



Selected Proceedings from the 1999 annual conference of the International Leadership Association, October 22-24, Atlanta, Georgia USA

Excerpt from Introduction

By Barbara Kellerman and Scott W. Webster

This is a first. This *Selected Proceedings* is the first to record, in part, an Annual Meeting of the International Leadership Association (ILA).

This brings us to a second first. This publication is based on a conference held in Atlanta in October 1999 – which was the first time the newly-established ILA actually convened.

Like all ostensibly new ideas, this one had roots. The ILA grew out of what was for one year called the Leaders/Scholars Association (L/SA) and which held a conference at the University of Southern California in November 1998. The L/SA, in turn, emerged from the Kellogg Leadership Studies Project, a four-year initiative intended to create a community of scholars in Leadership Studies.

At the same time, it is fair to say that the idea to start an organization with the manifestly ambitious name, International Leadership Association, was a quantum leap forward. **The ILA is an organization based on one big idea: that the global community of those with a professional interest in leadership is sufficiently large, diverse, curious, and committed to justify – to more than justify! – the establishment of an association dedicated to its particular welfare.**

As of this writing, in March 2000, the ILA is one year old. Even now it constitutes an international network for all those with a professional interest in leadership. Its

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constituency includes, among others, leaders, managers, scholars, educators, community activists, consultants, and trainers. Moreover, the ILA is designed deliberately to cross those lines that have up to now divided the leadership field: disciplines, sectors, regions, nations, and cultures. Think of the ILA as an umbrella organization and you'll get the picture.

Finally, it should be noted that the meeting this publication represents is an annual affair. These events will all have three primary ends: 1) to generate and disseminate cutting-edge work in theory and practice; 2) to strengthen ties among those who study, teach, and exercise leadership; and 3) to serve as an arena within which those with a professional interest in leadership can share research, resources, information, and, above all, ideas.

During its first year the ILA established a Governing Board that has turned out to be extraordinarily creative and productive. Some examples of various ILA initiatives: a governing document is being drafted; incorporation and, subsequently, tax-exempt status are being procured; affiliations are being sought with a variety of existing leadership organizations; and a key transition is being implemented – the ILA is even now becoming a membership organization....

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