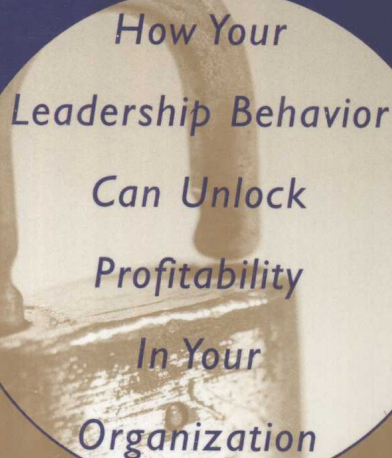


Leslie Wilk Braksick, Ph.D.

# Unlock Behavior, Unleash Profits



*How Your  
Leadership Behavior  
Can Unlock  
Profitability  
In Your  
Organization*

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can unlock profitability  
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**LESLIE WILK BRAKSICK, PH.D.**

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**“Unlock Behavior, Unleash Profits** is about 21<sup>st</sup> century leadership. The power of unlocking behavior in your organization starts with you, the leader. Dr. Braksick is herself a winner, and this book will be one and create many winners itself!”

—*Brian McNeill, Executive Vice President, Danaber Corporation*

**“Unlock Behavior, Unleash Profits** presents the missing link for success in business initiatives, performance concerns, and needed change—behavior. It still takes an above-average leader to make these models and concepts come to life, but there is no doubt about it—if you want to be a results-focused leader, here is the missing link to making it happen.”

—*Jay M. Duffy, Director, Executive Education and Leadership, Bayer Corporation*

“The influence of Dr. Braksick and her colleagues has dramatically impacted me and my leadership of one of the nation’s fastest growing companies.”

—*Michael G. DeGroot, Board Chairman and CEO, Century Business Services (CBIZ)*

“Dr. Braksick’s articulate, proven prescriptions for analyzing, shaping, and measuring one’s behavior and for coaching colleagues and family are vital elements for achieving stretch objectives in our meritocratic society.”

—*Philip W. Heston, Retired VP, Citibank, N.A.*

“Using the approach and tools outlined in this book, we made dramatic improvements in the performance of our business. In addition, these tools make managing a much more satisfying and rewarding experience for managers themselves.”

—*Peter McCrea, Vice President, Lubricants and Specialty Products, Chevron Products Company*

“Whether your goal is greater profits, greater productivity, or just a happier work environment, this book provides important new tools for success. If you are a leader or manager who doubts there is a science to behavior or that practical techniques can shape positive behaviors in the workplace, this book is for you.”

—*Helene D. Gayle, MD, MPH; Director, National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

“A breakthrough in leadership capability that naturally motivates people to achieve and drives organizations to produce results . . . a key to building employee commitment toward excellence in business execution.”

—*Rhonda Zygocki, Manager of Strategic Planning, Chevron Corporation*

***“Unlock Behavior, Unleash Profits*** is written with the CEO and top organizational leaders in mind. Behavioral science is a technology they can use to change the performance of individuals, entire organizations, and the organizational culture. The appendices are great how-to summaries on effective coaching.”

—*Ward Sproat, Director of Strategic Programs, PECO Nuclear*

“The principles and tools of behavioral science that Dr. Braksick describes so clearly and comprehensively in this book have helped us improve behaviors—especially leadership behaviors—for better performance throughout the company.”

—*Jim Tighe, Former Manager, Corporate Quality, Chevron Corporation*

“Dr. Braksick’s book does the nearly impossible! It explains behavior in a way that is technically and psychologically accurate, but also is useful and actionable.”

—*George Krock, Director, HR Planning and Development, PPG Industries, Inc.*

“Count me among those who hounded Dr. Braksick to write this book! It is clearly needed to unleash each company’s potential by explicitly addressing behavioral issues. It is a thorough, practical guide on applying behavioral science to achieve important business results.”

—*Jack C. Beers, Managing Consultant, Chevron Chemical Co.*

“The skill-building guidelines in the art of giving feedback, integrated with behavioral science, increase my understanding of people. Dr. Braksick’s book helps me make my personal and job worlds better places.”

