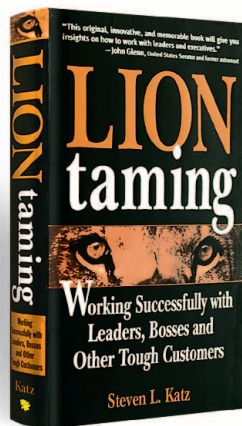


SOUNDVIEW Executive Book Summaries®

FILE: LEADERSHIP



By Steven L. Katz

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Working Successfully With Leaders, Bosses and Other Tough Customers

LION TAMING

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

If you feel like you need a whip and a chair to work effectively with your boss, client or customers, the techniques of real lion tamers can help you achieve better results. Lions are the people in all organizations who wield power and influence, and they are roaming freely in our lives. They act differently because they think differently. But they don't have to be difficult to work with!

Lions are the people all around us with power, responsibility, authority and talent — as well as the people who may simply be preoccupied with gaining more power and authority. They can be leaders, bosses, executives, professionals, managers, owners, partners, boards of directors, elected and appointed officials, colleagues, customers, clients and employees. Lions roam freely everywhere, across all occupations and professions — throughout life. Following the lions in the workplace in order to find out how to act, and as importantly when to act, leads to a twisting trail.

According to Steven L. Katz, a right-hand executive and senior adviser to leaders and executives across the worlds of business, politics, government and nonprofit organizations, lions are never tame, and you need strategies to deal with that. Katz explains that lion taming is really lion teaming. This summary will get you inside the minds of the leaders, bosses and other tough customers in your life, and help you to communicate and work more effectively together.

What You'll Learn In This Summary

- ✓ **How to establish your presence, authenticity and credibility** with your boss or leader.
- ✓ **How to identify the lions around you.**
- ✓ **How to decode the lion's four senses** of dominance, territory, social standing and survival.
- ✓ **How to avoid being the prey, the enemy or ignored**, and become an influential member of the pride or organization.
- ✓ **How to establish rapport with the lion** so you can achieve things together that you never could alone.

LION TAMING

by Steven L. Katz

— THE COMPLETE SUMMARY

PART ONE: LIONS ARE NEVER TAME

Lions Are Never Tame

We have all stood back from the lions in the office, the boardroom or wherever they appear on the scene. Who hasn't been afraid of getting their head bit off at work?

Many lions look to seize the advantage, even if it is by taking many small unobtrusive steps closer to power over a long period of time. They will patiently plan, wait and make their move. Lions thrive on whatever they get, whether it is information, intelligence, compensation, authority, territory, budget, head count or recognition. We need people who are good at being lions. We need them to use their persona to lead in a new direction; face challenges head on; expand the territory; and put their strength, power or position to use.

Lions at Work Are a Different Species

Of all the realities that must frame your outlook as a lion tamer in the workplace, it is that *you* are dealing with lions. As one executive who spent 25 years working his way to the top of his company observed about the company president, "*He's a different species, and that's how I treat him.*"

You need to *feel* that you are a lion tamer before you walk into the equivalent of the steel-caged arena at work. As one astute lion tamer observed, "I know that I am about to enter a cage full of lions, and I think carefully about it before, during and after I go in." You need to be in possession of the self-image and strategies that put you on top of the situation as both a participant and an observer.

Lions in the wild and the workplace share four important traits:

- 1. Lions need to be dominant and be secure in the feeling that they are dominant.**
- 2. Lions need to control territory and know when and how to preserve, protect and expand it.**
- 3. Lions need to know where they stand in the social hierarchy.**
- 4. Lions are fine-tuned to any potential threat to their survival.**

Lions in the workplace are always highly aware of the people they encounter and the environment that surrounds them, and they see through any organizational

framework to compete for a place in the hierarchy.

Hierarchies are particularly prominent in both the social lives of lions and the social order of the workplace, and have deep and often invisible effects on everyone. Lions often make the effort to operate beyond their existing terrain. But when they do, it is not to interact with just anyone — it is to satisfy their impulse to know where they stand as a lion. They have a need to validate themselves and others that they are lions — and this above all else is something that they must leave the isolation of their own hierarchy to achieve. They have a need for contact with each other, including the need to act aggressively with other lions. It is not just antisocial for them to do otherwise, it is "unbiological," as one scientist noted in the context of real lions. It is equally true in the workplace.

