

# MOVERS & *Shakespeares*

OUR APPROACH ABOUT US  
REVIEWS NEWS CONTACT in  
f t

## US News & World Report | The Funky Professors

By Christine Larson

A few years ago, when two senior executives at Northrop Grumman turned to each other while discussing a fierce competitor and said, in unison, "Agincourt," Katie Gray was baffled. Today, she's likely to say the same thing herself when faced with daunting odds. She might even quote a line or two from Shakespeare's St. Crispin's Day speech, delivered by Henry V to his outnumbered troops on the field of Agincourt. "We few, we happy few ... ."



If Gray did break into iambic pentameter, some 600 of her peers might join her. Since 1999, Gray, vice president of procurement and material management for Northrop Grumman's electronic systems sector, and other senior managers have completed a series of leadership workshops based on the Bard's plays. Presented by a Washington, D.C.-area group called Movers and Shakespeares, the sessions include movie clips, discussions of leadership dilemmas, and a finale in which willing executives don tights, doublets, and codpieces as they perform a Shakespeare-based skit. "More traditional leadership courses are helpful, but I don't retain the lessons the same way I do from these," says Gray.

It's not just Shakespeare who's teaching leadership these days. Executives from corporations as diverse as Bristol-Myers Squibb, Citibank, and Verizon are finding themselves sitting amid chamber orchestras, waving a conductor's baton, or even choreographing a few modern dance steps as part of leadership development programs. Dance, music, and drama give an artsy new twist to experiential learning, the same movement that has sent squads of managers hurtling through white water and rappelling down mountainsides in search of management wisdom. "The showing, not telling, is pretty powerful," says J. Richard Hackman, professor of social and organizational psychology at Harvard University. "Especially when you see something

# MOVERS & *Shakespeares*

OUR APPROACH ABOUT US  
REVIEWS NEWS CONTACT in  
f t

Speaking of unconventional methods, the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School's Leadership Ventures, which organizes the school's learning programs for students and alumni, recently added a workshop with the Connecticut-based modern dance group Pilobolus to its roster. Historically, the workshops have focused on excursions to Mount Everest, Antarctica, and other rugged locales. In one exercise with Pilobolus, the 30 or so participants were asked to take one step forward. The result: ragged, uncoordinated chaos. But after a few repetitions, with no further instruction or conversation, the line began to step forward in perfect unison. Exercises like these, says Itamar Kubovy, executive director of Pilobolus, show that leadership isn't just about giving orders. "Decisions that could never be attributed to one person are made collectively by the group, and suddenly the group has a purpose and structure and form."

With their innate emotional power and focus on creativity, the arts can bring management lessons to life in a way that escapes even the best keynote speakers. "Sure, I could bring in Bill Cosby or Bill Clinton to talk about leadership," says Ed Stanford, president of McGraw-Hill's higher education group, who has used an orchestra in management training sessions. "This provoked a very different experience than any kind of speech does. Partly, that's because the music makes it more dramatic."

Earlier this year, Stanford attended a Music Paradigm workshop in New York for McGraw-Hill executives. The organization brings a full orchestra into a conference room and then invites the executives to sit next to the musicians as the conductor demonstrates various leadership styles. During the session, the conductor, Roger Nierenberg, former music director of the Stamford (Conn.) Symphony Orchestra and the Jacksonville (Fla.) Symphony Orchestra, exaggerated every beat and nuance in a passage of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Then he asked the musicians what they thought. A cello player, for example, said he felt as if he was wearing a straitjacket. Another musician said he felt the conductor didn't trust him. "That knocked me over," says Stanford, who hired the group to train 250 of his managers in Chicago. "That's what micromanagement is all about--not trusting people."

Morgan Stanley regularly uses the Grammy-winning Orpheus Chamber Orchestra to demonstrate leadership by committee. Instead of using a conductor, the ensemble

# MOVERS & *Shakespeares*

OUR APPROACH ABOUT US  
REVIEWS NEWS CONTACT in  
f t

managing director at Morgan Stanley. But by the end of the sessions, he says, "they've realized they're going to get much better results if they make every person a leader."

One aspect of arts leadership makes it particularly effective for bright, sometimes impatient executives: The lessons aren't spoon-fed. "If people can get the point on their own instead of you lecturing them, then they own it," says Tracey Draper, an organization development specialist at Northrop Grumman, which has used Movers and Shakespeares about 40 times. "What people get out of that short eight-hour day would take a lot longer to learn in a traditional setting." A discussion of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, for example, quickly opened the eyes of Northrop Grumman's Gray to a critical gender divide. While talking about the play's heroine, Isabella, who is forced to choose between her chastity and her brother's life, "all of the women in the room saw Isabella as being taken advantage of," says Gray. "But some of the men, although certainly not all of them, thought perhaps Isabella was the one taking advantage and using her feminine wiles." Gray says she has since become more aware of multiple points of view regarding issues that may at first have seemed clear-cut.

While such insights can have a lasting effect, the value of teaching them can be difficult to quantify, says Pat Galagan, a vice president at the American Society for Training and Development in Alexandria, Va. With arts-based programs costing \$20,000 to \$100,000 per engagement, she says, "you risk looking frivolous if you can't make a good business case for this." Galagan advises firms to ask training organizations how their sessions helped other clients boost sales or save time.

Jacqueline Martini, senior manager of sales training at Lucent Technologies, ensured that Movers and Shakespeares would successfully link high drama to high tech by arranging extensive briefings for the group's principals. The training team explained the company's strategies and objectives, so Movers and Shakespeares could tailor its session to the specific needs of Lucent's sales force.

Often, companies help clarify those parallels by incorporating arts-based workshops into larger training events. WPP, which owns Ogilvy & Mather, Burson-Marsteller, and numerous other communications firms, has used Music Paradigm on the third day of a weeklong program for senior executives. "The rest of the lessons during the week were taught for the mind," says Samantha Lucas, managing director of Burson-Marsteller,



OUR APPROACH ABOUT US  
REVIEWS NEWS CONTACT in  
f t

♥ 0 Likes

Newer / Older



1601 Clarendon Blvd.  
Suite 1501  
Arlington, VA 22207  
703-989-5444



Please contact us directly at 703-989-5444 to inquire about scheduling with Movers & Shakespeares, or to ask any questions about our business training programs. Alternatively, complete the form below, and we will contact you within 48 hours. If you're a former participant in Movers & Shakespeares, we welcome you to share your feedback with us.

Name \*

First Name

Last Name

Email Address \*

Subject \*

Message \*

# MOVERS & *Shakespeares*

[OUR APPROACH](#) [ABOUT US](#)  
[REVIEWS](#) [NEWS](#) [CONTACT](#) [in](#)  
[f](#) [t](#)

SUBMIT

© 2017 Movers & Shakespeares | [Home](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [All Rights Reserved](#) | [Site by KVD](#)