inclusive team with complementary skills and a range of functional backgrounds.

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### **Employee Growth and Satisfaction**

Organizations benefit greatly by creating a culture of continuous learning. Staff need professional development opportunities to improve their skills and to gain new ideas. Leaders should communicate and reinforce the value of ongoing education and training opportunities to their staff so that employees take all learning programs seriously. The more employees develop and have the opportunity to contribute to your nonprofit in new ways, the more likely they are to be happy and loyal while working on behalf of your mission.

Financial independence and success are major motivators in life. And, ideally, nonprofit professionals should be able to do well while pursuing the larger goal of doing good. Since nonprofits operate on lean budgets, employee compensation is always a delicate subject. I often hear how employees are overworked and underpaid, and that turnover is high, particularly for fundraising professionals. The chief executive and board should prioritize offering respectable wages and benefits and educate donors on how general operating funds enable the organization to attract and retain excellent people.

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## Conversation Starters

### *For Chief Executives*

1. How does your organization demonstrate respect for the strengths, contributions, and cultural backgrounds of your employees? How do your policies support their health, workplace comfort, and psychological safety?
2. How do your organization's hiring, promotion, and compensation practices demonstrate respect for your people? How do you ensure that you are integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion into your organization?

### *For Staff Team Members*

1. In what ways does your chief executive model respect and trust? What could they improve?
2. How does your team demonstrate caring, listening, and working collaboratively? What are some opportunities for improvement?

### *For Board Members*

1. What are three ways your board could work more collaboratively as a team and in partnership with your chief executive?
2. How, in the organization's strategic plan and budget, is the board prioritizing equitable compensation and benefits and also encouraging professional growth for all employees?

### *For Individual Donors*

1. How can you assess whether a nonprofit respects and trusts its people and community stakeholders when planning and executing on its mission?
2. How can a nonprofit demonstrate respect and trust to its donors?

### *For Institutional Philanthropies*

1. In what ways do your grantmaking practices communicate respect and trust to your grant applicants? How could you deepen those further?
2. How well does your current funding support grantees in providing respectable wages and benefits, investing in leadership skill development, and strengthening staff and board diversity, equity and inclusion? How could new or increased funding further encourage your grantees to deliver in these areas?

3

## Bad News is Good News

Always listen for and even seek out signs of trouble.  
Bad news is good news if you do something about it.

Nonprofits are in the business of tackling tough challenges — addressing poverty, improving education, and protecting the planet. The passionate, smart, and good-hearted people who work in the sector are filled with optimism. This can make it uncomfortable for them to acknowledge a looming crisis. But to be successful, a leader must master the ability to perceive, acknowledge, and respond to threats as well as opportunities.

At Applied Materials, we saw bad news as an opportunity for innovation or a strategic shift. We had a saying: “Good news is no news. No news is bad news. And bad news is good news — if you do something about it.”

Of course, it’s important to celebrate successes. But only up to a point. You can’t bury problems or refuse to address negative issues. Do you welcome early warnings or are you ignoring them?

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## Porpoising

I called my bad news early detection system “porpoising.” Think about a porpoise, repeatedly diving deep into the ocean and then rising to the surface, gathering information at all levels. As a manager, you should periodically “porpoise” beyond your direct reports to talk to diverse groups of people at every level in your nonprofit.

Porpoising is designed to unearth valuable information, whether in the short term or for the long haul. Porpoising expresses a culture of observant listening — and enables you to “hear” sounds of trouble before you learn about it through official channels. Seek to understand by visiting teams and asking simple questions: What is going on here? Is the organization in your way? Why are deadlines slipping? What would you do to fix that? The key is to listen respectfully so that your employees are comfortable sharing what’s going on and giving you actionable information. To maintain that trust you will need to act on the information given. Be present and visible. I would sometimes take a sack lunch and eat with employees or drop in and sit in the back row of a meeting to observe, listen, and learn.

Also, ask board members to speak up when they see problems developing. You can even porpoise with other nonprofits, community stakeholders, individual donors, and grantmakers to gain valuable insights and to leverage their knowledge and expertise.

But what if there's no news or if no one has news to report? Without feedback, even top leaders have trouble assessing what's going on. I've learned that no news can be a sign of bad news — it may mean people or things are not moving forward. There are always problems or issues of concern to address. If things are quiet for too long, it's time to porpoise and listen carefully. You'll always find something good or bad. You just need to know which is which.

And if it's bad news? Bad news is good news because it gives you a chance to address problems before they spiral out of control.

Building a culture that embraces values such as “bad news is good news” doesn't happen overnight. And it needs to be reinforced by rewarding early detection. Everyone within your organization should encourage frank discussions of bad news. You must identify problems and then emphasize finding solutions, rather than assigning blame. Celebrate the solutions! Bad news is good news if you do something about it.

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### **Bad News is Essential for Boards**

Chief executives understandably like to highlight their successes to their board. But openly sharing bad news is an effective method for building mutual respect and trust. While it may be difficult at first, sharing bad news will help form a strong partnership with your board, important for bad times.