Identify the Lions Around You

No one likes to acknowledge that they may have to play lion tamer to a bigger lion, even though it could be the smartest job skill they ever master. One of the greatest challenges in the workplace is to function as a lion at your own level and as a lion tamer with the bigger lions above you.

The lion tamer is looking for the opportunity to work with the lions in ways that are proactive and productive, not reactive and perhaps disruptive. People who recognize this also know that stepping into the shoes of the lion tamer is something that they do well. ■

For additional information on familiar traits of the lions, go to: <http://my.summary.com>

The author: Steven L. Katz has worked for more than 20 years as a right-hand executive and senior adviser to leaders and executives in many industries and organizations. He has degrees in anthropology, history and law.

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Rules for Working a Lion Act

- ✓ Lions are a different species.
- ✓ Respect their power.
- ✓ Recognize the danger.
- ✓ Don't be thinking of anything else.
- ✓ Always maintain visual contact — keep them in front of you.
- ✓ Remain alert.
- ✓ Be determined.
- ✓ Patience is essential.
- ✓ Pay attention.

Get Inside the Lion's 'Skull'

The lions at work act differently because they think differently. In order to understand why and how to communicate and behave, “You’ve got to get inside the lion’s skull.”

You must first understand what shapes the lion’s perception of the people and the world around them. Lions, including those at the office, make a simple and instinctive calculation the minute any living thing comes into view.

You are either prey, the enemy or ignored. Prey they eat. The enemy they kill. Everyone else they disregard.

In order to work closely and effectively with lions, you cannot afford to be considered either prey, the enemy, or ignored. How do you deal with that? Surprisingly, it is more up to you than to the people who are the lions. You use your lion-taming skills to change your own focus from reacting as if you might be prey, the enemy or ignored. Instead, you make it your goal to communicate to the lions — by establishing rapport, trust and mutual respect — that it is to their advantage to have you working in support of their objectives. *You are aiming to be part of the lion’s pride in the office.*

The Lion's Four Senses

The Lion’s Four Senses are: Dominance, Territory, Social Standing and Survival. These four senses form the basis for how lions in the workplace determine where they stand and whether something is a good fit for them personally.

Applying the Lion’s Four Senses is a good baseline analysis of how the lions are feeling and acting. You can use it to make your own determination as to whether they should feel confident about their degree of dominance, territory, social standing or survival — including what might need to be done to shore up support in any of the four areas.

Additionally, the Lion’s Four Senses are useful to pinpoint and possibly remedy feelings of insecurity or uncertainty. If you can help someone see that their dominance, territory, social standing and survival are well established, they are likely to feel and act more confident.

Lastly, the Lion’s Four Senses can be used to help the person who is the lion honestly gauge the wisdom of an idea through the way it might affect their position as a lion. While the lions may not like others telling them how to

behave, they do appreciate it when people tell them that all the good things that they are doing to maintain their dominance, territory, social standing and survival might be placed at risk because of an idea or approach they are about to undertake. In many cases, this is an advantageous way of saying “no” and still have the people who are the lions respect that you are looking out for their best interests.

Instinctive Thinking

Lions in the wild and in the workplace operate by instinct. It is a unique and primal strength, both conscious and unconscious, that is shared by the lions that we encounter every day. Instinct is not so much unlearned as it is self-learned. In its most primal form, it is a highly personalized sense of knowing. It is the very core of the lion’s confidence, and often is what propels them into our lives. Instinctive thinking and behavior is a dominant characteristic, significantly more pronounced and critical to their existence than in anyone else we encounter. As a result, it is worthwhile to magnify the characteristics and significance of instinct in the leaders and bosses around us, and the impact they have on everyone around them.

