



Jeremy Baker

What the Experts are Saying

About Jeremy Baker

Jeremy Baker is the Deputy Assistant Director for the Office of Intelligence at Homeland Security Investigations, which is part of the Department of Homeland Security. Jeremy has worked in the national security field, including within the intelligence community, military, law enforcement for 20 years.

On Developing Diverse Leaders

A really telling indicator on this from the survey results is that only 21 percent of women see people like themselves serving as leaders in their field, while 65 percent of men feel that way. The bookend to this is that almost three quarters of women say it's more challenging for women to earn promotions in this field. That definitely shows us there's a need to do better! What does "doing better" actually look like? That's the key question. For me, that means that leaders need to be consciously seeking to encourage diversity as they develop others. John C. Maxwell has a tool called "the Five Levels of Leadership", and one of the top levels in his model is People Development. The idea is that the best leaders, the ones who seek long-term growth for themselves and for their organizations, spent a ton of time developing others, which in turn feeds commitment to and growth in an organization. I whole-heartedly believe this. And the more time that we as current leaders spend in the work of developing others, the more opportunities we will have to be mindful and intentional about embracing and promoting diversity in that development process. What does this look like? One simple example would be mentoring. Most organizations in this field have structured mentoring programs, and there are always opportunities to mentor others on an ad hoc basis as well. When mentoring, leaders should seek opportunities to mentor those who are different than themselves, whether by gender, race, background, experience, education level, national origin, or any other factor. This provides a benefit to the mentor as well as the mentee of course, insofar as leaders should never stop learning—and consciously exposing ourselves to different viewpoints, backgrounds, and so forth is a powerful way to learn and grow. I guess this boils down to: All leaders should do more to develop others. And all leaders should deliberately focus on development activities that result in greater diversity in the leadership ranks. If we as leaders commit to these two related courses of action, we will see more diverse leadership in our field.