



September, 2016 Volume 8, Issue 4

Number 76

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a MESSAGE from SYLVIA

How the Writing of My Book Affects YOU

Quite a few of you know that I devoted nine months in 2014 to writing a very personal book, *Learning Leadership Through Loss*, based upon thick private diaries stored in my basement. I hadn't opened those boxes in twenty-five years. After lugging them upstairs, I poured over literally hundreds of hand written pages for four solid weeks. The experience was taxing and emotional.

This immersion into such intense reading, however, prepared me to write. You may think of it as an investment in the quality of the finished product. I needed to relive that period of my life before I could tell it to--and share it with-- others. But as I had learned on a much smaller scale back in the early 90s when I cranked out meaty three-page articles on a monthly basis for a

Boston based magazine, good writing is hard work. It takes a pedal to the metal



discipline many folks don't have. Or desire.

Now, eighteen months after release on Amazon and Kindle, the book I birthed continues to change lives and careers. Folks representing a diversity of industries in the U.S. send emails informing me how this book, my precious baby, specifically impacted them. Believe me: It's humbling when it happens. If I'd have quit when the honeymoon was over (about six weeks into the process), these people would not have been influenced by my loss and how it shaped me as well as my career as a result of going through it. On the other side of the writing, I know that I learned more than persistence during those nine months. In this ezine I decided to make myself vulnerable and share these important lessons with you. Check out my feature article below.

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FEATURE ARTICLE

10 Lessons I Learned From Writing My Book (That Can Benefit Leaders Anywhere)

1. **Difficult things can be worth doing.** While I'd tackled some pretty big projects over 30+ years in the traditional workforce, none were as big as my book. When I started to write, I knew I faced the task of creating twenty chapters. This translated into typing a total of approximately 66,000 words. The thought was daunting, but I did it anyway.
2. **It pays to chunk your time.** If you'd have come to my house every Tuesday afternoon and every Saturday from February through October of 2014, you'd have seen me glued to my computer in the downstairs family room. There were weekends I declined social invitations. Often I didn't pick up the phone. There were evenings when Kevin cooked dinner. That's how the book got written. Time chunking was the ticket to productivity.
3. **Listen to your head and your heart.** Writing an entire book is a mental workout. No question about it. But my book would be academic and flat if I'd have left out the heart. In fact, people tell me that the heart threads I included are precisely what make my book memorable, inspiring, and strong.

4. **Keep on going no matter what.** I'd be lying if I told you I never thought about giving up. Some days I just wasn't in the frame of mind to write two sentences much less multiple pages of single spaced text. As you already know, I kept on going, even when it was rough. All kidding aside, I discovered that there are several levels of *rough*. Visualizing a completed book in my hand kept me on track.
5. **Identify your key talking points.** Remember what I said in my message above? I'd read hundreds of diary pages before typing a word. That's a lot of material to synthesize, summarize, and ultimately condense. It's not easy to boil down a mountain of thoughts and feelings to wind up with an ideal "sauce reduction". But that's what excellent writing requires—getting rid of everything that doesn't really count.
6. **Dare to be transparent.** Frequently readers have told me that my willingness to "tell it like it was" makes my book the gem they say it is. I chose not to hide the truth—or seemingly insignificant pieces of it. I wrote clearly, boldly, and honestly, moving beyond the fear that some folks may criticize my choice to be real.
7. **Understand that perfection is not the goal.** As humans, we cannot attain the status of perfection no matter what we do. It's utterly impossible. If I had insisted upon producing a so-called perfect version, I would never have submitted my manuscript to a publisher. Or certainly not in 2014. Toward the end of the year I sent the best version I knew how to write. And that's what my publisher reviewed.
8. **Manage your moods.** If you wait to start a book until you are in the right mood, you'll never begin. Trust me on that one. If you wait for the right mood to strike, you'll find every excuse known to man to avoid finishing a chapter. I've been there. The trick is to learn to identify and then manage your hour by hour moods—and write anyway.
9. **Ignore the naysayers.** Most folks in my world understood that I was already a skilled and experienced writer by the time I announced I was going to do a book. These people weren't surprised to hear this news, and they didn't doubt my ability to deliver. Occasionally, though, I'd run into somebody in

the business community who felt compelled to recite the dismal statistics related to the numbers of books that never get done. I needed to forget those conversations.

10. **Being in “flow” is bliss.** Until I started working on my book, I realized that I hadn’t experienced genuine flow very often in my life or my work. Flow goes way beyond interest, dedication, and enjoyment. It can be defined as a mental state in which we taste the indescribable beauty of complete energized motivation, focus, and absorption in whatever we are doing. I came to understand flow in 2014. In my opinion, it is the ultimate human experience. I sincerely hope that before you transition into the next dimension you get to know what flow feels like.

