

LESSONS FROM THE EXTRAORDINARY SAGA OF SHACKLETON'S ANTARCTIC EXPEDITION



THE RESONANT METAPHOR APPROACH

Our approach to learning about leadership, management and teamwork is based on the use of “Resonant Metaphors” – vivid, emotionally charged images and stories that act as powerful lenses to influence the way people see the world, themselves and others. The resonant metaphor is a story that is deeply personal and at the same time, a shared experience. This personal shared experience enables participants to explore the complexities of leadership beyond the superficial and theoretical. The story poses real life situations that are metaphorically reflective of the types of challenges faced by team working into today’s rapidly changing business environment.

The resonant metaphor for this program is based on the 1914-16 Trans-Antarctic Expedition led by Sir Ernest Shackleton. This story of inspiring leadership under “life and death” circumstances connects the exercises and discussions to real life examples. Using original photographs, drawings and journal entries from the expedition, participants feel like they were part of the crew, as the gripping narrative becomes the departure point for an intense and unforgettable experience.

THE SHACKLETON SAGA

In 1914, Shackleton and his crew of 27 set sail on the *Endurance* to launch the most daring expedition to date—crossing the entire continent of Antarctica. After traveling over 1000 miles through the pack ice, they became beset only 60 miles from their landing point on the Antarctic coast. After two failed attempts to cut through the ice, they resigned themselves to wintering on board the ship, hoping that the movement of the ice would take them closer to land.



For 10 months they drifted, locked in the grip of the ice, until the enormous pressure crushed and sank their ship. With limited supplies, the crew was forced to survive on the ice floes, where they were stranded for five more months. Finally reaching the edge of the ice pack, they traveled in three small lifeboats—a hazardous “open water” journey amidst the jostling icebergs. Five days later, they landed on Elephant Island: A bleak, rocky and uninhabited place, and due to its remote position, there was no hope of rescue.

Confronting their predicament—that to do nothing would lead to death—Shackleton and five others set out in one of the lifeboats on an incredible 800-mile journey through the Southern Ocean. Considered the most treacherous seas on the planet, this amazing journey of trial and tribulation is still considered one of the most difficult sailing accomplishments in the history of small boat sailing. Upon reaching South Georgia Island, as a final challenge, they had to trek over near impassable terrain to reach the whaling station on the other side of the island.

Immediately upon reaching civilization, Shackleton turned his attention to the remaining castaways still on Elephant Island. After four separate attempts—and 128 days later—Shackleton rescued all crew members. Miraculously, after the 634-day ordeal, no one perished!

How did this group overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles? How did Shackleton inspire his crew to such extraordinary levels of courage, unity and commitment? How did he create and maintain an organization able to sustain peak performance in such demanding and extreme circumstances?

Our research shows that their success was due to the exceptional leadership and teamwork they were able to exhibit. Based on over 25 years of research, the behaviors that were personified in the Shackleton Expedition have been successfully employed by leaders faced with such daunting challenges as fierce competition, the need for constant innovation and creativity, and the ability to inspire and lead during conditions filled with constant change.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The program has been designed to focus on the essential behaviors that our research has shown are critical for leadership and team effectiveness:

- Establishing clear long term vision while focusing on short term objectives
- The importance of personal example and symbolic behavior
- Overcoming adversity and remaining optimistic during challenging times
- Maintaining health, stamina and a balanced focus to improve performance
- Creating and maintaining cohesiveness in new teams
- Developing and sustaining core values and a winning culture
- Managing conflict and business challenges to improve performance
- Leveraging celebration and recognition to motivate the team
- Appropriate risk taking and ongoing risk management
- The relentless pursuit of creative solutions under difficult conditions



PROGRAM CONFIGURATIONS

The program can be adapted to fit into the client's existing leadership and team effectiveness offerings, and can be customized to support various leadership models. Depending on the objectives, the program can be offered in various configurations as follows:

- **High impact Presentation / Keynote Version – 2.5 hours – includes:**
 - The Shackleton Saga: an in-depth review of the Trans-Antarctic Expedition as a case study on leadership and team effectiveness, brought to life using the original images and journal entries from the expedition.
 - Comprehensive review of leadership and teamwork lessons from to the story.
- **High Impact Interactive Session – 4-6 hours – includes:**
 - The Shackleton Saga and review of key leadership and teamwork lessons.
 - Interactive discussions throughout the story to develop a deeper understanding of the key concepts from the story, and the unique challenges associate with achieving and sustaining high performance in today's rapidly changing business environment.
 - Application of learnings to specific individual, team and organizational challenges that need to be addressed to increase performance for the individual, team and organization, and action planning for immediate application to the work setting.