Inviting board member questions and listening to their feedback enables you to understand their concerns and to have an opportunity to learn from them. I like to say — speak once, listen twice.

By including bad news as part of board meetings, the chief executive, senior staff, and the board can explore ideas and learn together. You need to hash out what isn't working or what's keeping your top executive up late at night. In creating a greater shared understanding, your board can help to improve your nonprofit's productivity and performance. By brainstorming new paths of opportunity together you will build an organization that you can all be proud of.

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## Conversation Starters

### *For Chief Executives*

1. In what ways do you currently “porpoise” within your organization, making sure that you’re hearing from all departments at all levels? How have you made staff comfortable with sharing bad news when you porpoise?
2. How do you ensure that bad news is a focus at every board meeting? How do you integrate the board’s advice and counsel into your actions and communicate outcomes back to the board?

### *For Staff Team Members*

1. How comfortable are you sharing bad news with your manager? In what ways do you see porpoising as being different from being micro-managed?
2. How do you and your colleagues work together to turn bad news into good news? What practices could strengthen your teamwork even more?

### *For Board Members*

1. At board meetings, what process is in place to enable the chief executive and senior staff to comfortably discuss bad news and seek out constructive advice? How will meeting agendas shift to accommodate these discussions?
2. How does feedback from clients, employees, key stakeholders and donors influence the board’s planning and implementation work?

### *For Individual Donors*

1. How do you go about “porpoising” to learn about a nonprofit before making a donation or deciding to volunteer?
2. How might hearing a bad news story about the nonprofit sector impact your behavior as a donor?

### *For Institutional Philanthropies*

1. How do you “porpoise” with grant applicants when conducting due diligence and in-person site visits?
2. How do you encourage grantees to share bad news with you? How does bad news from grantees impact your funding commitments?



**With your culture defined, planning is the next step.**

When planning you need first to develop your radar to see everything that's happening around you, and to rapidly adjust to change. You have to commit to doing "the whole job" – investing in organizational capacity contributes to excellence and impact. And you need to prioritize and focus: With only limited time and resources, it's essential to establish priorities and to focus on them.

4

## Use Your Radar

Scan your environment to see everything that's happening around you, and rapidly adjust to changes.



Radar is used to detect and respond to weather conditions, hazards, as well as air, sea, and land movement. Radar provides advanced warning, which allows responses to be more calculated and effective.

Leaders must manage daily operations, and they must also monitor situations inside and outside their organizations to anticipate problems, recognize opportunities, and adjust strategy. This is called systems thinking, and it requires use of your personal radar.

Here's another way to think about it: When our kids were young, our family did quite a bit of river rafting in Northern California. My daughter enjoyed it so much that she became a weekend guide and developed her version of radar.

As a rafting guide, you have to have skill, but you also have to pay attention to other factors, like the skill-level of your guests, the weather, the water current, and hazards like rocks or a log that can suddenly appear. You have a plan, but you also have to paddle down the river with your head up and your eyes open. You can't ignore a sign of danger or a problem that might sink the raft. You have to develop confidence and adjust quickly when conditions change. As the guide, you pilot the boat; and the better your court sense, the better the outcome.

How have you developed your radar?

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### **Radar for Nonprofits**

In the nonprofit sector, "using your radar" means understanding the environment that impacts your organization. You can't hone your radar in a vacuum — or an echo chamber. It's valuable to take time regularly to step out of your comfort zone, and out of the weeds of daily tasks and pressing issues. A disciplined way to put your radar into play is through annual and multi-year planning cycles.

Your job is to look up, look forward, and look around. Be ready to react to changing conditions and threats, and to identify new opportunities to innovate and to take risks. To thrive in a complex world, you can't just slog forward every day checking off

boxes in a linear fashion. You have to anticipate problems, process new information, and adjust your strategy. This is systems thinking. And systems thinking requires court sense.

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## Driving Forces

In thinking about the long-term direction of your nonprofit, it's critical to assess driving forces. Driving forces include demographic shifts like the rise of millennials, issues surrounding equity, diversity, and inclusion, and the global interest in reducing reliance on fossil fuels. Micro driving forces can be unique, possibly fleeting opportunities, such as a community partner's strategic program shift, changes in tax law, or a lapse in government funding.

A good leader is constantly looking for what is likely to impact the organization's future. Get used to assessing driving forces early and often. Your ability to perceive and incorporate them into your thinking will improve over time. Reflect on how you, your board, and staff are strategically positioning your organization to take advantage of change. Systematically seek client feedback and analyze program evaluation data to inform your thinking. Every significant decision should assess relevant driving forces, both short-term and long-term.

While strategic decision-making always includes risk, developing your court sense and regularly assessing trends will help shape your instincts and reflexes. It will inform the way you lead and how your people work, make decisions, deliver services, and relate to clients and donors.

