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## College of Business News

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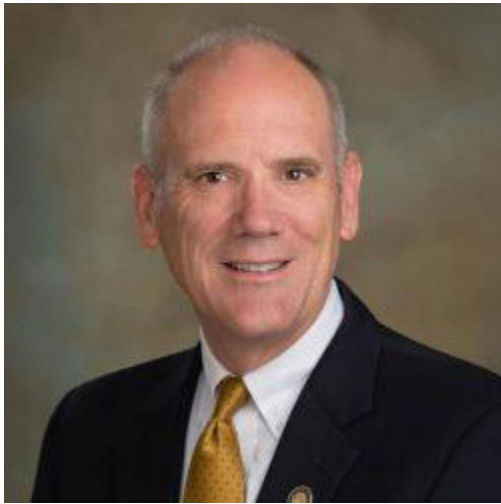
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## Message from the Dean, May 2023

May 30, 2023



As we near the conclusion of the academic year, I'll be wrapping up my year-long series on strategic management and its application in the Parker College of Business. I hope you've found it enjoyable and thought provoking; I've certainly enjoyed thinking about the issues and discussing them in these commentaries. In the remaining newsletters, though, I want to talk about a couple of singular topics that are tangential and closely related to strategic management but that also stand alone and so warrant special consideration. For today, the topic I want to consider is leadership.

Scholars define leadership in a variety of ways but most of the definitions involve two basic elements: translating a vision into reality and guiding others to accomplish outcomes that they could not achieve individually. Putting the two ideas together, a few things become clear. First, leadership is something you do, not merely something you are. In other words, leadership is an activity, rather than an identity. Holding an important office or a position of authority doesn't make one a leader. Rather, doing the difficult work of actually creating something new does.

Next, leadership involves others. It's often said that, if you want to go fast, then go alone, but if you want to go far, then go together. Leaders depend on others and empower them to work together in moving forward. Leaders create, organize, motivate, promote, and drive for better outcomes—outcomes that others often see as being impossible. Leadership improves things and “moves the needle” in a way that others cannot.

Third, leadership involves creativity; leadership involves seeing a future state that is better than the current one and then articulating that vision in a way that others can see, understand, and join in on the work of making it so. That requires more than just dreaming; leadership requires practicality and pragmatism and an ability to work with the tools at hand.

Finally, leadership is not easy; quite the contrary, it is very hard work. True leadership is so very valuable precisely because it is so very rare. And it is rare precisely because it is difficult. Leadership is not formulaic; it has no policy manual or recipe to follow. And, more often than not, the steps and actions required to lead effectively will not be obvious or even well-understood by the majority of those