ABOUT ALTUS GROUP



IT'S ALL ABOUT ALIGNMENT.

SIMPLE IN CONCEPT, YET VERY DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE AND MAINTAIN OVER TIME.

Whether you are an executive hoping to increase your individual performance, or a senior team pursuing aggressive goals, or an entire organization experiencing rapid growth and transformation, the more people, processes and priorities are aligned, the less energy and time it will take to accelerate and maintain high performance.

EVERY COMPANY IS MADE UP OF PEOPLE WHO WOULD LIKE NOTHING MORE THAN TO REALIZE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL. SOMETIMES THEY NEED A LITTLE HELP – THAT'S WHERE WE COME IN.

For those who want to reach their highest potential, we offer an integrated set of consulting services focused on increasing individual, team and organizational performance.

EXECUTIVE COACHING – Improving leadership performance as a trusted advisor

TEAM PERFORMANCE – Creating alignment and increasing effectiveness

ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION -- Cultural change and strategic visioning

PRESENTATIONS & PROGRAMS – Learning through metaphors and stories

We are committed to providing the best thinking and creative solutions to meet the ever-changing needs of our clients. We seek to understand the culture and business of our client organizations to ensure that our approach meets their unique challenges. We strive to provide more than expected—at every interaction—and our exceptional service has allowed us to build long lasting relationships with clients around the world.

Our best thinking, tailored to address your unique challenges, delivered with exceptional service and value—that's the Altus Group approach.

CLIENTS & EXPERIENCE

"Paul has played a key role as an advisor and coach in our transformation and is truly a partner in our journey to achieve our 2020 Vision. We've worked together for seven years now, and we're looking forward to continuing this partnership."

- Rajiv Verma, CEO, HT Media, Delhi, India

"Over the many years we worked together, Paul always went above and beyond... He would put in the extra time (at no charge) if he felt it would add more value to the program. I believe Lend Lease received great value for the money that they invested in the Springboard Leadership program."

- Natalie Braid, Former Program Manager, Lend Lease, Sydney, Australia

"I'm sure we'd not be as far along as we are without your help. Over the past year, you've helped to create the alignment we need and I appreciate all that you've done."

- Patrick Murphy, VPHR, Vesta Corporation, Simsbury, USA

"This was an important event to gain insight and perspective in these troubled economic times. I want to personally thank you for making this a valuable experience for all who attended."

- Bob Kerzner, CEO, LL Global, Hartford, USA

"On behalf of Lend Lease, it's been a wonderful experience for all of us who have had the privilege of working with you and your team on this initiative."

- Adrien Meredith, Global Manager, Lend Lease, Sydney Australia



HT Media Limited



Morgan Stanley
Smith Barney



American General



The Housing Specialists



MERCK

Be well



INTERNATIONAL PAPER



PAUL R. KESSLER -- MANAGING DIRECTOR

Paul Kessler is Managing Director of the Altus Group, a consulting firm specializing in increasing individual, team and organizational performance. He has helped many leading organizations to define and execute their strategic direction, vision, values and goals. He has expertise in organizational transformation, leadership development, executive coaching, team effectiveness, training and design, group process and facilitation, and change management.

After serving in the United States Naval Air Department, Mr. Kessler received his B.A. in psychology from Franciscan University of Steubenville. He completed his M.A. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology at the University of New Haven.

Mr. Kessler is co-author of *Leading at the Edge: Leadership Lessons from the Extraordinary Saga of Shackleton's Antarctic Expedition*, which summarizes 25 years of research on individuals and teams attempting to perform at "The Edge" – the highest possible levels of performance. His passion to understand "The Edge" has taken him to disparate places — to Antarctica, where he retraced the footsteps of famed explorer, Ernest Shackleton; and to Australia, where he sailed with the crew of the *Midnight Rambler*, winners of the treacherous 723 mile Sydney-Hobart Race.

Mr. Kessler has co-authored various articles including *Leadership Lessons from the Race to the South Pole*, *Decision Making at the Edge*, and *Using the Power of Resonant Metaphor to Increase Leadership Effectiveness*. His work was cited by the American Society for Training and Development as outstanding in the field at the 2000 annual awards ceremony. His focus is on helping organizations to maximize leadership and team performance under conditions of adversity and rapid change. He is a featured speaker at conferences around the world and resides in Connecticut.

