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*Understanding customer needs and trends.
Honing your message and strategies to meet market demands.
Building a reputation to create and sustain your leadership.
Demonstrating value.*





These are all paramount to your success.

Inspiration and ideas come from a wide variety of sources. The ability to integrate new thoughts and make the strategy + communications + leadership link helps companies and executives alike elevate their performance.

Because it's challenging at the top, [The Aerie Company](#) offers you useful and thought provoking ideas to help you soar to new heights. Enjoy these latest insights.



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My Fellow Americans – Presidential Communications Lessons

Presidential speech writer and best-selling author James Humes said that the promise of America is expressed is through the presidency. At the helm of this singular institution, the president becomes “the chief articulator of a unique idea.”

As market leaders, we must be adept at identifying, articulating and communicating value. When we look for inspiration some of our nation’s leaders may provide good insights. Just like a nation, businesses large and small advance because of strong leadership. This Presidents Day, as we take a pause to honor the contributions of our forefathers, we’d like to share some communications lessons we can learn from George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

Washington and Lincoln came from completely different backgrounds yet became respected leaders.



They focused on a just and noble cause. Neither feared failure but rather the loss of what would have been achieved if they had not pressed on. They had passion, persistence and patience. Washington was blessed with success transforming from a brash young man to a statesman and entrepreneur who sought out positions of leadership and responsibility. He became admired for his business, military and social success and was most recognized for his character and willing to put his life at risk to defend and make his grand vision for a better life a reality. Lincoln was an equally inspiring leader who came from a humble background, overcome many challenges in life and business and reached the White House to serve in

the country’s top office. His talent for the written and spoken word continues to provide inspiration and enlightenment for today’s leaders.

As you build and maintain your market leadership position consider these presidential leadership lessons:

- **Have integrity** – putting a cause or organization before yourself is one of the major assets of

leadership. Washington was well regarded as a man of honor, character and courage. He did not want to be president, but after the Constitutional Convention when he wanted to retire to his farm he understood that the needs of the nation were more important than his immediate desires. Both he and Lincoln were passionate men of action who ensured their personal integrity came above everything else. Lincoln listened, learned and never let criticism destroy his self-confidence or will to lead. Neither man dwelt on failures. They stayed committed to a just cause and believed the truth would ultimately prevail no matter how hard the fight.

- **When you communicate say something of value** - Both men were strong proponents of freedom of speech and knew how to engage an audience. Washington had a vision for where the country could go, what it could become and the collective responsibility to get there. "In times like the present, men should utter nothing for which they would not willingly be responsible through time and eternity," he told Congress in 1862. Lincoln often talked about preparation of your message. "No matter how skillful a speaker or writer you may be, if you are ignorant of something that you could know, or if your knowledge is faulty, you will eventually be found out." Equally important was how he connected on an emotional level counseling that if you dictated to a man's judgment, commanded his actions or marked him to be shunned or despised, "he will retreat within himself, close all the avenues to his head and his heart."


- **Recognize the value of intelligence** – These leaders understood the importance of seeking outside knowledge. Washington brought rival factions together to unify the nation. He was known as a good delegator and judge of talent who sought out advice from his teams before making final decisions. During times of conflict, close connections with troops at the front lines was vital. Washington always sent scouts to observe and report and he deferred to experts whose experience enabled formidable innovations such as how troops could more effectively use artillery. Lincoln learned in his earliest days as a lawyer how good questions could gain information and guide conversations that ultimately won cases, impacted communication and propelled leadership. As an avid learner, he read biographies, joined literary groups and debating societies and remained open-minded to ideas that helped him make more informed decisions. Journalist and frequent Lincoln critic Horace Greely observed that "There was probably no year of his life that Lincoln was not a wiser, cooler, better man than he had been the year preceding."
- **Consider unprecedented ways to share your message** – The better you know your audience, the more innovative you will be in communicating. Lincoln's presidency was transformed by communications technology. He was the first president to use the telegraph to communicate with his military leaders during the Civil War, improving both the immediacy of information gathering to understand what was going on in military headquarters and influencing his often too timid generals while propelling his leadership vision to the front. Washington's Farewell Address has become a great study in how to get a message out. Instead of delivering it as a speech to Congress as was the typical format at the time, he took his case directly to the people publishing it as an open letter to the American public in a local newspaper which was subsequently picked up and reprinted all over the country. The plain language approach helped instill confidence for this new country going forward.

This is what great leaders do. They set the tone and create the environment for future success for those best placed to make it happen. So be inspired. Do something every day, no matter how small, to communicate more effectively and make your world or company better.

New Links

Links to help you communicate more effectively.

Training the next generation about the importance of your sales pitch - even the Girl Scouts are getting the message! [Would You Buy Cookies from This Girl Scout?](#)

We have an obligation to help the next generation of women leaders with more than just a "you go girl!" Hear what Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg has to say about [getting to the C-Suite](#). Share your wisdom generously.

See our website at www.aeriecompany.com for more links.

About The Aerie Company

Because it's challenging at the top, The Aerie Company collaborates with organizations and executives to identify, articulate and communicate their value.

For more information on how we can help you build market leadership that



demonstrates your distinctive benefits and communications impact, visit our website or contact us at info@aeriecompany.com.



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