—*David Tarnowski, Senior Electrical Engineer, Whirlpool Corporation*

“Dr. Braksick’s book is hugely interesting and entertaining. I have read a lot of management books in the last few years, and this ranks with the best. I have ‘met’ all the people in her examples and would admit to some of the behaviors myself! I am recommending this book to my colleagues.”

—*Howard Lees, Bechtel Corporation, London*

“Dr. Braksick has advanced the business applications of social science a giant step in the right direction. She makes a convincing case for harnessing the power of human behavior to produce exceptional business results.”

—*Larry K. Durham, CEO, National Express Corporation*

“I’ve worked where behavioral management principles were widely applied, and I saw the results first-hand, including in my own management practices . . . behavioral management had more impact than any other intervention . . .”

—*Jennifer Powell, HR Manager, Aetna U.S. Healthcare*

# Dedication

**T**O MY PARENTS, Herb and Connie Wilk, who have loved me and encouraged me every day of my life . . .

To my husband Matthew, who is the wind beneath my wings that gives me flight . . .

To my children, Austin and Madeleine, in whose little faces I see my reflection, but whose wonderfulness I cannot take credit for . . .

And to Sydney Leigh, whose brief visit taught me the power of parental love and left me humbled, stronger, and changed forever.

# Foreword

**I**N THE PAST 25 years, I have served as a business school dean, a corporate consultant, and an executive coach, and I have worked in the areas of executive development, organizational effectiveness, and knowledge management. During this time, I have seen many a management fad come and go. As Dr. Braksick notes, America's top organizations have flirted with "flavors-of-the-month," each designed to be the next and best solution for improving the bottom line.

Many of these fads have given lip service to the idea that people are the most vital and underutilized asset within any company. However, rarely has this resulted in capturing the true power of human assets. In *Unlock Behavior, Unleash Profits*, Dr. Braksick details an approach that explains the very real power of behavioral science as a tool to maximize corporate agility and bottom-line performance.

Recently, I had the opportunity to see Dr. Braksick's highly focused and dynamic approach take root within a mature and premier Fortune 50 company. The initiative came at a time of great uncertainty and anxiety. A high-profile merger had just been announced, and many questioned the timing and value of instituting a behavioral approach during such a major transition.

Employing the concepts in *Unlock Behavior, Unleash Profits*, Dr. Braksick and her team presented a behavioral approach that had the flexibility, clarity, and practical applicability to secure major breakthroughs and advantages during the transition. They were able to combine the essence of behavioral science (how and why people perform the way they do) with solid performance metrics. The result was significant and measurable impact to the bottom line.

Why does Dr. Braksick's approach work? There are three reasons. The first reason lies in understanding how executives truly develop. Over the years, I have asked hundreds of executives in all types of companies one very basic question: "As you look back, what has

contributed most to your growth and development?” By far, the most frequent answer is “stretch assignments.” These stretch assignments often are exceptionally challenging and difficult. Yet, once complete, executives recall them as periods of enormous growth in skill development and managerial perspective. Further, when asked, “What do you feel made the difference between success and failure during your stretch assignments?” executives usually credit coaching and mentoring that provided feedback on their performance and strategies. Unfortunately, many companies place leaders in challenging situations without the tools and support they need to learn and adapt. They rarely receive open, honest feedback—the very thing they need. The behavioral model presented in *Unlock Behavior, Unleash Profits* neutralizes this problem by creating a feedback-rich environment for leaders and by linking their development to business results.

The second reason that Dr. Braksick’s approach is so successful is that it provides tools for managers at every level, tools that help them link critical business issues to the behaviors that will yield the strongest and most desired results. Moving beyond a practical explanation of behavioral science, this book provides clear examples of how to use these principles to affect change in the critical behaviors that link most directly to performance goals. One comes to realize that the ability to apply the principles of behavioral science consistently and day-to-day really is the hallmark of great leaders at every level of the organization.

The third reason for the success of Dr. Braksick’s approach is its universal applicability. The application of behavioral science principles is powerful, whether applied in mature, traditional organizations or in newly evolving virtual organizations. The scientific laws that govern the behavior of people are always the same, regardless of context. From basic manufacturing to e-commerce, the approach laid out in *Unlock Behavior, Unleash Profits* exhibits great flexibility in leveraging the power of people as a virtually unlimited source for increasing performance.



