

## About Leadership

**“Communication and a winning team are critical to succeed in today’s market and if you want to learn...learn first, to listen” Ron Foxcroft.**

*On March 7, TMG Principal Lisa Mattam interviewed Ron Foxcroft. Ron is the President of Fluke Transport and the inventor of the Fox 40 whistle. Widely recognized as a passionate business man and an innovative thinker, Ron was ranked one of the Top 10 Entrepreneurs in Canada. His energy is contagious and his commitment to excellence in unyielding- his accomplishments inspire.*

**LM:** How would you describe **your leadership style**?

**RF:** My style is focuses on **people communication skills**. I build **winning teams** and value passion, commitment, work ethic, accountability and integrity. Life is fast, business is even faster. I hire people smarter than me. I communicate with them. I create and environment where they can be motivated and I encourage their commitment.

In my office, if you sit less than 14 feet apart, you can not communicate over e-mail (unless it is to confirm an appointment). Communication is key. It’s important for your people and for your customers.

I follow the model, that **business is built on relationships**, and those relationships can only be built with effective communication.

**LM:** When you think of your journey with the Fox 40 whistle from inception to now being the most widely used whistle in the world- what **one skill or value do you believe was pivotal** to helping you achieve your goals?

**RF: Building a team-** When I invented the Fox 40 whistle, I recruited all my team players, the mould maker, the designer, the bankers. When you create a team, you pull everyone together, it’s like a huddle, **you leverage everyone’s different skill set**. I pride myself in forming teams that win. I often gather information by committee and make my decisions from my gut but without the expertise from my team, I can’t make the best decision.

**LM:** You have been rated by Profit Magazine as one of the top 10 entrepreneurs in Canada, what would you say has been **your biggest challenge** in your entrepreneurial life?

**RF:** There are so many challenges you face 1) attaining capital 2) changing the attitude of your consumer, in my situation Canadians- we are amazing people but we are often risk averse and don't want to change 3) having people disappoint you but **the biggest challenge** is that **Profit Camouflages Inefficiencies**. If you have the right people working for you, they will point out where you could perform better or eliminate inefficiencies. Companies often, because they are profitable assume they are doing the best- but is it really the best? We need to ask ourselves- can we do better? That is how you succeed beyond your competition and be the best. Remember Good is Never Good Enough.

**LM:** What keeps you awake at night?

**RF:** There is a lot that keeps me awake at night. I am excited- I don't know where to stop or what will be the next great idea- and the best ideas come from our end-users. I worry a lot tactically about counterfeiters but I would say what keeps me awake at night is **being so excited about what is still to come**.

**LM:** What advice would you give to young corporate executives looking to accelerate their careers and solidify their leadership ability?

**RF:** **Form a team; get a mentor; enlist a rolodex of advisors; be ready to turn on a dime.** Know that you don't know everything and find the right people to help you and then **Communicate!** There are going to be days when you are frustrated, days when you are scared particularly as an entrepreneur. You will even feel lonely at times but have passion, a vision and a plan and you can succeed. Always have a PLAN, but be certain you correctly communicate your plan to your entire team. **If you decide to take on the challenge to be an entrepreneur, you** will quickly learn and you must realize that your banker and financial backers are your partners for life. Make a conscious decision to meet with your banker frequently, (every quarter in the beginning) and **deliver all significant news face-to-face**.

Ron Foxcroft is the President of Fluke Transport and Warehousing and the Chairman, Founder & C.E.O. of the Foxcroft Group of Companies, Fox 40 Logistics, Fox 40 International Inc. & Foxcroft Capital Corp. He is Inventor of the Fox 40 Pealess Whistle which is now sold in 140 countries and is sanctioned by almost all major sports worldwide, including the NFL, CFL, NHL, NCAA and the NBA. Amongst his many accolades, Ron was named by Profit Magazine as one of the 10 top Canadian entrepreneurs of the decade, was inducted into the Canadian Basketball Hall of Fame and was given an honorary Doctor of Laws by McMaster University in 2001. As well, Fox 40 Whistles & Ron Foxcroft were named to the Canada Innovation Centre at the Canada Science & Technology Museum in Ottawa, Canada . Ron is an active member of the Hamilton and McMaster community, a philanthropist and a sports fanatic. His energy and passion are an envy to all those he meets.

Ron lives in Burlington with his wife Marie and has three sons, Steve, Dave and Ron J.r.