Every lion tamer in the office needs to be acutely aware of this. It is an important part of the lion’s personal tool kit and his or her ability to simultaneously explore, learn, decide and act. Inside the lion’s skull, instinct drives his or her behavior not merely to live another day but to survive and live *as a lion in lion society.*

Juggling Perspectives

In the workplace, that often means that the lions react to other lions in the same organization. The people who are lions have an *Instinctive Identity* that enables others to recognize instinctive leaders in all professions, occupations and walks of life by the way they think and act. As **multidimensional thinkers**, lions are capable of juggling a variety of related perspectives and interrelationships among people, information and events. Be clear and organized in how you present something to them, but do not be one-dimensional. Include perspectives from others whose opinion they might respect or want to consider.

As **adaptive learners**, they are keenly interested in how change will affect them and are often interested in how they can use change to their advantage. Always be upfront about the possibility of change, the factors that you believe are determinative, and the opportunities and advance preparation that might be required to be ready. Then be ready to help them prepare in advance so that they can both act instinctively and absorb new information while moving at the same time.

Focus on Doing

As people who are **focused on doing**, lions are not afraid to do things — and while they have their own sense

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Get Inside the Lion's Skull

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of risk related to their status as lions, they are much more prone to and interested in learning by doing. Since they do not spend time analyzing their own learning process, it is not productive when you work with them to spend much time explaining how you are going to do something. Instead, put them into action as quickly as possible.

As people who must *demonstrate their instinctive speed and strength upfront*, it is crucial that these lions use but do not abuse the opportunities to demonstrate their instinctive thinking and behavior publicly. The crucial point to remember is the social importance of instinctive thinking and leadership. The value of the lions that fall into this category is not simply triumph of a brilliant or intuitive mind, but the degree and manner in which others learn to look up to them. ■

The Top of the Food Chain

Instinctive thinking is one of the most distinct and important “species characteristics” of the lions. As one lion tamer observed, “The whole art and science of lion taming revolves around species characteristics.”

The primacy of the lion's instinctive abilities poses an important irony that explains why the lions in the workplace need good lion tamers around them. The lions establish their territory, but it is your job to create the environment for them to be effective, feel safe and perform well. That includes scanning and interpreting the world around the lion.

Strengths and Weaknesses

There are always certain non-negotiable realities that you have to be prepared to accept and deal with, including:

- *Individual instinctive strengths can sometimes be weaknesses.* Instinctive thinkers can pull information from many sources and directions all at once. However, some people are capable of pulling the information without having the ability to organize it. Just as in real lion taming, the lions in the workplace need others around them who know their strengths and weaknesses, help them prepare in advance, and focus their energies so they can leap through hoops of fire without any visible assistance.

- *Instinctive leadership that is effective in crisis may breed a climate of crisis.* Some lions are good leaders in a crisis. But no viable organization or situation can remain stable and successful in a constant state of crisis.

- *The same instincts and intuition, even genius, that gave rise to a great idea can limit its viability and success.* The inherently personal nature of being a lion in the workplace can lead people in positions high up in the food chain to forget that there is always a supporting structure, framework or organization that also defines

their dominance as the lion.

While life at the top of the food chain represents significant challenges and non-negotiable realities in the instinctive behavior of lions, as a lion tamer you have to be aware of the entire range of behavior and how to deal with it. The lion establishes his or her territory, but the lion tamer, as the person who is responsible for creating the right environment for the lion to operate in, must maximize the display of the lion's strengths, while managing the risks associated with the lion's possible weaknesses. ■

Bring Out the Lion Tamer in You

Kevin Patton trained lions and then acquired his own formal graduate education in biology. Here he describes the ways in which working with lions and people in the workplace are parallel experiences: “Choose your battles. Know the difference between when it is vital to have the lion's attention and when it is just convenient. If you see every situation as vital, all your energy will be spent on ‘attention getting’ and both the lion tamer and the lion will burn out quickly. Lions are not going to simply be soldiers on parade for you. Work on the steps essential to achieving goals and leaping through the true hoops of fire in the arena!”

