



## INSIGHTS

# 6 Secrets to Effective Impact Leadership

Here's my best advice from 30 years of C-suite experience.

By *Darin Anderson*

**A**s impact companies, we see the greater purpose of our work and are dedicated to making decisions with the best interest of team members, customers, investors, partners in mind, knowing financial success will follow. However, it's not always an easy path. From my three decades of C-suite experience, here is what I have learned are the keys to being a successful impact CEO.

**01 Be clear on your purpose and what success looks for you and your organization.** Find the best people who can help you achieve that — people who share your values, vision, passion, and determination.

**02 Execute your plan.** Listen, adapt as necessary, and execute. Work diligently and always do the right thing for your team and clients. Be highly accountable for results and actions, and be transparent in all that you do and your reasons for doing it.

**03 Share the rewards equitably.** Help people feel like owners in the organization's success by allowing them to be rewarded like owners. We make it a priority to compensate our team members well and relative to the contributions they make with salary, benefits, bonuses, and company shares. Everyone in our organization can be an employee-owner. We are also transparent about our performance. When people feel truly invested in the long-term success of your organization, they will show up, give the extra effort, and deliver the desired output.

→ **QUICK TAKE**  
Be intentional about your purpose, plan, and people, share your rewards equitably, and consider your legacy.



**04 Surround yourself with people and peers outside of your organization who will be honest with you in life and take an active interest in your well-being and that of the company.** I have many CEO friends whom I meet with regularly or run or ride bikes with to review family, personal, and business progress. I have learned so much from them and their approach and viewpoints. These connections are invaluable and have helped me be a better leader.

**05 Find great partners in life.** I am blessed to have an amazing spouse whom I have tremendous respect for and whom appreciates me. She makes me a better person. We support each other and champion each other in this beautiful life journey. Like my marriage, my leaders are also my partners in life. We are committed to each other's success, and we all know it.

**06 Consider your personal impact and legacy.** Look in the mirror and regularly ask yourself: Am I doing all the right things to achieve this? I reflect on my own impact often. Personally, I believe that if you take care of the people around you, create the right environment for individual and team success, and share rewards equitably and thoughtfully, you're going to leave a great legacy. ■

**Darin Anderson** has served as chairman and CEO of Salas O'Brien since 2006, guiding the company to become one of North America's leading engineering and technical services firms. He has led large engineering and construction organizations for 30 years as CEO, COO, and CFO.