



In 1983, entrepreneur Linda Crawford opened Delta Dallas while Texas was experiencing a recession. Twenty-five years later, Delta Dallas has survived several economic downturns. This is a direct result of strong leadership and a business of passionate people.

Delta Dallas is the only nationally accredited staffing firm in the DFW area and has a full staff of certified, award-winning recruiters. Recently, I met with Linda to discuss her current thoughts on leadership:

Tabitha: Linda, thank you for meeting with me. I'm truly excited to talk to you about leadership. In today's world, what characteristics do you like to see in a leader?

Linda: Leaders have integrity, which builds trust within an organization. Leaders are accountable for results and will admit when they are wrong. Leaders keep one foot planted firmly on the ground, and their eyes on the horizon, which is a reflection of a visionary. Leaders embrace the ideas of others and continue to seek new knowledge; leaders beget leaders. In my mind's eye, leaders in today's world walk a fine line between managing resources and taking risks.

Tabitha: Who inspired and influenced you?

Linda: So many people... Through the years I have benefited and been gifted through associations with my mentors, business associates, and most of all our Delta Dallas team. The leadership of Delta Dallas, Don, our CEO and President, and Vice Presidents Kim Follis and Michelle Cook, make decisions on behalf of the company every day. They are

proven and trusted.

Tabitha: Linda, I met with two of Delta Dallas' long-term employees to get their perspective on your leadership style, and here is what they said:

"When I started working for Linda over 20 years ago, I had no idea what an amazing leader she was. I have learned through her to never give up, believe in your people, use integrity and heart in making decisions, and to be true to yourself. She not only leads others, but leads herself."

~Kim Follis, CPC, CTS, Vice President, Delta Dallas, 20 years

"Linda has been an inspiration to me in many ways. I knew people in the industry before I came to Delta Dallas, and the reputation that she built with those people was amazing. I have come to know that the reality far outweighs the reputation. She has built one of the most recognizable staffing companies in the state. Knowing that Linda can take an idea and transform it into such an awesome reality, simply by making that first phone call in November 1983, inspires me to pick up the phone every day. Her leadership and constant encouragement are the reasons that I feel blessed to come to work for Delta Dallas every day!"

~Dana Lee, CPC, CTS, Senior Recruiter, Delta Dallas, 7 years

Tabitha: What leadership qualities do you have, Linda, that you believe influence and inspire your employees?

Linda: Wow, it's very affirming to hear those words from Kim and Dana. They are leaders in their own right and they make me a stronger person. The success of any company comes from the people who are setting the pace. I attribute the success of Delta Dallas in the early years to me taking responsibility, doing things myself, and doing whatever needed to be done. I believe in leading by example, walking the talk, doing whatever it takes for as long as it takes.

I think that one of the greatest successes is when you develop leaders that have the same value system. I trust the staff of Delta Dallas to uphold our

reputation. This has served both me and the company well.

Tabitha: Do you believe all people are leaders?

Linda: Absolutely! For Good or Bad. Years ago, I read a book, *The Flight of the Buffalo* which was the catalyst for leadership training and a leadership team at Delta Dallas. A chapter in the book compares a herd of buffalo with a flock of geese. A herd of buffalo will follow their dominant leader over the edge of a cliff. A flock of geese, though, will fly in a "V" formation and take turns leading the flock. They can fly for miles and miles and miles! After reading this book, I implemented a leadership team at Delta Dallas. The purpose of our team is to communicate and exemplify the values of our company while mentoring, coaching and training during the course of a normal workday.

Tabitha: How do you encourage your employees to take a role of leadership?

Linda: We constantly seek new knowledge and stay aware of what is happening in business. We read business books. We are students of leadership. The very nature of our work demands that our employees are leaders. Our philosophy is to be on the "inside" what we present to the "outside."

Tabitha: What advice do you have for leaders during these challenging times?

Linda: To read the poem "IF" written by Rudyard Kipling. I think it perfectly describes survival strategies for any person in business and in any economy. How dull life would be if it wasn't uncertain.

IF...

by Rudyard Kipling

IF you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:
If you can dream – and not make dreams your master;
If you can think – and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:
If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
' Or walk with Kings – nor lose the common touch,
if neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And – which is more – you'll be a Man, my son!

"...Or you'll be a woman! And most of all you'll be successful in business and life in general, through thick and thin." – Linda Crawford

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