

Az Business LEADERS

2019



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How can we define a great leader?

The dictionary — that heavy thing we used before we could Google things — defines leader as “the person who leads or commands a group, organization, or country.” But the definition and expectations of a leader can change from moment to moment and from circumstance to circumstance.



The truth of the matter is that the best leaders seem to possess an elusive mix of talents, traits and qualities that cannot be easily defined. If those traits could be defined and duplicated, we wouldn't have the special women and men who rise to the tops of their industries. That said, an analysis of 200 CEOs from around the world by Russell Reynolds Associates and Hogan Assessment Systems reveal three major indicators of successful leaders:

- They have a strong sense of purpose, passion and urgency.
- They know how to shift through information and find the most important parts.
- They are humble, always learning and are master collaborators.

In the pages on Az Business Leaders, you will read about men and women who possess all those traits — and more. The men and women profiled in these pages have created industries, transformed industries, saved lives and improved the lives of those in the communities they serve.

The leaders you will see profiled in the pages of this magazine were selected from a pool of more than 5,000 of the most innovative entrepreneurs and the best and brightest Arizona business leaders in healthcare, real estate, construction, education, banking, financial services, manufacturing, technology and law. Over the course of more than two dozen meetings, that list of 5,000 leaders under consideration was paired down to the five leaders which the selection panel considered to be the most influential leaders in their industries. The panel looked at those people as the all-star team on their respective industries.

The drivers of Arizona's economy who are profiled inside the pages of this magazine have counseled presidents. They have survived plane crashes and kidnappings. They play in rock 'n' roll bands. Some were Olympians. They reflect a wide spectrum of ethnicities, age and gender. But they share one thing in common: they are catalysts for Arizona's economy. They are leaders. They are innovators. They have influence. And when they speak, they make things happen. And together, they are guiding Arizona toward greatness.

Enjoy this edition of Az Business Leaders. And if you have someone who you think should be considered for next year, nominate them at azbigmedia.com.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Gossie".

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A TOM ARGUE

Founder and president // Argue Custom Homes // arguecustomhomes.com
Nearly two decades ago, Argue Custom Homes entered the Valley's homebuilding market with the goal to build the finest homes in the finest neighborhoods. Today, Argue is a preferred builder in DMB's prestigious Silverleaf, Estancia, Troon and Fulton Ranch communities. Many of these communities offer exquisite architecture, private golf courses and world-class amenities. With more than 100 luxurious homes from Cave Creek to Paradise Valley, Argue has become one of the premier builders in the Valley. Argue Custom Homes was the No. 1 Custom Home Builder in the 2016 edition of Ranking Arizona.

Recent projects: "Carefree Estates in Carefree and Village of Saguaro Forest within Desert Mountain."

B MIKE GODBEHERE

President // GCON Custom Homes // gconinc.com

Godbehere has more than 25 years of experience in the construction industry. A fourth-generation Arizona native, he received his bachelor's of science degree in construction management from Arizona State University.

Professional advice: "Titles are overrated. Some days, I am the CEO; other days, the janitor. We all have to respect each other's roles to make the machine work."

Industry outlook: "GCON Inc. has a strong outlook for 2019 and beyond. We have had strategic growth hitting our 2020 goals three years early. For our industry to continue this success, we need workers in the trades and need to get the word out that there are quality jobs with great benefits that don't always need college degrees."

C DAVID KITNICK

Founder and president // Rosewood Homes // rosewoodhomes.com

Kitnick is a 32-year industry veteran, having earned local and national recognition, including starting and successfully leading the Arizona division of Greystone Homes in the 1990s and Ashton Woods in 2001 before founding Rosewood Homes. Kitnick led all three start-up to "Builder of the Year" or "Small Volume Builder of the Year" recognition at the homebuilding industry's MAME Awards.

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE: "Be willing to accept a lower paying job if it's with a well regarded company (or person) where you can learn a lot and have opportunities for advancement. Remember, it's not where you start but where you finish. Be willing to work hard. Be flexible. Be a team player. Have a long-term strategy. And remember, there is rarely a perfect job or perfect company, particularly early in your career."

D TOM LABLONDE

President // LaBlonde Homes // lablonde.com

Growing up in the homebuilding industry, LaBlonde spent weekends during high school learning the trade. After college, he put his business degree to work managing the construction of condominiums, duplexes and homes in Wisconsin. He started his own company in 1987 and survived every downturn and the Great Recession to stay successful through it all.

Professional advice: "Know your target market. If everyone wants steak, don't try to give them pork. Designing and building homes that meet your target market will result in success."

Industry outlook: "The market in which I build — North Scottsdale, Carefree and Cave Creek in the \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million price range — is strong heading into 2019 and should stay strong until 2021-2022, when we might see a slight downturn for a short period of time."

E JOHN SCHULTZ

President // Schultz Development Corp. // schultzdevelopment.org

Schultz was born on Long Island and moved to Arizona with his mother, father and two sisters in 1973. He went to ASU, starting in their pre-professional architecture school, thinking that he wanted a career in design. He decided his passion was in building and design so he received his degree in business with the intent of starting his own custom home building company. After working for another home builder for a few years, he started Schultz Development Corp. in 1988. Schultz's wife, Denise, worked for the company for more than 10 years, as the company was growing. Schultz's father, Arne, was also a superintendent for more than 20 years and they enjoyed working side by side every day.

