

## The Legacy of Louis Allen

A fundamental at Louis Allen Worldwide is that we are research and data-oriented. We pay close attention to research in management and organization. We design our programs and methodologies in line with the best thinking and research. As well, when we work with clients, we gather information before, during, and after our work both to understand and assess current state as well as to track progress against the outcomes desired. Lou Allen created the basis for our perspective more than 50 years ago. As he points out in the Preface to this first book, "Management and Organization" (McGraw-Hill, 1958):

*"The concepts presented in this book are based on firsthand study and investigation of 230 leading companies."*

In his award-winning follow-on book, "The Management Profession" (McGraw-Hill, 1964), Lou was able to demonstrate his company's on-going commitment to research:

*"...the contents [of this book] summarize the new findings of our continuing research in the management of leading companies. Originally begun in 1954 as a three-year study of 150 business enterprises in the United States and Canada, it now reflects the results of further studies embracing 385 business, governmental, and institutional enterprises throughout the world."*

He did more than research and publish. Lou believed bringing this research and the insights it offered to managers in the forming of development and training programs was essential to make its impact felt in the business world,

*"the author has had the opportunity to present this information in one- and three-day seminar sessions to over 2,200 executives, including 312 presidents and board chairmen, and to discuss it with 40 of the leading organization specialists in the United States."* ("Management and Organization," McGraw-Hill, 1958)

We at Louis Allen Worldwide, 50 years later, continue Lou's legacy of research, publishing, training, and consulting. Our objective is to help executives be more effective in managing and changing their organizations to deliver on-going results demanded by shareholders and society.

A lot has changed since Lou Allen's day. At that time, Lou Allen felt the level of capability most executives exhibited was that of "natural leadership." What he meant by that was that most executives had never had any formal training in how to manage or how to lead, so most fell back on their natural instincts as to what should be done; thus, the notion of the "natural leader." A natural leader was untutored, but by luck of innate skills, had risen to a role of responsibility in his organization. His view was that if natural leaders could be given training in

management concepts and skills, they would become far more effective, becoming leader-managers:

*“[The natural leader] leads instinctively and not through his skills which he has identified and systematically developed to enable him to secure most effective results in working with others. The natural leader is the untrained leader who can be effective primarily because of what he is, not because of what he has learned to do in order to lead effectively.*

Since then, much has happened in the field of management. Training and development has become sophisticated beyond anything Lou could have imagined. Whether it is “the pit” at GE’s headquarters in Fairfield, Connecticut as a cauldron of learning, whether through the intensely personal examination and development of leadership skills at the Center for Creative Leadership, whether through Outward Bound or t-Groups or Action Learning or Best Practices, the ways and means for managers to learn how to be better managers and better leaders has grown and expanded dramatically in the last 50 years.

In the late 1950’s, not many dreaming of their future saw it passing through one of the top MBA programs in the country; indeed, only Harvard might have been seen as an enviable stepping-stone. Now, applicants by the hundreds of thousands clamor to matriculate to any one of the top 20 business schools. Lou saw the future:

*“The manager is a new kind of professional, destined to take his place with the scientist and the educator in shaping the society of the future. Expert in a complex, difficult, and most demanding kind of work, the role of the professional manager is critical and his potential is unlimited. In the years ahead, competence in management will mark the difference between the leaders and the also-rans. This will hold true not only in business, but also in government and education, and in all those situations in which people wish to maximize their efforts for their common benefit.”* (“The Management Profession,” McGraw-Hill, 1964)

We continue Lou’s quest. We believe managers can be more effective if they have more actionable information about their managing – not just about how their typical personal style finds favor or not with people, but how their actions can be judged and modified to achieve better results.

Whether in consulting, development programs, or surveys, we at Louis Allen are constantly striving to find ways for managers to learn more and become more capable.

We invite you to join us in this journey.