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What Clients Say

Sylvia’s book illustrates how raw life experiences can really position someone to be an expert. The story is captivating, and the structure works. Jam packed with insight and wisdom, from the beginning I felt a level of trust with the author. I believed in her business recommendations because her personal story clearly demonstrated both credibility and compassion for people. Learning Leadership Through Loss is a great read if you are seeking a professional and personal growth opportunity that’s different from many others.

- Kristina Pae, Harrisburg Academy, Camp Hill, PA

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Offers and Opportunities

Want to Learn Leadership Skills On Your Own?

If you have not already read Sylvia’s riveting book released in March of 2015, grab yourself a copy by [clicking here](#). Having appeal to both women and men, this book is available in paper back and Kindle.

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RESOURCES

My 10 Lessons Made Real for YOU

Take 60 seconds to answer these questions with candor:

- When is the last time you tackled and completed a hard task/project?
- How did it feel when you finished?
- When did you last set aside several hours to work on a project?
- How did this level of focus impact the quality of your work?
- What can you put more “heart” into this week?
- How might “heart” affect the outcome?
- What were you tempted to give up on recently? Did you keep going?
- When did you last condense a large volume of information/data?
- What was it like to do that?
- How can you be more transparent at work?
- Do you tend to strive for perfection? How does that affect things?
- How well do you manage your moods?
- How often do people doubt that you can do something?
- How does such negativity impact you emotionally and practically?
- Have you ever experienced true “flow” in your professional life?
- What did that feel like? How did it affect your work?

You may want to file these questions and go through them every thirty days. This is a good way to stay on track in a number of ways that seriously impact your ability to stand tall in leadership.

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TIP

Which one of the ten lessons discussed in the feature article above could be a game changer for YOU— IF you adopted that particular belief, implemented that particular strategy, practiced that particular habit, or accepted that particular challenge for the next twenty-one days? If you did that one thing without procrastinating, how would your boss see you differently? How would your productivity increase? How would the quality of your work improve? How would you be happier? Pick one of those lessons and live it like your entire career depended on it.

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Where in the World is SYLVIA?

Over the past few weeks Sylvia has been busy developing a two-hour deep dive web-based training module for PA's network of victim assistance providers and stakeholder agencies in the criminal and juvenile justice and human service systems. This training course is one of thirty to be created by a select group of consultants/coaches in South Central PA. The U.S. Department of Justice, funder of this initiative, has awarded the contract to the Pennsylvania Coalition on Crime and Delinquency. All aspects of this contract are being administered through Penn State Harrisburg. Sylvia feels honored to have the opportunity to develop several other training modules between now and March 2017!

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Join Sylvia on these social networks!

About This Ezine

The purpose of this Ezine is to: 1) Provide readers with valuable FREE content which contributes to personal and professional growth as well as overall career development; and 2) Invite readers to take next steps toward working directly with Sylvia.

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forwarding the Ezine email. Include launchinglives.biz in your list of safe senders or friends, depending upon your email software, to be sure you receive the monthly emailed issues.

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About SYLVIA

Sylvia Hepler, Owner and President of Launching Lives, LLC, specializes in career development for both corporate and nonprofit executives and managers. Based in South Central PA, she specifically supports clients as they upgrade their current job performance, seek a promotion, or plan/navigate a career transition. What makes her services unique is that Sylvia helps people to cope with change, loss, and grief as they work on developing their careers. Her professional background includes: nonprofit executive management/leadership, nonprofit community health program start-up, program evaluation, public speaking, business and freelance writing, teaching, and retail sales.

A certified executive coach through The Rescue Institute in Golden, Colorado and Quantum Endeavors in Chicago, Illinois (plus a participant in extensive continuing education opportunities with several coaches of national notoriety), Sylvia offers individual and group coaching, assessments, teleseminars, workshops, keynote speeches, and retreats. She also has created tangible and downloadable products that augment her coaching and speaking services.

For more information and to connect with Sylvia try:

[Launching Lives Website](#)

[Click to contact Sylvia by Email](#)

Reach Sylvia by phone at **717-761-5457**

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Launching Lives SERVICES

Launching Lives, LLC is a full service career development company for managers and executives located in South Central PA. Utilizing a holistic

approach to service provision, Launching Lives focuses on supporting clients as they create the platinum level career they desire by upgrading their job performance, seeking a promotion, or planning/navigating a career transition

Often people don't really know HOW they might benefit from coaching. Quite simply, ask yourself these questions: "What can't I seem to resolve on my own? What is keeping me awake at night? What am I missing when I look at a certain situation? How can I get to the next professional level? How can I learn certain skills quickly? How can I narrow my professional gaps? How can I motivate my staff? How can I communicate more effectively so I serve myself and others better? How can I reduce my work-related frustration? How can I develop a viable plan of action for myself and/or my organization? How can I obtain greater job satisfaction? Coaching may be the SOLUTION to any of these issues.

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