

# Turbo Leadership Systems™

# The **TURBO** **Charger**

Phone: (503) 625-1867 • Fax: (503) 625-2699 • email: [admin@turbols.com](mailto:admin@turbols.com)

Issue 175



To our clients and friends

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## Thin Ice



Larry W. Dennis, Sr.  
President,  
Turbo Leadership  
Systems©

*Leaders take  
risks and  
others follow*

**J**ohn, head machine tender for a paper mill in northern Ontario, Canada, told Session 3B of the Leadership Development Lab:

"It was the first week of December 1987. My good friend, Moe, and I decided it was time for our first ritual ice fishing outing of the season. When we reached Saganash Lake, the ice was crystal clear without even a speck of snow on its surface, reflecting back like a mirror, almost blinding both of us. I got out my axe and made a hole close to the shoreline. To my surprise I discovered that there was only about 1½ inches of ice. Moe looked at me and said, 'No way are you getting me out on that thin ice!' I said, 'Come on. The good fishing is about a hundred yards away over toward that island.' I told him that I would go across the ice first to show him that it was safe. So I grabbed my axe and slowly started my way towards the island, making small holes every few yards on my way to check the ice's thickness. I reached the best fishing spot about halfway to the island and came back for Moe. I told him it was safe to cross and that we could go out where the good fishing was. Moe was still a bit scared. He told me, 'I swim like a rock', but when I started back toward the good spot, he followed me. It was a very fruitful day. We caught a lot of fish and spent a great day in our north county winter outdoors. By showing Moe that it was safe, he followed.

I learned an important lesson about leadership that day. If I want people to follow when they are afraid, it is my responsibility to show them that it is safe. When I show them, they will follow. In new, untested territory, every-

one wants reassurance. The action I call you to take is when people are afraid, scared to take a risk, lead the way by your example and they will follow.

The benefit you will gain is your team will trust you, try new things, break old routines, and together you will experience continuous improvement in performance. Don't miss the broader application of this story – for your company or your department to experience continuous improvements in performance, it requires employees taking risks of many kinds. They will have to 'go out on thin ice.' Most people are like Moe and feel as though they swim like a rock when it comes to any new change or challenge. The answer is for you to approach change courageously. Lead your team through change. Get out in front and show the way." **###**



Join us in celebrating . . .

A case of **15 Leadership Principles & Ronald Reagan** - Use Them To Change Your World was purchased last week as graduation gifts for each of the soldiers graduating from the ROTC program in Boston, Massachusetts

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**C&S Fire Safe Services** . . . April '08 was their best month in 30 years with an increase in sales of 52% over April '07

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**Tembec Paper Group**, Kapuskasing, Ontario - April record production; up from 337 tons per day to 400 tons per day.

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