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## The Inspirational Why

To be an effective manager, you need to be sensitive to how organizational change affects your employees. Rapid ups and downs are rough on people and create tension. Employees can fall into predictable patterns where they might deny what's going on, become discouraged, or resist change. A common mistake is to ignore the tension and just keep adding more responsibilities to people who are already working very hard. But your employees' energy and commitment are vital. By listening to your staff and engaging in open, honest conversations, you can build bridges of understanding and enhance workplace morale.

Even amid disruption, always focus on your nonprofit's goals and values to keep your team's focus on the "inspirational why" of your work — the reason your organization exists.

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## Conversation Starters

### *For Chief Executives*

1. How do you factor driving forces into your organization's annual and multi-year planning cycles? When you detect changing conditions, how do you adjust your strategies and find ways to move forward?
2. What steps have you taken to prepare your staff to respond to rapidly changing external conditions and trends? What do you do to pay attention to employees' needs during times of change?

### *For Staff Team Members*

1. How does using your "radar" inform the way that you work, make decisions, deliver services, and relate to clients and donors?
2. Think of a time when you or your organization had to make a quick adjustment. What did that experience teach you? What, if anything, would you do differently next time?

### *For Board Members*

1. What current significant trends and driving forces provide the organization with opportunities for growth and change?
2. How can you support the chief executive and staff through times of rapid change to confront the challenge of work overload and the risk of burn out?

### *For Individual Donors*

1. How do you use your "radar" when considering where you might make a donation or volunteer?
2. How do driving forces in our world shape your philanthropic interests? How do they impact where you decide to direct your donations or to volunteer your time?

### *For Institutional Philanthropies*

1. How do your "radar" and systems thinking inform your grantmaking?
2. How do driving forces in our world shape your giving strategies, priorities and approach?

5

## The Whole Job

Commit to doing “the whole job.”  
Investing in organizational capacity  
contributes to excellence and impact.

When I joined The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Asia Pacific Council, one of my priorities was to convey to our teams the concept of “the whole job.” Environmental expertise and developing creative solutions to preserve the ecosystem were the main focus. But, in order to do “the whole job,” it is also important to develop strength in finance, fundraising, marketing, and hiring.

Your nonprofit has specific functions and processes, as well as regulations it must follow. You spend and control cash, acquire facilities and equipment, hire and train a diverse team, manage information and much more. Sometimes you can fill gaps and create efficiencies by leveraging volunteer expertise, seeking opportunities for collaboration, or sharing back-office operations. All are effective ways to strengthen your nonprofit while reducing administrative costs. A weakness in any operational area can negate successes in others. Over time, without all the parts functioning well, the entire organization will suffer. Commit to doing “the whole job.”

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### Face the Elevator Door

Change is the medium of opportunity. At Applied Materials, my team developed the concept to “face the elevator door.” With shifting economic cycles, things happen that can help or hurt an organization. You need to prepare yourself to capitalize on an opportunity (the elevator door opening) regardless of where your nonprofit may be in its lifecycle or in implementing its strategic plan. As a leader you need to be out front, thinking ahead of the game. By staying attuned to the macroeconomic forces that can impact your revenue, you’ll be ready to move when the momentum shifts, the door closes, and the elevator changes direction.

Investing in people and infrastructure is essential. When revenues are strong, control your spending and aim to build a cash reserve that can cover three to six months of operating costs. When the economic climate changes, causing a downturn in earned revenue or charitable contributions, your organization will be well-positioned to meet urgent or emerging needs. Cash is king. Raise it when you can; don’t wait until you need it. Always protect your downside.

Fundraising challenges add more volatility to the mix. Many major donors impose restrictions on their gifts and grants. This increases risk and can even cause harm.

Your nonprofit will prosper if you focus on finding and cultivating donors who share your vision. To attract multi-year gifts ensuring your sustainability, you'll need to show donors and grantmakers a multi-year strategic plan and budget to sustain and grow your organization's impact. I am always impressed when a nonprofit has an honest conversation with me about how unrestricted general operating support will best help them achieve their goals.

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### A Humble Approach to Giving

I've been deeply engaged in philanthropy for more than two decades and have had exposure to a wide variety of nonprofits through our family foundation. Friends and colleagues often ask me how I assess the effectiveness of a nonprofit. I share with them that I have the highest regard for organizations that have:

1. Strong leadership with a bold vision and a strong plan for implementation.
2. A clear mission that spells out what the organization seeks to accomplish and why it's important.
3. Transparency regarding finances, governance, program evaluation, outcomes, and impact.
4. Strong partnerships with donors, volunteers, other nonprofits, businesses, and government.

My wife Becky and I have encouraged our family, foundation staff, and fellow donors to apply those same principles in their philanthropic efforts or when considering where to volunteer or serve on a nonprofit board.

No matter the size or type of contribution, take a humble approach to giving. Trusting a nonprofit's leadership and contributing unrestricted dollars to support their whole mission is a sign of respect. While an organization's budget may have line items for people and infrastructure separate from program costs, they can't operate without both. Investing in leadership development — for both staff and board — is an impactful contribution to help sustain and grow an organization.