Communicating and Working More Effectively

Stepping into the lion tamer's shoes is the part of everyone's job related to communicating and working more effectively with people who have more power. Being a lion tamer means:

- **Strengthening your own self-perception and self-image.**
- **Adding a dimension to how you think about yourself in the job you were hired to perform.**
- **Playing a proactive, observant and strategic role instead of having to feel that you are in a subordinate or weaker position.**

The signs that you are bringing out the lion tamer in yourself include:

- **Recognizing who the lions are and what they want to be the lions of.**
- **Trusting your own intuition and instincts while verifying what others see and experience in similar situations.**
- **Feeling and operating less defensively and more proactively with the lions.**
- **Observing more and reacting less.**
- **Establishing your own presence, reputation and authenticity.**
- **Deciding who you want to work with or for, and why.** ■

For additional information on “he never saw it coming,” go to: <http://my.summary.com>

PART TWO: THE ART OF LION TAMING

The Art of Lion Taming

Contrary to popular ideas and circus posters, the art of lion taming is *not* about driving lions into a snarling frenzy, winning a battle of “man over beast” or sticking your head into the lion’s mouth! Lion tamers use brains not brawn. Thinking that you can muscle your boss is a bad idea. Even if you have the ability to escape from the ring unscathed, you still do not have the option of sending the lions at work back to their cages after their act. They are roaming free, and the things that they can do and say will have an impact on you and everyone around you for a long time to come.

At the core of every lion tamer is an acute awareness founded on his or her respect and understanding of the lion. Lion tamers must think on their feet before, during and after they have gone into the ring with the lions. To do so, they must succinctly capture in their own minds the information that is most real and most important.

Just “standing up” to a lion can be suicidal. Only the lion tamer who understands how and where to stand his or her ground while shielding his or her personal fears can take the next steps. These steps are establishing their presence and reputation in the eyes of the lion, and building rapport, trust and mutual respect in order to work together.

Adjusting to a Dynamic Environment

One of the characteristics of a good lion tamer, both in the center ring and in the office, is the ability to accept that the environment is complex and dynamic. It means actively sensing and sorting out what is unfolding around you and why. Some of what you observe is about you, but much is also revealed about the nature of others.

Success does not come from the equivalent of just posing with the lion. As Alfred Court, the revered French lion tamer and animal trainer, wrote: “When does the lion tamer think most productively? When the muscles are warmed up ... the body steams with sweat ... the mind is busy ... a new idea emerges!”

Lion tamers recognize the need to create an opportunity for the lion and the lion tamer to adjust to each other. It is a core requirement in approaching the lion with the aim of having the lion approach you. Lion tamers have an adjustment agenda that precedes, helps establish and serves as a foundation for working toward rapport, trust and mutual respect.

Here are the corporate lion tamer’s rules for building trust:

- **Don’t bring anything to the table until you totally understand the lion.**
- **Work to create a first impression by getting to know the lion first. If you lose the first impression, it’s over.**
- **Find out what makes them tick and what is**

important to them. Are they trying to accomplish something specific? Help them.

- **Don’t throw yourself at anyone.**

In order for the lions to approach, you must give them the ability and opportunity to AIM directly at you: *Attention, Interest and Motivation.* ■

Courage, the Whip, And the Chair

Clyde Beatty, the legendary American lion tamer of the big top and the big screen, created the fighting lion-tamer image in popular culture that has lasted across many generations. Standing poised and seemingly fearless in a steel-caged ring full of roaring and ferocious lions, he was protected by nothing more than a whip and a wooden chair.

You cannot afford to reveal either courage or fear in a dramatic sense to the lion, because as one observer stated philosophically, “Courage that is self-conscious betrays great fear.” Indeed, in the workplace, the lions may interpret a display of courage as a direct challenge or competition and prey on your fear as a weakness. You will succeed in getting the lion’s attention, but not in a way that is useful to anyone. The secret is found in the heart of every successful lion tamer: *It is the courage not to show fear.*

In lion taming, you need to be more in control of yourself than ever. A truly courageous lion tamer is extremely aware and cautious. When lion tamers list the attributes they consider essential, courage and bravery may be implicitly essential, but *patience* is at the top of the list, and *overconfidence* always ranks at the very bottom.

