

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Undercover Boss Sends a Wake-up Call to America's CEOs, Says Executive Coach Stephen Xavier**

RALEIGH, N.C., April 7, 2010 -- There is nothing like a hit reality show to inspire water cooler exchanges, and that is exactly the effect of the hit CBS series *Undercover Boss*. The Sunday evening program follows high-level chief executives who go undercover to explore the inner-workings of their companies. This televised fieldwork is exposing the great divide that often exists between leadership and employees -- a gap that can be bridged by a simple yet effective strategy, according to Stephen Xavier, an executive coach and author with more than 20 years of experience coaching and mentoring Fortune 500 clients worldwide.

"It's impossible for a CEO to understand everyone's situation or story, considering that companies can have thousands of employees," says Xavier, America's Top Coach® (<http://www.americastopcoach.com>). "However, good leaders can be extremely effective if they 'manage by walking around,' meaning they observe their people working in the field at every level, interact with employees -- with or without their bosses present -- and hold weekly 'town hall' style meetings to monitor the business' pulse and employee satisfaction. This is exactly what several of the CEOs that I coach do, and, today, they're 'poster boys' for success when it comes to modeling exceptional leadership."

Xavier notes that whenever employee satisfaction surveys are conducted, "more money" rarely tops the wish list. Rather, employees rank job security, a healthy, safe work environment, and being treated respectfully above money. That delivers a powerful message, and is one of a few, but important, ongoing themes playing out in *Undercover Boss*, Xavier notes.

"For anyone who has watched *Undercover Boss*, there are several simple yet critical takeaways regarding America's CEOs," Xavier says. "The *Undercover* CEOs and other corporate leaders have strayed too far away and become too out-of-touch with who their people are and what makes their companies function effectively."

For instance, the show points out that many decisions are being made at an executive level without serious consideration of consequences that surface downstream. Xavier's suggestion: Create a culture that fosters deeper, more meaningful engagement in the workforce, so senior leaders can make better decisions that ultimately boost the company's bottom line.

In fact, The Gallup Organization regularly tracks employee engagement, measuring the percentage of employees who are engaged, not engaged or actively disengaged in companies throughout the world. Recent data collected has measured various impacts to companies, including financial consequences -- now a staggering loss of \$300+ billion annually.

"This monetary hit is staggering, especially considering these economically challenged times and that there's a proven strategy that helps prevent such loss," Xavier says. "While I certainly don't expect any CEO to walk the shop floor day in and day out, a significant amount of visibility on the part of the CEO has real value, and this show demonstrates exactly that."

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