



International Leadership
Institute: Providing
Leadership Development
Services and Programs in the
US and Europe since 1985

The International Leadership Institute

- Was founded in 1985 in Princeton, NJ
- Remains dedicated to leadership development
- Has run more than 90 educational programs in the US and Europe, for more than 900 participants
- Has partnered with the US Department of State, the University of North Florida, the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce and more than 700 other businesses, universities, religious organizations, private citizens and government agencies

Leaders to Follow

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GREEN AND GROWING

By Sara Tusek

This month, the Irish get a bit of recognition on St. Patrick's Day, March 17. That's the day for wearing green clothes and drinking green beer—in fact, that's the day that the city of Chicago dyes its namesake river green!

The color green is a generally-well-liked color, as it symbolizes fresh growth in nature. Especially in arid climates, green indicates that life-giving rain has come to nourish plants, to make them grow and bloom.

Green has become the key word for environmental responsibility, as in "think green" ad campaigns by companies ranging from the multinational petroleum giants to the local office supply store encouraging you to recycle your printer cartridges.

Green also has a bit of a flip side, as in "green with envy" or "greenhorn," but generally green is a positive word, as in "greenback."

When the Institute was looking for a logo, we wanted to convey both the coming together of different parts of the world, and the idea of professional growth and development. Bob Davis, Jacksonville-based graphic artist, designed our logo with two global views (the Western and East-

ern hemispheres, in blue) and a golden, growing sprout. This sprout indicates our firm belief that a person or an institution must be constantly growing, or it will lose ground very quickly.

THE SHARK

It's said that sharks must keep in constant motion or they will die. Sharks cruise the waters, mouth open for any stray food, scanning their territory for new developments or threats.

In the same way, people need to keep growing professionally and personally. It's all too easy to get into a rut (and what's a rut, except a coffin without a cover?) once we've established a cozy routine that suits us well enough. *To p. 2*



Serene green: Polasek Sculpture Gardens in Winter Park, Florida

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Green and Growing from p. 1

But a nice, pleasant, comfortable routine is the enemy of growth. Imagine a seed, nestled into the soil, protected from the hot sun and chilly rain. If you asked the seed if it would rather grow or stay where it is, all comfy cozy, it would most likely reply that growing sounds like a lot of trouble. Staying protected sounds much nicer.

YOUR COMFORT ZONE

Unfortunately, it's not that easy. Staying within your comfort zone may seem attractive, but there are two big problems with such a goal:

1. *Your comfort zone changes without your permission!* Just when the seed is getting settled, the soil overhead washes away in a hard rain. Exposed to the sun, it begins to sprout. Ouch! Its protective covering splits open and the green inner shoot climbs inexorably toward the sun. The seed's secure world has collapsed in an instant.
2. *You lose the chance to grow and blossom.* Like the seed, if you are buried and safe you won't grow. You may not even realize that you can grow!

GO GREEN!

How can you avoid the nearly-irresistible urge to get comfortable and maintain the status quo? There are three time-tested ways to go green:

1. *Break a habit*
2. *Get a partner*
3. *Learn something new every day*

Breaking a habit is as simple as taking the bus to work, or bicycling, instead of taking your car. Rearrange the furniture, or get up an hour earlier to swim or meditate. Try a vegetarian diet, or unplug the TV. The act of breaking out of your rut will activate your intellectual faculties and help you see new, better ways to do things. We've seen the bumper sticker: "If you always

do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got." While this bumper sticker doesn't tell the whole story, it certainly makes a point.

Get a partner: most things are more fun when you have someone to share them. Finding a co-worker, family member or friend to share your habit-breaking new activity will give you more incentive to break the habit permanently.

Learn something new every day: you probably have books in your home that you haven't read, or projects that you started that remain half-finished because you need more information. Learning doesn't have to be formal, or exhaustive; you can sign up for free daily updates on an enormous range of topics that will appear in your email box with no effort on your part. Brush up on your high-school French; decode HTML; learn to kayak, or to surf.

STAY GREEN!

It's always heart-warming to see people on the TV news celebrating their 110th birthday. You can't help but admire them for living so long! And in most cases you'll find that they aren't shut up inside a nursing home with no outside contact—these long-living folks are volunteering in their local schools, or hiking, or swimming laps in the pool. They're taking art appreciation classes, or learning to dance. The secret to a long life is to be constantly growing.

"It's better to wear out than to rust out" is another bumper sticker. Rusting out happens when your rut becomes so deep that you can't even move! Wearing out happens when you keep going and growing.

Staying green is not hard, but it does require a commitment to change. Why not begin today, by breaking a habit or learning something new? Find a partner who also wants to "go green," and share the fun of being green and growing.

