

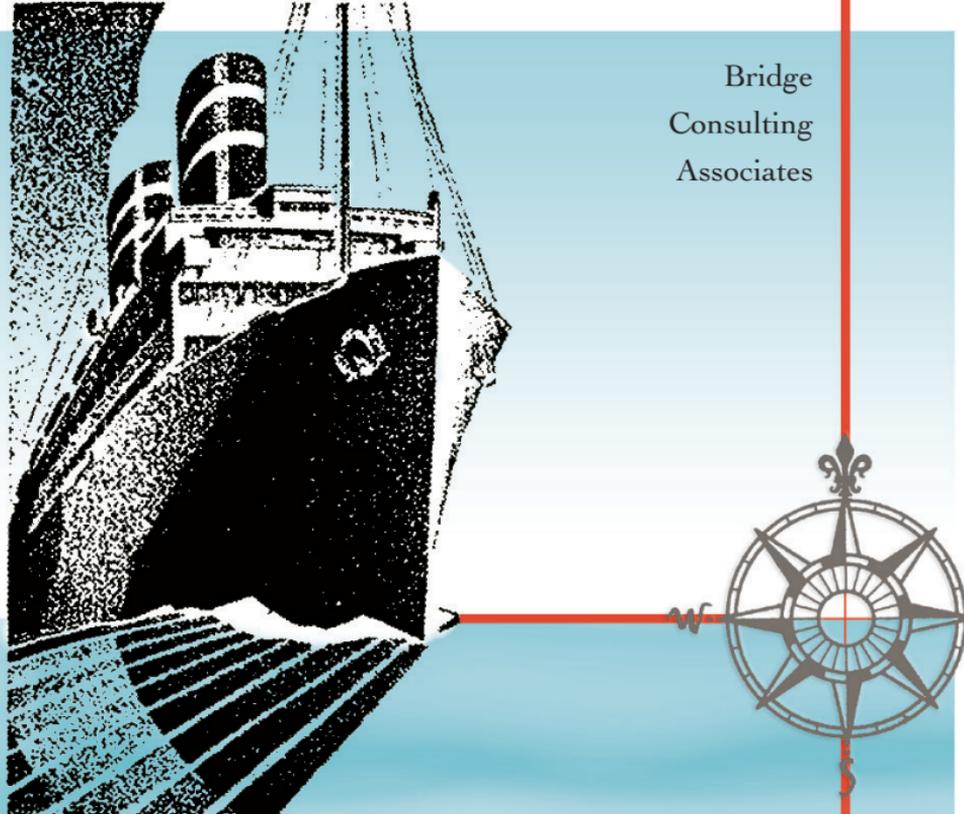


Bridge  
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## *Intersections: Living & Leading*

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As many of you already know, I've become cruise-crazy since last November. I realized while logging 36 days at sea that bobbing on the surface of the planet reflects our day-to-day reality that is often contradictory to our preferred perception—that we're ever in charge!

Specifically, I was amazed that I could viscerally feel the constant interaction of the *cradled ship on the omnipotent sea*. I actually felt as though I were intruding on an intimate exchange between the physical and the mystical since the power of the sea was always in evidence. The constant motion while at sea felt especially nurturing as I was reminded of the constant care from the universe that we often ignore. Referencing this experience after my first cruise, a friend reminded me of the *similarity in the French terms for "sea" (la mer) and "mother" (la mère)*. I was fascinated! Then, a few months later as I watched the wake from the stern of the QE2 on a transatlantic crossing, it occurred to me that Mother Nature ever provides her significant power to facilitate, nurture and advance us. It's only when we choose to abuse or ignore the equation that we are jeopardized!

So, cruising came to mean *the promise of adventure horizontally* as ports could be anticipated over the horizon plus a reminder that, as I experienced *the deepest vertical reality of connection and support*, I could choose to be more trusting.

*How does this duality serve beyond the sea?* I need to continue in a spiritual direction to respond. You see, I was often reminded of clients and other leaders who have been willing to admit their fears when struggling with particularly challenging choices. I wondered . . . what if we considered ourselves to be externally or horizontally advancing toward new vistas of opportunity while also trusting internally or vertically that the power of the universe is ever eager to support and nurture us in our individual struggles? Could we replace fear with trust when making choices? And if so, instead of feeling "adrift" on uncharted waters, could we regard *this intersection* between the horizontal and vertical, between the physical and the spiritual or mystical, *like the bridge of a ship that would steer us to new experiences of fulfillment and wonder?*

Especially on a recent Baltic cruise, I was awed by two specific examples of choices that reflected the kind of nobility of spirit and heroism that bring me to tears—the Berlin Airlift and the Danish Resistance during WWII. Fortunately, our current lives may not call for such heroic choices. We can, however, welcome the horizontal invitations to life by responding with a deep or vertical trust that serves, as effective leaders do, the greater good—a heroic course for all of us to set. May it be so into 2004.

*Happy Holidays,*

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Executive Coach