The Invisible Whip and Chair

Whether you’re in a steel-caged arena or the boss’ office, you may be telegraphing your deepest feelings in the silent language of your facial expressions and your stance. You will communicate through your words, cues and footwork. Your courage and strength will reflect your mental focus, physical stamina and nerve. Ideally, everything culminates in an arc of understanding and communication that flows between the lion tamer and the lion. In all kinds of lion taming, you need to become aware and in control of yourself and these movements.

The invisible whip and chair can be words and ideas that move someone in a particular direction. You can use them how lion tamers use them — to break the lion’s concentration, switch the subject or get things back on track.

Your goal in using courage, the whip and the chair as a lion tamer is not to control the lion, but to move and work in unison together. When it is the lion’s turn to perform, it is the lion tamer’s job to stand back and let the lion do it! ■

The Lion's Pedestal

How is it possible to meet the lion's need for dominance without giving in entirely to its will? The answer is to *put the lion on a pedestal*. Lion tamers don't do this simply for the dramatic effect or to help the audience see the act better (although it helps). The lion tamers guide the lions to a place where they will feel dominant and secure in the feeling that they are dominant. The lion tamer uses his or her knowledge of the lion's primal needs to establish a safe and secure ground so that the lion has his or her own space from which to begin communicating and working together. That's the real goal.

As one lion tamer explained: "To the cat, his seat is a security position. Other cats won't bother him there — he can't get in trouble for being there. The lion is rarely disciplined there unless he has just returned from a fight and is told that he is being bad."

Attention Getting and Attention Using

The lion's pedestal is the secret to minimizing attention getting while successfully maximizing attention using. Until the lion tamer gets the lion's attention, he or she cannot use it. That is why one of the most valuable secrets of lion tamers is, "If you don't get them to sit, you've got nothing!"

Natural lion's pedestals often exist in formal meeting rooms, such as executive conference rooms. However, it is important to remember that such settings can also change the dynamic of the way you are with each other from a private, one-on-one discussion to a public setting. In private, you can often confront and challenge the lion's views in a more open discussion, but in public the same discussion will be seen as competing with the lion or challenging the lion.

To get the attention of the lion, remember this: When it appears that you may be infringing on the lion's space and you have engaged the lion sufficiently, make sure that you are backing up at the same time to achieve the distance needed to remove the lion's motivation for attacking you. Remember that the motivation is not anything you said; it is the simple fact that you are in the lion's space. In fact, you will probably have to repeat what you said once both you and the lion adjust the space between you. ■

Sticking Your Head in the Lion's Mouth

Despite the popularity and danger of the trick, not all lion tamers believe that sticking your head in the lion's mouth is a feat worth attempting. In fact, some object strongly. Their reluctance provides several valuable lessons for the workplace.

Clyde Beatty addressed the subject as "The Head-in-

the-Lion's-Mouth Trick — How It's Done and Why It Shouldn't Be." He may have saved many a future lion tamer the need to discover the apparent truths about "lion's breath." He believed strongly that nothing is so important — not even getting a roar from the audience — that you should put yourself in a totally defenseless position. For Gunther Gebel-Williams, the choice was simple, "I do not do anything ridiculous to show off, such as putting my head into a tiger's or lion's mouth."

There is always a triangle of perception between the lion, the lion tamer and the audience (not to mention the other lions). In the workplace, the triangle exists between employees, managers and executives. In the office, everyone observes the interactions of others, hearing about events they did not actually see, casting judgment, reaching conclusions and acting accordingly. They decide who is strong and who is weak, who is smart, who is a leader and who is dangerous.

The bottom line is that in business, the leaders, bosses and other tough customers are an investment. If you do anything to diminish their value, you will pay for the loss as much as they will, perhaps more.