*Unlock Behavior, Unleash Profits* helps us understand the power of behavior and the tools for linking behavior to the bottom line. In doing so, Dr. Braksick provides companies and their leaders with the keys to sustaining advantages as we enter the new millennium.

Winter Park, Florida  
September, 1999

Richard C. Huseman, Ph.D.  
Global Manager,  
Executive Knowledge and Education,  
Mobil Corporation

*Dr. Huseman is coauthor of* *Leading with Knowledge: The Nature of Competition in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.*

# Preface

I'VE WATCHED many companies launch “silver bullet” training experiences, designed to transform their companies and their people, only to see them fail.

I've heard some of the brightest managers I've been fortunate to work with say that their superiors encouraged them to stay on a “technical track” versus a “managerial track” simply because they had “weak people skills.”

I've met some awfully nice managers who were liked by everyone—but who couldn't get bottom-line results.

I've seen top-notch strategies falter over and over again because their implementation missed the mark.

What do all of these dismaying shortfalls have in common? *Behavior*—or rather the telltale signs of not attending to behavior.

These are all examples of how most companies approach “people issues”—the so-called “soft side” of business. But it is *not* the soft side; it's the hard side! “People issues” are the hardest of all. Fortunately, they can be understood and acted upon if we apply the power of a hard science: behavioral science. Behavioral science unlocks our understanding of human behavior and teaches us how to create an environment that motivates and sustains desired behaviors.

I wrote *Unlock Behavior, Unleash Profits* for leaders who are responsible for the performance of people or organizations. I wrote it for leaders who are interested in understanding why people do what they do, and who want to know how they can make the workplace a positive, productive, and profitable experience for everyone.

I wrote it for those of you who spend your careers trying to make a difference.

Finally, I wrote this book to set the record straight. We don't need culture change programs or personality analyses to see positive, supportive work cultures maintained by employees who achieve sustainable business results. There is a *science* to human behavior that leaders need to learn and apply consistently everywhere. Leaders need to evaluate *strategies, processes, and behaviors*—their own and those of their customers, their employees, and their work cultures—by using the science of human behavior. It's just that simple. And it's just that complicated.

Behavioral science is easy to master—as you'll see in this book—but challenging to apply consistently. *The ability to apply behavioral science consistently is a key distinguishing feature of great leaders.* Leaders who naturally do this, or who have paused long enough to learn how, see two effects: first, they see employees who routinely exhibit discretionary effort and high degrees of commitment to “do what it takes.” Second, they have consistent, sustainable, bottom-line business results that reflect their approach to effective leadership.

Join the ranks of those leaders who have learned to unlock desired behaviors and unleash profitability throughout their organizations. And enjoy the book!

# Acknowledgments

**T**HERE ARE MANY, many people who have contributed to the writing of this book. I feel deep gratitude toward them all, on many different levels.

I am grateful to the behavioral scientists who have shaped my thinking and the direction of my career: Drs. B. F. Skinner, Tom Gilbert, Geary Rummeler, Dale Brethower, Bill Redmon, Bill Hopkins, Paul Brown, Alyce Dickinson, and Aubrey Daniels. In particular, I recognize Bill Redmon, who has been my teacher, colleague, fellow trailblazer, and dear friend for as long as I can remember. I thank Bill Hopkins for his kindness and encouragement throughout my career, and Paul Brown for being a model behavior analyst from afar for many years—and thankfully, most recently, from up close as a colleague. Drs. Bill Redmon, Paul Brown, Tom Mawhinney, and Bill Hopkins provided valuable feedback on early drafts of the manuscript.

Many colleagues have impacted my work and my motivation. My cofounders of The Continuous Learning Group, Inc. (CLG)—Julie Smith and Larry Lemasters—shared a vision for what could be and helped make it happen. Colleagues and friends Steve Jacobs, Ned Morse, and Jim Hillgren were pioneers in their own right, traveling on different paths before joining CLG, but through similar landscapes. I have learned much from each of them and value their leadership within CLG and their presence in my life.