Both individual donors and institutional philanthropies must invest strategically, sufficiently, and over the long-term. Nonprofits and donors become a team when they think of doing “the whole job” together.

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## Conversation Starters

### *For Chief Executives*

1. What staff and other capacity investments are needed for your organization to increase its impact? How do you educate your board and donors about essential infrastructure investments?
2. How do you prepare to capitalize on opportunity, thinking ahead of the game for your organization?

### *For Staff Team Members*

1. What are you doing to help your organization face the elevator door?
2. How do you and your colleagues contribute to gaining donor support for doing “the whole job”?

### *For Board Members*

1. How does the board support the chief executive and staff to be ready to capitalize on opportunity, the elevator door opening?
2. How well do the board’s fundraising efforts support the organization’s need to do “the whole job”? What are ways that you can strengthen your messaging to promote that concept?

### *For Individual Donors*

1. What principles are important to you when considering where you make a donation or choose to volunteer?
2. Does your approach to giving demonstrate respect for and a commitment to the organization doing “the whole job”?

### *For Institutional Philanthropies*

1. How can you engage in more open, honest conversations with nonprofits about their essential staff and infrastructure needs?
2. How can you educate your philanthropy’s board about the importance of providing unrestricted funding for nonprofits so they can effectively do “the whole job”?

6

## Prioritize and Focus

With limited time and resources,  
it's essential to prioritize and then focus.



Organizational success is a marathon, not a sprint. Today, many individuals and nonprofits run at an unsustainable pace that is reactive, but not strategic. With limited time and resources, it's essential to set priorities and then focus on what's most important. As a leader, you must motivate everyone — staff and board — to march in the same direction and maintain focus. People have to trust the leader's vision and accept responsibility for helping make that vision a reality.

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### 10% for Planning

Planning to implement a nonprofit's vision and strategy requires looking at both the short term and the long haul. I always urge staff teams to spend at least 10% percent of their time each week planning. Taking time to plan and confer creates a useful rhythm and routine. Stepping away from the daily grind challenges you to slow down, reflect, and adjust your plans as needed.

One of the practices I've always preached is what I call the "Rule of Three." You should always identify and focus on three priorities. Start each day reassessing and reaffirming them. Have a separate list of priorities for a day, week, month, three months, and up to a year. While most of us do many more things in a day, or a year, you need to budget your time so that your top priorities are always front and center.

"Priority management" is much more powerful than "time management." Make sure that all of your activities, each day, are moving you past short-term priorities and toward longer-term goals. You'll gain a feeling of control when you move away from being constantly in reactive mode. Don't let the urgent rob time from more important long-term priorities. Review your best ideas at least weekly, prioritize them, and think about when they can become actionable. Never treat long-term goals as something you plan to "get to" in a year.

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## Board Priorities

Nonprofit boards have three primary governance responsibilities. Priority one is setting strategic direction. Second is ensuring adequate financial and human resources. And third is providing oversight to fulfill the nonprofit's mission.

Part of a board's value is its ability to take the long view. Being a thought partner to the chief executive offers your nonprofit a broad range of perspectives. Recruiting a diverse board with a range of functional experiences and networks from different industries and among different stakeholder groups is more likely to produce a healthy mix of viewpoints, advice, and counsel.

Board work requires discipline. Using your organizational multi-year strategic plan and budget, the chief executive and the board chair should design an annual "conversation map" focused on what decisions need to be made and when. Meeting agendas should center more heavily on engaging in generative conversations to reflect, solve problems, and create meaning. Strategic and fiduciary issues also then need to be covered to monitor the nonprofit's agreed-upon goals, outcomes, and financial metrics.

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## Plan to Succeed

I served for nine years on the global board at The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Our governance committee focused on two key oversight functions. First, to drive better performance, we developed a strong planning process for conducting annual performance reviews for the chief executive as well as the board itself and individual board members. Reviews such as these are an opportunity to build trust and to keep people motivated and focused. A healthy process and conversation will recognize good work and discuss areas that can be strengthened. Throughout the year, you can promote a culture of listening and learning by providing ongoing coaching and offering constructive feedback.

Secondly, our governance committee developed succession plans for both the chief executive and the board officers, so that we were prepared for either an emergency or for a planned leadership transition. These plans became tools to help align our talent development with our future leadership needs. In this situation, my "Rule of Three" is to create a personal list of at least three people whom you think could be good additions to the staff and board teams, being attentive to your organization's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Success comes from continually prioritizing and focusing on your goals. You must plan to succeed. And you must plan... to succeed!

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## Conversation Starters

### *For Chief Executives*

1. What would enable you to devote 10% of your weekly schedule to short- and long-term planning? What would you eliminate from your current schedule?
2. How do you engage your board in serving as your thought partner? What do you do to ensure that they remain focused on their top three governance responsibilities?

### *For Staff Team Members*

1. How do you go about setting your work priorities, both short-term and long-term? What are your top three priorities today and this week?
2. How can you create time in your weekly schedule to reflect on your priorities and adjust them as needed? How will you communicate any planning changes to your manager?