The list of possible ways that people stick their heads in the lion's mouth at work reads like a coroner's statement of the hasty lion tamer's "cause of death." Whether it is a leader, boss or other tough customer, any of the following is the equivalent of sticking your head in the lion's mouth:

- **Bruising their ego.**
- **Challenging them gratuitously.**
- **Pushing them to do something they fear.**
- **Talking behind their back.**
- **Wasting their time.**

Executives interacting with one another often stick their heads in the lion's mouth. Their biggest weakness is failing to sense — instinctively, intuitively or just reading the sign on the door — when to assume the role of the lion tamer instead of the lion. ■

For additional information on the big fangs, go to: <http://my.summary.com>

Lion Taming in Action

These basic laws of lion taming also apply in the workplace:

- **Maintain visual contact at all times.**
- **Keep a positive attitude and a firm, upbeat tone of voice.**
- **Stand back and give the lion room.**
- **Let the lion roar — after all, he's a lion.**
- **Respect the lion.**

When lions are ready to leap through a hoop of fire, your
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Lion Taming in Action

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job is to stand back — sometimes even very far back.

In lion taming, the painstaking work and patience that go into establishing the trust, respect, rapport and understanding between the lion tamer and the lion will determine the result. In this case, it proves particularly

important to work with the lion to build and maintain his or her trust, set and meet expectations, and ensure that the lion does not feel threatened, and that you don't cause him or her to flee, bluster or attack.

In the end, the lion jumps through the hoop of fire on his or her own initiative. Lions in the office want to jump through hoops of fire, they just don't want it to appear that someone made them do it! ■

PART THREE: LION TAMING IS REALLY LION TEAMING

Lion Taming Is Really Lion Teaming

Lion taming is really lion teaming! This is the basis for the one-to-one relationship between the lion tamer and each of the lions. At the same time, it is the concept that connects the lions and everyone that surrounds them in the larger environment. While taking quite seriously the matter of establishing his or her own presence, credibility and reputation with the lions, the lion tamer works hard with a positive attitude to foster rapport, trust and mutual respect. Behind every performance are hours of long training and a sorting of roles between the lion tamer and the lion, and also others around them. It is the building of the lion team.

Hoops of Fire

The purpose of any team is to work toward a set of goals — hoops of fire, you might say. Executives, bosses, clients and customers need to jump through hoops of fire. These are not only identifiable goals, but are often the very reasons that bring people in contact with the lions that they work with every day. Four kinds of hoops of fire — leadership, management, communications and relationships — are good examples. Other hoops of fire may also be related to short-term decision making, direction setting, policy-making, resource allocation or delegation of authority — the hoops of fire that are always visible when you think of the reasons why you are walking into the boss' office.

Despite the appearance of strength and self-sufficiency, lions in the office can and will work with others to see goals, develop the process for reaching the goals, and execute individually and as part of a team. However, never forget that they are still lions.

Lions are hardwired to be dominant, but they are also hardwired as “pride” animals. Lions in the wild and in the workplace are social animals, and to survive as lions, they must operate in two parallel worlds — the hierarchy and the pride or group. Social dominance is meaningless without social context. These worlds are not merely complementary; they are necessary to the lion's survival.

The lion cannot easily camouflage himself. The lavish mantle around his neck and shoulders that shields him against slashing claws and ripping teeth is also a walking

advertisement of dominance, strength and virility. When the large males are around, every other inhabitant of the animal kingdom knows it. “Male lions on the hunt look like large haystacks moving through the grass,” a naturalist observed.

It is no different in the office, where the boss cannot begin showing up to every meeting. Imagine the chaos this would cause. Tension. Distraction. Stress. Uncertainty. All these limitations of power are the immutable laws of the corporate jungle. If the boss' presence does become too pervasive, nothing would ever get done.

Freedom and Responsibility

You can live and operate in the lion's world, but the lion usually cannot operate in yours. This inherent limitation of movement and relationships creates a need, a role, and responsibilities for others who can move more freely.

A very important role for others exists as part of the lion's team through their ability to operate in the world that the lions cannot easily roam. Because the presence of leaders and bosses can sometimes have unintended consequences, part of your job as a lion tamer is to determine how to help present and portray their presence in the office so that it is productive.

It is the lion's responsibility to see that the lion tamer is respected for his or her unique role. Together they must ensure that the role is viewed as authentic. ■

Bring Out the Lion Teamer In You!

When you work with lions, there is no parity, no equality — only rank. Teamwork may sound ironic in the context of leaders, bosses and other tough customers, but it leads to more effective roles and relationships because it complements their natural thinking and behavior in ways that managing your boss or “managing up” does not.

