

October 3, 2008



Shepherd e-Leader: Leadership Requires Listening



Changing the Future of Leadership

Common Ground



Bob Beckel (left) and Cal Thomas (right)

Based on their successful *USA Today* column “Common Ground,” political speakers Bob Beckel, a liberal Democratic strategist, and Cal Thomas, a conservative columnist, take on the contentious issues that divide America along partisan lines, and find areas where they agree! That's right—the best of America's right and left come together to advance their common positions on the critical domestic, security, and social issues facing the United States.

Moving away from the archaic crossfire format—Beckel and Thomas find shared beliefs that both liberals and conservatives can agree upon. More like a conversation between friends than debate between enemies, they inspire audiences to find the common ground in their own beliefs, and put aside politics as usual. Their book, *Common Ground: How to Stop the Partisan War That is Destroying America*, expands on their work in *USA Today*, and is a discussion of how liberals and conservatives can work together to put America back on track.

Shepperd Distinguished Lecture Series

“Common Ground”

Thursday, October 30, 2008

7 PM at the UTPB Gymnasium

For more information, please call 432-552-2850.

Admission is free. No tickets required.

The authors will be available to sign copies of their book following the lecture.

John Ben Shepperd
Public Leadership
Institute

“Leadership to me means duty, honor, country. It means character, and it means listening from time to time.”

-George H. W. Bush

“One of the most curious things about American politics is that without a single historical exception a partisan is invariably a member of the other party”

-Anonymous

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Leadership Requires Listening A Practical Application

If you want to be known as a good conversationalist, you must remember and implement the following:

People love two things: the sound of their name and the sound of their voice.

Good conversationalists do the following:
"So, Sam, tell me what you think about the economic bail-out."

Notice that you have made sure "Sam" hears his name, and then when he answers your question, he will hear his "voice." Now, your responsibility as a good listener is to do just that—listen. Don't even start thinking about what you are going to say in response.

And keep your focus on "Sam." Don't start looking around the room for people to greet, meet, etc. As "Sam" begins to wrap up, you can either encourage him to say more, or you can bow out of the conversation with a statement like this:

"Sam, I appreciate your insights and/or viewpoint, and certainly we both agree that it is a monumental economic mess. It's good to visit with you and hopefully we can continue talking some other time."

Of course this does not mean that you don't ever get to talk—it simply means that you have an opportunity to let "Sam" know he is important and that you value his opinion. A good rule of thumb is to listen over fifty percent of the time and talk only about forty percent of the time. And when you talk, it is a good idea to summarize what you just heard before you launch into your ideas, opinion, etc. This reassures the other person that you really were listening.

Listening, really listening, is a skill. But once you learn it and practice it, people will think you are wise, intelligent, and your "likeable" rating will go up. And they will begin to "listen" when you speak. Not a bad exchange.

Texas Leadership Forum Update

The 24th Annual *Texas Leadership Forum* will be held October 10-12, 2008 in Austin, Texas. The leadership team has worked tirelessly to put together an impressive slate of speakers including:

Sylvester Turner, Speaker Pro Tempore - Texas House of Representatives
Clark Kent Ervin, Director of the Aspen Institute's
Homeland Security Initiative
John Boettiger, President of the Texas Lyceum
...and many more!

We are also honored to have Texas Supreme Court Justice Harriet O'Neill serving as judge for the "Search for Solutions" contest along with State Representative David Farabee and "Outstanding State Leader" award winner, Ernest Angelo.

Be watching next month for photographs and highlights from this years' forum.