### *For Board Members*

1. How do you establish your annual work plan and priorities? What training and education programs could strengthen new member onboarding and ongoing governance performance?
2. What processes are in place to provide the chief executive, individual board members, and the board collectively, with ongoing feedback and an annual performance assessment?

### *For Individual Donors*

1. Before giving to a nonprofit, how can you gather information about its strategic plan and finances?
2. Does your giving tend to be more strategic or reactive? How might committing to multi-year giving be beneficial to the nonprofits you support?

### *For Institutional Philanthropies*

1. How often do your board and staff refocus your grantmaking approach and priorities? How do you communicate these shifts to your grantees?
2. How can funding a nonprofit's board and staff development, strategic planning, and executive succession planning be wise investments?



## Success is 90 percent implementation.

Culture matters—it's your core organizational asset. And planning is essential—establishing strategic priorities and focusing on them. But success is only 10 percent strategy. It's 90 percent implementation. Create an accountable culture; if you set an example of taking responsibility for your own decisions, your people will do the same.

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## Take Action

Planning is essential but success comes from the implementation of your ideas. Take action  
Make a decision and manage the consequences.

One of the biggest challenges of leadership is moving ideas to action — implementation. I saw this when I had the opportunity to serve on the Board of The Nature Conservancy (TNC). I saw that a disproportionate amount of time was spent strategizing and reorganizing. In the process, I frequently found myself urging the team to take action.

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### Success is 90% Implementation

The cry “take action!” means, “we’re finished building this. Let’s move on.” It’s a plea to get on to execution. I used it at TNC as a way of saying, “No more dithering. We’ve done our best here; now let’s put the decision in motion and see what happens.” If problems develop, you manage them. But kicking the can down the road over and over just saps energy. While time should be spent on organizing, strategizing, and planning, success comes from the implementation of ideas. Going from planning to doing requires courage and involves risk.

My experience is that you have to cultivate the habit of making timely decisions. You must conduct your due diligence and then trust your instincts. Making good decisions, timed right, is a significant challenge for any organization. Organizations in motion can alter course much faster than those that are stuck in one place. Decisions create momentum.

At Applied Materials, we used to envision ourselves standing on a cliff. One of three things could happen:

1. You give a correct answer to the question, and you stay on the cliff.
2. The wrong answer — you’re pushed off.
3. No answer — you’re also pushed off!

This scenario helps sharpen the mind. Within someone’s area of responsibility, most people will give the right answer most of the time. They just need to decide. Then the team can move forward with whatever is necessary to do “the whole job” — complete the project, hire the person, or secure the donation.

Implementation is in part an attitude: Just do it. That perspective shows a bias toward action and thoughtful completion. Success is only 10 percent strategy. It's 90 percent implementation.

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### The Cost of Perfect Information

Voltaire said, "Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good." That's sound advice. Time is wasted and opportunities are lost when people become fixated on having perfect information, rather than appreciating that there will never be enough information, nor will there be perfect decisions. That does not mean you agree to pursue long shots or ignore troubling data just to make sure you do something. You always want solid information, whether it's about your client's demographics, your program outputs and outcomes, or your nonprofit's financial condition.

But often people neglect to establish benchmarks and contingency plans and to do an honest assessment of whether the plan is working as the organization reaches (or doesn't reach) those key milestones. There will always be unexpected twists that can sabotage the best-laid plans, so having a Plan B at the ready is a sound practice. Once in motion, be prepared to adjust and recalibrate to ensure success.

At Applied Materials, we developed some ways of talking about this that empowered our people to keep moving forward at all times, even when it was difficult to predict what the competition would do, or where the economy might go, or whether we could meet an ambitious goal. Given the choice between waiting for complete information and riding momentum, I will take momentum every time.

Clear and proper communication by leadership is the first step in transitioning from decision-making to implementation. Make sure that people are clear on what the big decisions are and the rationale for them — even put them in writing to avoid misinterpretation. Be inclusive by disseminating them to the entire organization. The goal is to have your team gain a greater understanding of each decision, how it was made and by whom, thereby reducing your implementation risk.

Leading a nonprofit demands passion, perseverance, the ability to make decisions and communicate them, and to manage the consequences. When all is said and done, you don't want to be on the side of more was said than done. Take Action!

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## Conversation Starters

### *For Chief Executives*

1. How much time do you spend focused on your team's implementation work versus their strategy development? How do you promote the need to move ideas and action plans forward?
2. How comfortable are you with not having perfect information when making decisions? How does that impact your ability to take risks?

### *For Staff Team Members*

1. What slows down or blocks your ability to make decisions?
2. How do you manage the consequences of decisions that have been made, monitoring them once in action? How do you assess whether course corrections are needed?

### *For Board Members*

1. What processes and systems are in place to monitor the implementation of the board's earlier decisions and actions?
2. What is your tolerance for not having "perfect information" to inform the board's decision-making?