The secret is to recognize the complementary yet distinctively different worlds of the hierarchy and the pride that lions must live in simultaneously. If a lion perceives you as competing with them to operate in the hierarchy of lions, he will resist you and may try to eliminate you altogether. You may be the most capable, expert person to

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Bring Out the Lion Tamer in You!

(continued from page 7)

do what they need done, but if they view you or your approach as furthering your own importance, not theirs, you'll be up to your neck in teeth!

However, by approaching the lions in the workplace with an attitude of teaming, where the issue of status and roles is undisputed and the focus is on what needs to be done, you can be most helpful, influential and effective.

The lions must always know where you stand in relation to them, that your intentions are consistent with their business objectives, and that they can achieve something by working together that they could not achieve alone.

Contrast and Context

People are surprised at the enormous difference in size between the lion tamers and the lions — surprised in a way that confirms their anxiety on the other side of the steel bars. The same ingredients are needed in the workplace. Lions need other people to provide the contrast and context to reflect the lion's role and actions. Here are three lessons about power and contrast, which show invaluable roles you must play and why lions in the workplace cannot do it alone:

- **Power needs contrast and context:** to shape and present the lion's power — helping even the lion to recognize his or her own power.

- **Power needs communicators:** conduits for inbound and outbound information to organize, describe, condition and project — but not necessarily to speak for them.

- **Power needs other people who have more freedom of movement** because they are less conspicuous than “the boss.” These people can represent them, be participant-observers inside and outside the organization, be diplomats ... and bring others closer to them. ■

Perform in the Center Ring

For many, the idea of working with lions arouses a sense of danger and doom. However, others repeatedly demonstrate in both real and corporate lion taming that the ability to spark a positive chemistry has a contagious effect on others around you. Try these techniques:

- **Acknowledge that you have a preference and an ability to work with the lions around you.**

- **Treat your instincts as if they matter.**

- **Recognize that these capabilities genuinely reflect your style of effectiveness.**

You will find that you implicitly communicate this to the people who are the lions. In fact, lions look for and recognize these qualities in the people they work with. It is part of what brings you together as a team in the first place, and is an essential part of the chemistry that enables you to

work together successfully.

If you need to stand up to the lion, you need to do it in the right way and at the right time. Here are the strengths and strategies that the lion in the workplace will recognize and respect in this situation:

1. The *authenticity* of your reaction.

2. The lion's *realization* that his or her own actions might jeopardize a valuable and beneficial relationship upon which he or she relies.

3. The lion's perception that you have a capability — including knowledge or relationships — that he or she cannot pinpoint and does not wish to trigger.

The strength of your reaction alone will not suffice. It is the authenticity, timing, speed and proper context that give the lion in the office pause. ■

Build the Lion Team

One lion tamer learned his job by standing behind a more experienced lion tamer and holding on to his belt, following and learning every move, word and gesture. However, before he took on the challenge of entering the ring alone with the lions, he wanted to make sure he had prepared in his own mind:

“On my first solo in the arena, I used only props, no animals, going through the cues repeatedly, practicing footwork, bodily movements, verbal commands and cracks of the whip. While I must have looked rather silly, gyrating and talking to the animals that weren't there, it was worthwhile, for soon I had all the details of the act in mind, ready to carry them out reflexively.”

Visualize Lion Teaming

The tool you need to work smarter and more strategically in collaborative relationships with others around you is *visualization* — *the hybrid of imagination and the way things really are*.

The first step in lion teaming isn't creating the team; it's seeing it. No matter where you work, there are almost always existing relationships, dynamics and perceptions that are embedded in a broader and deeper culture. Imagine yourself moving between pedestals and unlit hoops of fire.

Lions will accept you as a lion tamer if you do three things:

- **Help them succeed in new ways.**

- **Tacitly acknowledge that you can help them in ways they cannot accomplish alone.**

- **Don't be afraid to say no, alert them to consequences and keep them out of trouble.**

Realize that a genuine roar or a snarl may mean you have engaged their interest and involvement as much as if they were smiling. As one corporate lion tamer commented, “I didn't realize I was a lion tamer until I said no to the lion!” ■