Several of my CLG team members provided invaluable feedback on early drafts of the manuscript and encouraged my writing the book. They are some of many at CLG who prove and reprove this science every day with their clients. For this and much, much more, I recognize and thank Galen Reese, Jim Joyce, Dick Sandrock, Denny Sullivan, Jonathan Freedman, Joe Laipple, Tom Wrenn, and Kathy Callahan. Additionally, there are those practitioners at CLG who have helped

over the years to refine our approach and methodologies. With thanks I recognize David Uhl, Joe Wiley, and Frank Berardi.

Other reviewers represented the viewpoint of the audience. This contribution was most critical to the successful evolution of this book. These reviewers were Jack Beers, Steve Pendill, and Norm Braksick. Their own experiences in great corporations allowed them to evaluate the book for its usefulness in that setting.

I will always feel that one of my greatest fortunes has been the clients I've had the privilege to support. Darry Callahan, John Peppercorn, Jack Beers, Skip Culbertson, Ed Kura, Jim Lieto, Jane MacKenzie, and a multitude of their colleagues have left their handprints on CLG and on my vision. Stan Henderson, Pam Liberacki, Marsha Boggess, Edna Rothwell, Hugh Morton, Gary Pritchard, Bob Smith, Mark Kutner, Nancy Dreicer, Bonda Garrison, Ethel Batten, Brian Baker, John Simpson, Brian McNeill, Ralph Belrose, Bill Glantzburg, Andy Feldheim, Bill Mueller, Keith Busch, Frank Rab, and many, many others have provided me the opportunity to demonstrate the power of applying behavioral science within their organizations. Without this, I would not be where I am today.

Several CLG colleagues contributed wonderful content to the technical sections of the text. Consultants Tracy Thurkow, Karen Bush, Ravi Jariwala, Julie Oliver, Chuck Gibbs, John Dale, and George Greanias made the writing of this book possible through their personal time and talents, and through their encouragement to keep going.

My developmental editors Fred Schroyer and Jennifer Campbell are to be credited with the style and ultimate completion of this project. They modeled the principles taught in this book every step of the way, and they deserve enormous recognition for the publication of my—and my company's—first book.

I am also grateful to the thorough copy editors who carefully scoured the manuscripts for my rare (!) mistakes: Tom Miles, David Porter, Andy Schmidt, Lori Schwabenhausen, and Andrea Soccorsi. And I thank Donna Kullman for her quality-check of the final typeset material before it went to the printer.

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and Lisa Smith are all to be recognized for their skilled eyes and hands. And I give special recognition to Christina Gump, whose original design was selected for the cover and dust jacket.

The production side of a book lacks glamour and excitement, but I was blessed with production expertise second to none. Special thanks go to Lisa Berry, whose continuing ingenuity and software wizardry got the book to the printer in record time, and to Paula Panagopoulos for her expert composition. Christine Casasanta, Janet Jenkins, Sherry Perkins, Beckie Pestun, Amber Pollastrini, and Julie Terling also were skillful pinch hitters when the need arose.

A project like this does not get done without tremendous support and sacrifice from family. My husband Matt was always there with enthusiasm to attend to the other side of our life while I wrote and thought and revised. Special thanks to my young son, Austin, who was always there with a hug and words of excitement about how proud he was of his mama. My little daughter Madeleine was sweet and loving unconditionally, as always. My parents, Herb and Connie Wilk, and my parents-in-law, Norm and Carol Braksick, were the cheerleaders who encouraged and supported me every step of the way. My sisters and brothers-in-law shared their pride in me throughout and always inquired with encouragement about the project: Michele and Donald Haugh, Nicole and David Warhoftig, Karen and Jared Wells, Amy and Marv Baldwin, and Barry Braksick.

And finally, I recognize and thank Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, which is the sole recipient of all my royalties from the sale of this book. The physicians and nurses at Children's perform miracles every single day. It is a very special place—a place you pray you never find yourself—and a place for which you give thanks when the events of life put you there. I will always be indebted for the skillful hands, brilliant minds, and warm hearts that comprise the team at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh.

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