### *For Individual Donors*

1. How do you go about assessing whether a nonprofit is successfully implementing its strategic plan? What additional tools or information can you use?
2. What specific types of information do you value and reference when considering where to make a donation or to volunteer your time?

### *For Institutional Philanthropies*

1. When considering grant requests, what emphasis do you put on a nonprofit's projected plan versus its implementation of past plans?
2. How does the quest for perfect information impede your ability to work efficiently with grantees? How can you control risk without perfect information?



8

## Advance Accountability

To create a culture of accountability,  
reinforce individual ownership of problems.  
Always ask, “Who’s owns this problem?”

Nonprofit leaders are often overworked and under-resourced. As a result, staff problems can easily move up the chain of command. You need to create a culture of accountability to ensure that the only issues that land on your plate are the ones for which you hold clear responsibility.

Let's say that one of your staff shows up in your office with a problem. As a manager, you want to acknowledge that you see the problem and that you care about the problem. You may even commiserate for a few minutes. But you can't let that employee leave the problem behind for you to take care of. Be sure that when they walk out the door of your office, the problem goes too.

Owning the problem means the person responsible cannot pass the buck; they must think through the consequences of decisions and try to solve the problems that arise.

Ask yourself, "Who owns this problem?" Create an accountable culture; don't accept a victim mindset. If you set an example of taking responsibility for your own decisions, your people will do the same.

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## Empowerment

The notion of problem ownership, framed in a memorable way, appeared in a 1974 Harvard Business Review article, "Management Time: Who's Got the Monkey?" by William Oncken, Jr. and Donald L. Wass. They describe five degrees of initiatives that can empower staff decision-making. The employee could:

1. Wait until told (the lowest initiative).
2. Ask what to do.
3. Recommend an action and wait for a decision.
4. Act but inform at once.
5. Act, then report on the decision in due course (the highest initiative).

The manager's job is to outlaw the use of 1 and 2, and to ensure that for each problem leaving their office, there is an agreed-upon level of initiative assigned to it.

As management guru Stephen Covey points out in talking about accountability, you should keep in mind that empowerment means you have to develop your staff's skills — a valuable investment. Managers should thoughtfully plan for an employee's development — with their input. Determine the right level of coaching and feedback for each direct report while avoiding micromanaging. You can reassure them that they have the skills and experience to make important decisions. Motivating your team members will boost their confidence and reassure them that they can take risks safely. My idea of management is serving as "First Assistant To" others, helping them to succeed.

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## Organizational Structure

The job of a chief executive is to create an organizational structure with functional processes. When the number of staff exceeds a few, if everybody in the nonprofit is reporting to the top executive, dysfunction is inevitable. A good leader needs to be able to communicate that in a growing organization, hierarchy is a good thing. It speeds up decision-making.

As a nonprofit shifts to a more hierarchical structure during a growth phase, leaders and managers need to determine who's responsible for each type of decision at every level; and that there is a structure that enables decentralized decision-making. You tune the structure and process to fit the work and the people and then urge your employees to make and take responsibility for their decisions. People will make mistakes, but you must make sure they own the problem. If you step in and fix things for them, or punish them for reporting an issue, they will not make decisions.

In a culture of accountability, employees are more comfortable acknowledging reality, warts and all. They do not just wait for someone else to solve the problem or hope things improve or spend their time crafting excuses or pointing fingers at others. They take responsibility for finding solutions and improvements for the problems over which they have clear authority.

At Applied Materials, people who owned their work, both its successes and failures, knew that we could adjust to an honest mistake. If people fail and do not learn though, you must move on and make changes fairly and quickly. Doing so, in fact, is respectful to your good performers who deserve to be surrounded and supported by competence and, ideally, excellence.

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## Conversation Starters

### *For Chief Executives*

1. How can you serve as “First Assistant To” your staff, supporting them through successes and failures?
2. How does your organizational structure enable decentralized decision-making and empower staff to make and take responsibility for their decisions?

### *For Staff Team Members*

1. Think of an instance where you dropped the ball and your manager had to step in. What would you do differently next time?
2. In what ways do you see your chief executive and colleagues taking responsibility for their decisions? What can you learn from their examples?

### *For Board Members*

1. What issues do you have responsibility for, separate from management’s? What leadership skills are required to effectively address those issues?
2. How does the board communicate its accountability to stakeholders and the public?

### *For Individual Donors*

1. In what ways can a nonprofit best demonstrate to you its accountability and transparency?
2. What does it take for a nonprofit to earn and maintain your trust and support?

### *For Institutional Philanthropies*

1. How do your grantees demonstrate a culture of accountability and transparency? What would you do if you lose trust in a grantee?
2. Are your grant reporting requirements creating unnecessary work and taking time away from your grantees’ focus on mission delivery? What could you do to simplify your requirements to be mutually beneficial to your institution and your grantees?

## Applying Your Wisdom

*Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other. — John F. Kennedy*

Whatever your role or job title, you can improve your management and leadership skills with understanding and practice. I've found that a key to achieving success in work and life is to be a continuous learner. Collecting the tips and insights in this booklet helped me evolve as a leader and manager. I've also become a better board member, volunteer, donor, foundation trustee, and even family man.

