



INTRODUCING THE LDC

FROM THE CHAIR, JIM MERZ



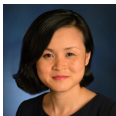
In a world that feels constantly evolving, one thing that is not changing is the need for effective leaders. To that end, the Leadership Development Committee has been working hard to impact the identification and development of diverse, passionate, dedicated and qualified volunteers who can create a robust leadership pipeline and assume CAS leadership roles. Please see Wes Griffith's column below for an in-depth look at the LDC.

As the newly selected chairperson of the LDC, I am proud to count myself a member of such a well-organized and dedicated group of volunteers. They are stewards of the CAS, making sure that we have the leaders of the future regardless of the changes in the world around us. This newsletter is an example of the innovative and productive changes the LDC is making towards a more engaging future.

Six Books for Actuaries to Excel at Leadership, Strategy and Communication

Jessica Leong, CAS President-Elect

These are six books that have helped me the most in my actuarial career. It's not enough to just read these books; you need to practice the skills that they teach. Luckily, volunteering for the CAS gives you ample opportunity to practice these skills. So, I encourage you to go forth and read, practice and grow.



Start with Why Simon Sinek

A strong leader needs a point of view. Simon says, "people don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it." Read this book (or watch the Ted Talk) and find your "why."

Good Strategy, Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why It Matters

Richard Rumelt

The title says it all. Rumelt gives examples of bad strategy like: "we want to grow profits by 20%," followed by strategic retreats where everyone generalizes that they will become more awesome. If this sounds painfully familiar to you, and you instead want to know how to come up with a good strategy, read this book.

The Lean Startup Eric Ries

If you want to be innovative, then you can learn a lot from how startups approach innovation. This is one of the first books to talk about the concept of a minimum viable product - a great concept that I use to develop new tools at work.

The Art of Public Speaking Stephen Lucas

This is not your typical book on public speaking. Instead of focusing on how to stand or project your voice, this book taught me to focus on my content, especially how to organize content. Content organization is very different when you're speaking to 200 people than when you're speaking to 10 people. Once you have mastered this, people are engaged and everything else (how you stand, etc.) comes naturally.

Wall Street Journal Guide to Information Graphics Dona Wong

This is a very simple and practical guide to displaying data that makes it easy to understand, with takeaways that are immediately actionable.

Everybody Writes: Your Go-To Guide to Creating

Ridiculously Good Content Ann Handley

I've read a few books on writing, and this one is my favorite because it's so practical. My favorite tip in the book? Put the most important thing in the start of your sentence. For example, instead of saying "According to Mrs. Jones, an authority on asbestos reserves at The Big Consulting Firm, the reserves at XYZ Insurance are deficient." You would say "The reserves at XYZ are deficient, according to Mrs. Jones, an authority on asbestos reserves at The Big Consulting Firm." It seems like an obvious tip, but it's something I've never actively thought about until I read this book.

How to be a Distance Leader

Somil Jain



There is no one single skill that makes a good leader; it is an amalgamation of good decisions and forward-thinking acts. During this time of shelter-in-place, these are the specific traits that I feel are most critical for leaders.

Distant work requires clear and crisp communication. My personal management style is fairly hands-off and focuses primarily around coaching. However, when the regular in-person contacts are infrequent, I find that defining clear expectations is necessary. For instance, I find it worthwhile to get tactical and get agreement on "who", "what" and "when", especially for work spread across multiple teams. Another key aspect of distant leadership is to assume positive intent; it's very easy to misinterpret people's remarks, so start by assuming they meant it in the nicest possible way, until proven otherwise. On the flipside, make sure you offer "thank you" and "good work" often.

As leaders we are comfortable taking ownership of tasks that our teams are responsible for; now we need to take ownership for the well-being of our teams as well. Work-from-home has presented unique challenges to many people. People have lives at home that include kids, elderly parents and other dependents, sick or otherwise. Many team members now have another set of tasks beside their professional workload to manage within the same workday. Allowing people additional flexibility in terms of hours may be a great way to build greater trust with your team, and likely get more done.

One welcome advantage is that the current work from home situation has given us an opportunity to better get to know our coworkers and their families. My last piece of advice would be to encourage everyone to be thankful for what you have and keep in mind those less fortunate.



