

## “Zensights Gathers Top Executives, Philanthropists, and Celebrities to Explore How Support for Veterans Fits Within Corporate Social Responsibility

### Zensights Gathers Top Executives to Discuss Adaptive Strategies:

The Harvard Club, New York City,  
December 2, 2014:

Why is it that an industry in the business of making people healthier has such an image problem? And what role can philanthropy, sustainability, diversity, and service play in enhancing that image? A recent article in The PatientView Quarterly shared the results of a survey of 600 international, national and regional patient groups. Of eight healthcare sectors, the pharmaceutical industry ranked 7th! The industry’s reputation trailed behind retail pharmacists, medical device companies, private healthcare services, biotechs, not-for-profit health insurers, and generic drug makers.

In the third of its “Adapt or Die” meeting series, Zensights gathered biopharma leaders, philanthropists, celebrities, and experts in corporate social responsibility. Zensights departed from its traditional

format and assembled a panel comprised of leaders from outside the Pharma industry. During a fascinating evening, the panel shared unique perspectives on the links between corporate social responsibility (“CSR”), employee morale, philanthropy, partnerships, and the bottom line. Specifically, the evening focused on post 9/11 veterans – who they are, what has been done, what else can be done, and why it is so important to do more.

The Keynote was delivered by Lieutenant General (Ret.) Rick Lynch, an expert on Adaptive Leadership. Rick shared experiences from his days leading troops in the military, and how those leadership principles could and should be applied to business. He talked about engaged leadership - one of his principles is, “love your subordinates like you love your own children.” Determine what they are great at, what they are struggling with, and



help them succeed. If you care about them, urged Rick, really take the time to understand them, and they will work really hard at getting the job done! Rick also talked about building a diverse team. Too often you will find leaders who surround themselves with teams that look and act a lot like them. He emphasized the strength of teams that are built with people with diverse experiences and skill sets.

After Rick’s talk about leadership principles, he shifted gears to speak about post 9/11 veterans. He shared some eye opening statistics, summarized key issues, and most importantly, offered several ways companies and individuals can help.



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## Veterans:

### Who they are:

2.3M all of whom volunteered to serve  
(no draft since 1973)  
58% married with children  
99% high school graduates  
72% with some college  
94% proud of their service  
60% under the age of 34

### Current 9/11 Veterans Issues:

50,000+ have visible wounds  
150,000+ with invisible wounds  
13-20% have been diagnosed with PTSD  
1/3 don't get help because of stigma  
associated with mental issues  
48,000 are homeless  
9.9% unemployed

### Organizations can help by:

Hire post 9/11 vets  
Hire post 9/11 vets spouses  
Help with transition by developing useful skills (GE has a major program).  
Know who the vets are and show them you care. Lead them to help as required.  
Help with home building / home renovation programs (Gary Sinise Foundation, Carrington Charitable Foundation).

## NOTABLE QUOTE

*"I found the meeting to be excellent. I was really impressed with Rick - his willingness and desire to give back is truly inspirational and he is very down to earth. Gary's passion was contagious! No promises, but I am going to go back and have conversations with our leadership team to see what I need to do to be the executive sponsor for including Gary's foundation in our list of charitable foundations. Thanks again for including me....I look forward to seeing you again soon."*

## Rick Lynch's 9 Leadership Principles

<b>Focus on Opportunities, not obstacles.</b>	"It can be done!"
<b>Have fun!</b>	"If the boss ain't happy, ain't nobody happy!"
<b>Achieve a work-life balance.</b>	"How are you living you dash"
<b>Decide when to decide.</b>	"Take time to think!"
<b>Look down, not up.</b>	"People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care"
<b>Be a mentor.</b>	"You must be accessible, you must listen, and you must truly care!"
<b>Engaged leadership is important.</b>	"Love your subordinates like you love your own children"
<b>Be demanding but not demeaning.</b>	"Everyone must perform to his or her full potential"
<b>Always celebrate diversity.</b>	"Don't surround yourself with people like you!"

*R. Lynch & M. Dagostino (Oct, 2013) Adapt or Die: Leadership Principles from an American General, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books*

As Rick concluded his talk, he introduced his good friend Gary Sinise, Actor and Philanthropist, and Founder of the Gary Sinise Foundation. The mission of the Gary Sinise Foundation is to serve our nation by honoring our defenders, veterans, first responders, their families, and those in need. This is achieved by creating and supporting unique programs designed to entertain, educate, inspire, strengthen, and build communities.

Gary has spent his life supporting veterans, gaining unique notoriety after playing "Lt. Dan" in the film, Forrest Gump. Giving back to those who sacrifice for our nation and encouraging others to do the same has long been Gary's personal quest. "Freedom and security are precious gifts that we, as Americans, should never take for granted," says Sinise. "We must do all we can to extend our hand in times of need to those who willingly sacrifice each day to provide that freedom and security. While we can never do enough to show our gratitude to our nation's defenders, we can always do a little more."

Gary was joined in a panel discussion by Winell Herron, Group Vice President for giant Texas/Mexico retailer H-E\_B,, and Bruce Rose, CEO of the Carrington Companies, a real estate financial services company. The panel was moderated by Ted Deutsch, President of the communications firm Taft and Partners.

## NOTABLE QUOTES

*"Thought it was interesting, but if the foundation is serious about enlisting more overt support from pharma, in my view, has to approach engagement from an unconventional angle – most company philanthropy or foundation people are quite hidebound [and actually very conservative] in their perspective and don't really want to take their activities in new directions."*

*"I thought the Adapt or Die meeting was very informative and it was great to meet Gary and Rick as well as Bruce, Winell, and DB. I am still amazed at the dedication that Gary and Rick have to help out the wounded servicemen and women as well as the first responders. I will certainly contribute to the Gary Sinise Foundation on my own."*

## KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM THE PANEL:

- Check book philanthropy (writing a check without any involvement of time, energy, commitment) while it is very much appreciated, it is NOT enough. Much more is accomplished when people are involved. Examples included employees working at charitable events such as serving food at military hospital events, flying alongside and aiding wounded veterans for treatment and/or races, and visiting wounded veterans in hospitals. Contact charitable entities directly to learn how your organization can get involved.
- Families of veterans also need our help. It is often easy to overlook the sacrifices being made for families of veterans. They are often facing financial hardship, housing needs, and overall lack of support systems.
- It is important to carefully evaluate how well a foundation is being run. Both the Gary Sinise Foundation and Carrington Charitable Foundations are run with very little overhead. As a result, the money gets to the people who need it most, the veterans and their families.
- Corporations can also help by hiring veterans. The leadership principles outlined in Rick's talk are highly transferrable to business. There is a large pool of unemployed veterans, well trained in the areas of leadership and discipline, which would be an asset to corporations.

As the event closed, Gary Sinise summed up the theme of the night well:

“While we can never do enough to show gratitude to our nation's defenders, we can always do a little more.”

For those interested in learning more about the Gary Sinise Foundation, please go to:

<http://www.garysinisefoundation.org/>