I encourage you to start your own collection of management ideas and catchphrases (see page 53). It will help shape and support your management style and your identity as a leader.

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### Take Action

Now that you have read this booklet, you may be asking yourself: where should I go from here? Perhaps you've discovered some new ideas that you think can be helpful or have been reminded of an older concept that now applies to a current situation. But it's not enough just to read about management and leadership development. I hope that you are inspired to take action. Remember, success is 90 percent implementation!

To continue your Applied Wisdom journey, visit [AppliedWisdomforNonprofits.org](https://AppliedWisdomforNonprofits.org) where you can access the Applied Wisdom for Nonprofits Digital Bundle. Order complimentary copies of the booklet in print, digital and/or audio formats for yourself, for your team, and for your friends and colleagues.

Also on the website is the Applied Wisdom for Nonprofits Leadership Course, an 8-part self-paced online course, which includes videos, exercises and a range of supplementary tools.

And don't forget to subscribe to my newsletter. Each week, in just a few short paragraphs, I recap some of the lessons from the booklet, and link those to current issues and concerns.

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## Organizational Capacity Building

For any organization, this booklet can be used as a capacity-building tool and culture-change framework. Consider leveraging this booklet as the cornerstone of your organization's learning and development program. Tackle some of the "Conversation Starters" questions by integrating them into monthly staff or board meetings. Or set up a book club where people read and reflect on a particular insight. Creating these types of engaging learning opportunities will build team cohesion, and empower individuals to improve their leadership skills, regardless of their title or position.

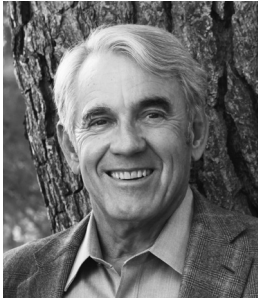
Whether you direct these activities yourself, or you engage a consultant, positively transforming the behavior and habits of your people will enhance their professional growth and impact your nonprofit's ability to deliver greater outcomes.

Be a continuous learner — join our learning community at [AppliedWisdomforNonprofits.org](http://AppliedWisdomforNonprofits.org).

To your success,

***Jim Morgan***

## About James C. Morgan



James C. Morgan is an influential nonprofit and philanthropic leader, based in Silicon Valley, who has worked extensively in the worlds of both for-profit and nonprofit organizations. He led the semiconductor equipment giant, Applied Materials, for nearly three decades — one of the longest tenures of any Fortune 500 CEO.

Under Jim's leadership, Applied Materials built an exceptionally diverse workforce, with top engineers, both men and women, representing many backgrounds and ethnicities.

Applied Materials received numerous awards for its commitment to achieving sustainability and for its socially responsible practices. It was named one of America's Best Managed Companies and Fortune magazine selected it as one of America's 100 Best Companies to Work For, and among the Best Companies for Minorities.

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## Nonprofit and Philanthropic Contributions

Over the decades, Jim has worked with nonprofit organizations of all shapes and sizes.

In 2007, Jim co-founded, with his wife Becky Morgan, a former California State Senator, The Northern Sierra Partnership, a pioneering collaboration bringing five conservation nonprofits together to do what none could do alone. The partnership has successfully preserved over 100,000 acres in the California Sierra Nevada Mountains.

Jim served as both a California and global trustee, as well as co-chair of the Asia Pacific Council of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), a worldwide nonprofit focused on programs that "Protect Nature and Preserve Life." He was honored with The Nature Conservancy's prestigious Oak Leaf Award.

In 1993, Jim and Becky cofounded the Morgan Family Foundation, with a shared goal of changing lives and transforming local communities.

Jim was also an advisory board member for Santa Clara University's Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship, the largest and most successful university-based social enterprise accelerator in the world.

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## Recognition and Awards

Jim has served as a technology adviser to three U.S. presidents, including George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush. In 1996, he was presented with the National Medal of Technology and Innovation by President Bill Clinton.

The role that Jim Morgan has played in the growth and success of Silicon Valley continues to be recognized. In July 2023 he received the Imec Lifetime of Innovation Award “for his immense impact on the semiconductor industry as well as on society at large.”

Jim served as both a California and global trustee of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), as well as co-chair of TNC’s Asia Pacific Council. He was instrumental in creating The Tech Interactive’s “The Tech Awards” (now “The Tech for Global Good” awards), and inspired the “James C. Morgan Global Humanitarian Award,” which honors individuals whose broad vision and leadership are focused on combating critical global problems. Past recipients have included Bill Gates, Gordon Moore, Al Gore, and Julie Packard. The 2023 winner was entrepreneur, creative innovator, futurist and philanthropist will.i.am.

Jim says of his work with *Applied Wisdom for the Nonprofit Sector*: “I hope to provide succinct leadership tools and techniques for people who work in nonprofit organizations, small or large, new or well-established, regardless of their position or title. My goal is to help them accelerate their development as leaders.”

