

## WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA? STEWARDSHIP

According to the tenets of stewardship, a gentler, kinder business world is emerging, where people are treated with humanity, not as assets to be used and disposed of. As for the material assets and the equity of the business, they are not just fungible items on the balance sheet, but essential elements in the identity of the commonwealth to be protected, nurtured, grown and used for the benefit of all internal and external stakeholders. The leader's job, which of course is shared with all other members (for in this world everyone is a leader), is to be the chief steward of the commonwealth.

The leaders' role is to make sure that the intangible as well as the material assets are left in better shape at the end of their tenure than at its start, for they are just the ones whose job it is to feed the flame of the firm before it is passed on to succeeding generations. Ahh. It brings a tear to one's eye just to think of it, doesn't it? And if you are so cynical as to think this is all moonshine, that the owners



feed the workers to keep them pacified, then look at how well your local family firm is doing – so long as it hasn't been burnt to the ground by rioting mobs excluded from its cosy world.

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