"Participating in the LDC Mentoring Program was a great experience and extremely valuable for my role as Chair of the University Engagement Committee. The LDC took all of my mentoring wishes into account when pairing me with Beth Fitzgerald, who has greatly influenced my approach for managing my committee and who has helped me become a more effective leader within the CAS."

FEATURED LEADER

Tom Whitcomb



Building a Leadership Pipeline for the CAS

Wes Griffiths

The CAS is growing and evolving every day and there is a need to identify, develop, and promote leaders within the organization to execute our [strategic plan](#). The CAS utilizes the Leadership Development Committee (LDC) to support this function.

The LDC was formed over ten years ago with a simple charge: to ensure that the CAS has a robust and diverse pipeline of passionate, dedicated and qualified volunteers ready to assume leadership roles over time. The LDC is made up of more than twenty CAS members who are passionate about leadership and who have committed to minimizing the talent risks for the organization.



What does the LDC do?

Build the Pipeline

The process starts by identifying individuals who could serve as leaders in the future. There are a few avenues taken to accomplish this:

- The CAS database is mined to see who has been an active volunteer to date
- Current leaders are contacted to provide names of members who have [key skills required](#) to serve in the future
- Members are surveyed directly through the annual CAS VIP Survey to gauge interest in serving in a leadership role

Paramount to any talent strategy is ensuring that a diverse pool of candidates be considered for all leadership roles. LDC partners closely with the Joint CAS/SOA Committee on Inclusion, Equity and Diversity to continually challenge any biases the committee may have and to ensure that the group is casting the widest possible net in their efforts.

The LDC then interviews those identified to understand their volunteer motivations, interests, skills, development areas, leadership aspirations and availability. This is completed in order to identify skillsets needed and to build our bench of leaders for current and future opportunities.

Provide Access to our Services

When individuals are identified and their needs are understood, the LDC focuses on exposing them to services that help them grow and develop their volunteer leadership skills with the intent to ready them for future CAS leadership roles. This includes:

- Mentoring – Individualized Outreach & Connections
 - Matching aspiring volunteer leaders with those who have led (both in their careers and within the CAS) to allow them to focus on identified development areas
- Leader Support – Tools & Resources
 - [CAS Chairperson's Best Practices Manual](#) and accompanying [webinar](#)
 - An [infographic](#) on how to effectively work with CAS Staff
 - [Online Courses](#) focused on 'Running Productive Meetings' and 'Managing Projects Effectively'
 - Coming in 2020, a new [webinar](#) called 'How the CAS Works' focused on helping volunteers see the bigger picture of the CAS from governance, [structure](#), decision making and strategic priorities
- Leadership Development Courses – In Person Group Training
 - In 2019, two sessions were offered on 'Leading without Authority' to over 40 CAS leaders in sessions held in Chicago and Hartford. And in 2020, additional courses on topics such as 'Fostering Innovation' and 'Leading Change' will be offered to CAS leaders.
 - In addition to learning new skills, these courses provide ample networking time to encourage the leaders to broaden their CAS volunteer network outside of their current committee structure.
- Communications – Telling our Story
 - Technology is being leveraged to communicate with the CAS leaders of tomorrow to make sure they're aware of the strategies of the CAS and the available development opportunities.
- Connect Volunteer Talent with Opportunities
 - Leveraging the database of leaders we've cultivated, the LDC is well positioned to fill the organization's talent needs in the future. The LDC operates as "HR for Volunteer CAS Leadership Resources" with a list of members ready to serve in various capacities. The LDC plays an active role every year in sharing names with the CAS Nominating Committee. CAS leadership has also approached LDC on occasion to ask for names of individuals to serve as chairs and key task force leaders.
 - The LDC also ensures that many of the leaders "on our radar" are included in the annual CAS Leadership Summit to learn more about the organization, CAS priorities, and to continue to build their networks.

Interested in Learning more about CAS Leadership Opportunities?

The CAS needs leaders with different skills and backgrounds to help maintain our gold standard and the LDC stands ready to help!

If you're thinking about getting more involved in leadership within the CAS, please visit our [volunteer page](#) to learn more about the services available to aid you in your development.