Jim and Becky Morgan reside in Northern California near their two children and five grandchildren.



# My Collection of Management Tips

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“I have always encouraged people to develop their own management toolkit. It’s a habit that serves as a constant reminder that we evolve over our lifetime as managers. There are always new ideas that can be helpful — or old ideas that suddenly apply to a situation in which we find ourselves.” — Jim Morgan

Start your own collection of maxims and catchphrases reflecting your unique management style and identity.


As you think about developing your personal collection of tips, note when the tip first entered your consciousness, not necessarily when you recognized it as a tip. Here are a few examples from my experience:

The Tip	When I First Learned It
<i>Use Your Radar: Court Sense</i>	When playing 5th grade basketball in Indiana
<i>Mutual Trust and Respect</i>	Working as a teenager with my Dad and Grandad
<i>Make a Decision, Manage the Consequences</i>	Cornell Business School
<i>Leadership Traits and Principles</i>	US Army, Fort Bragg, N.C.
<i>Bad News is Good News</i>	Developing the culture at Applied Materials
<i>Health Consciousness: Life is a Marathon, not a Sprint</i>	I’m not sure when I first recognized this!



You can download a worksheet to jot down insights and other ideas to reflect on by scanning the QR code or at this link:

[AppliedWisdomforNonprofits.org/tips](https://AppliedWisdomforNonprofits.org/tips)



Below is a fillable PDF that can be printed. You may also consider saving your tips online using an app like Apple Notes or Microsoft OneNote, or in a Google Doc.

### MY COLLECTION OF MANAGEMENT TIPS

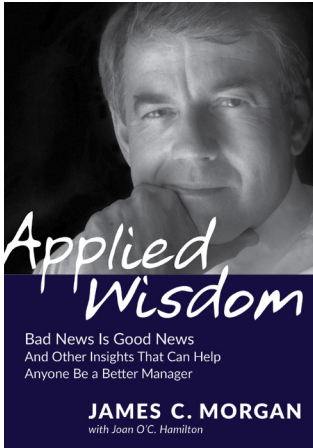
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

INSIGHT	SOURCE	DATE COLLECTED
<i>(Example)</i> <i>I feel that luck is preparation meeting opportunity.</i>	<i>Oprah Winfrey</i>	<i>12/03/2022</i>
<i>There's no shortage of remarkable ideas. What's missing is the will to execute them.</i>	<i>Seth Godin</i>	<i>02/01/2023</i>
<i>If you really look closely, most overnight successes took a long time.</i>	<i>Steve Jobs</i>	<i>03/12/2023</i>

AppliedWisdomforNonprofits.org

## Also by Jim Morgan

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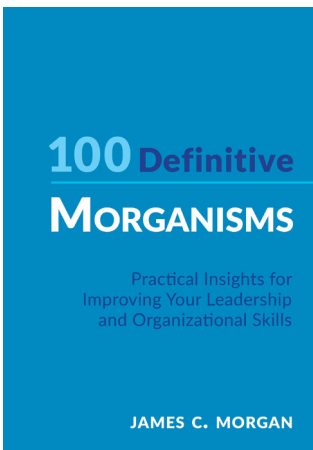


“Managers of any size business or nonprofit group will find solid advice for building agile and effective organizations.”

— Meg Whitman,  
*former President & CEO, Hewlett Packard*

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[appliedwisdombook.com](http://appliedwisdombook.com)



*The Definitive Morganisms* collects over 100 of Jim Morgan’s most famous “Morganisms” — simple management insights that can help anyone be a better manager and leader.

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[AppliedWisdomforNonprofits.org](http://AppliedWisdomforNonprofits.org)

## Finally, a booklet that integrates the best of business management with the realities of the nonprofit world!

Jim Morgan believes no matter your role in life or job title, anyone can improve their management skills with understanding and practice. In *Applied Wisdom for the Nonprofit Sector: Eight Practical Insights for Leaders* Jim shares his proven leadership insights and management principles through easy-to-remember maxims designed to assist individuals, teams, organizations, networks, and movements to think about and then to apply to complex, real-world situations.

“This little booklet is EXCELLENT for the whole nonprofit sector. Well done... and it’s fun to read! Jim Morgan’s insights offer wisdom and ready-made learning to spur action and promote behavior change within ourselves and our organizations.”

— **Tom Tierney**

Chairman and Co-Founder, Bridgespan

“A great resource for leaders of community foundations, private foundations, and nonprofit organizations alike. It’s succinct, practical and inspiring all at once. Among many valuable insights, I love Jim’s reminder to consistently look up, look forward, and look around.”

— **Nicole Taylor**

President and CEO, Silicon Valley Community Foundation

“This book by Jim Morgan is outstanding. *Applied Wisdom* couldn’t have come at a better time. The workforce is multi-generational and it gives you insights that are unchanging, and apply to all of us.”

— **Teresa Chapman**

Chief People Officer, Santa Clara Family Health Plan