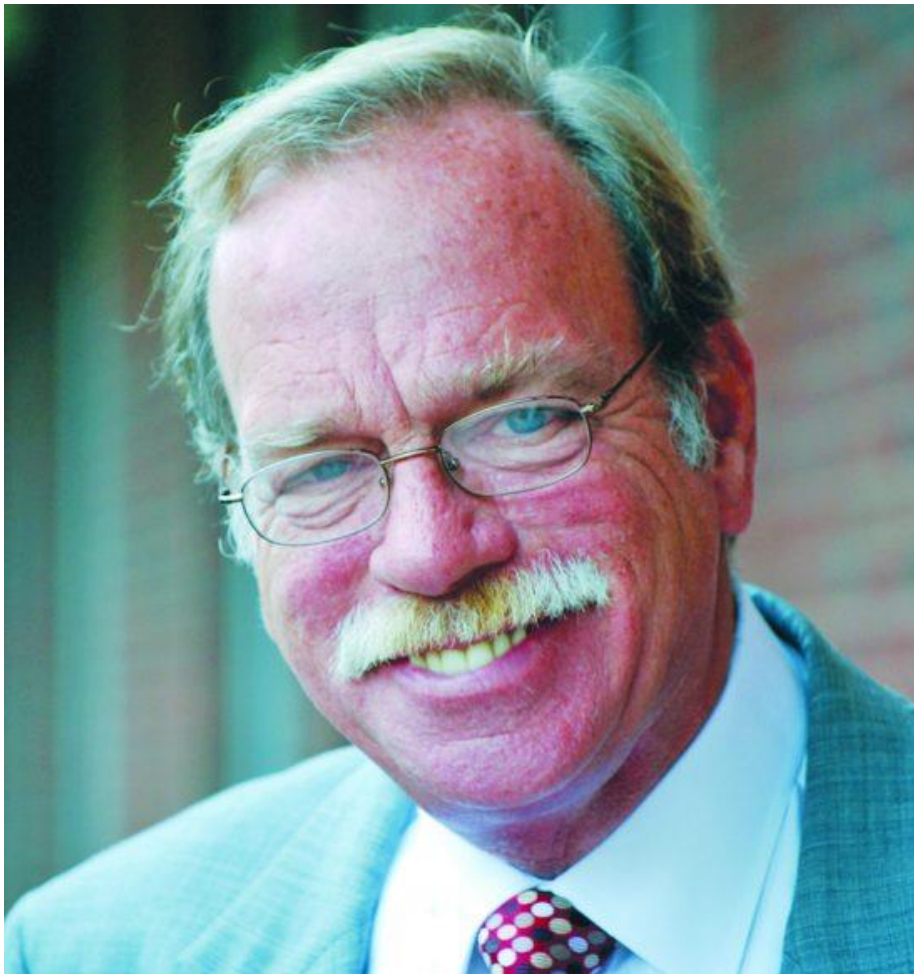
following. Nevertheless, good leadership gets good results. It's right there, in the definition and in the job description.

So, how do we apply these understandings about leadership in the Parker College? In two ways really. First, we teach it in the classroom. We challenge students to actually do things. Rather than relying on a pedigree or their superior education and knowledge, they understand that they must produce real and tangible results. That involves imagination, creativity, and innovation, but it also involves organization, coordination, communication, and plain hard work. Second, we try to model these principles ourselves through an emphasis on innovating in our own business and in our ways of doing things, motivating by providing a clear sense of what we believe is possible, and then building a team and organization that can translate that potential into reality. We see a future where the Parker College is among the world's great business schools, and we work every day to translate that vision into reality.

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### **In Memoriam**

May 30, 2023



The Parker family is sad to announce the loss of Edward H. Sibbald (1948–2023), retired BB&T Executive in Residence in Banking, director of the Center for Excellence in Financial Services, and lecturer of finance. Ed, who prior to coming to Georgia Southern had a distinguished career in banking, came to Georgia Southern in 2006 and immediately embraced his new career as an educator. He especially enjoyed connecting the banking community to his students and helping to support community financial institutions. Ed founded Georgia Southern’s annual Southeast Georgia Community Bank Symposium and extensively consulted with Central Ogeechee River Educators (CORE) Credit Union. According to Don Berecz, senior lecturer emeritus of accounting, Ed frequently provided helpful advice and direction.

After his 2016 retirement from Parker College, Ed, a lifelong baseball fan and baseball card collector enjoyed continuing his love of the game, visiting the beach, basking in the sun in a comfy chair, and spending time with Maria, his wife of 51 years; his daughter and son-in-law, Kristen and Joe, and their children, Maddie and Will; his son, Ed, Jr. and daughter-in-law, Charlotte, their children Sebastian and Malcolm; and his niece Donna, her husband, Tim, and their daughters, Brittany and Danielle.

Away from Georgia Southern, Ed and Don formed the “Illinois Club” and enjoyed gatherings after work hours involving random pools involving the Super Bowl and March Madness. Don fondly remembers that, after the New York Giants won Super Bowl XLII, Ed was upset even though he’d won the pool because he had wanted to witness “a perfect NFL regular season by the New England Patriots” just once in his lifetime. Don concluded, “We all will remember Ed as ‘perfect’ and will miss him in our hearts. His smile will never leave our memories.”

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