

The Associated Press picked up this release and it appeared in



1800 Sainte Claire Plaza  
1121 Boyce Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15241-3918  
724-942-7900  
[jsujansky@keygroupconsulting.com](mailto:jsujansky@keygroupconsulting.com)  
[www.keygroupconsulting.com](http://www.keygroupconsulting.com)

PITTSBURGH  
TRIBUNE-REVIEW

The Philadelphia Inquirer

The Daily Item

Your Independent North Shore Newspaper Since 1877

(Daily newspaper in Sunbury, PA)

## NEWS RELEASE

**Exclusive to Associated Press**

### CONTACT:

For more information or an interview with Dr. Joanne Sujansky, contact Hank Walshak, Walshak Communications, Inc., at (412) 831-3023 or [hank@walshakcommunications.com](mailto:hank@walshakcommunications.com). For more information on KEYGroup®, visit [www.keygroupconsulting.com](http://www.keygroupconsulting.com) or contact Dr. Joanne Sujansky at [jsujansky@keygroupconsulting.com](mailto:jsujansky@keygroupconsulting.com) or at 724-942-7900

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **SUPER STEELERS – SUPER CULTURE**

*Getting the Steelers to the Super Bowl Takes More Than Passing, Running, Blocking, and Kicking. It Takes a Special Kind of Organizational Culture, Says Dr. Joanne G. Sujansky, CSP (Certified Speaking Professional) CEO and Founder of KEYGroup*

**PITTSBURGH, PA, January 26, 2006** – You know the Steelers are a great football team. What you may not realize is that the Steelers have all the characteristics of a lean, mean, agile, seize-the-initiative, get-it-done now 21<sup>st</sup> century business. That's right! According to Dr. Joanne G. Sujansky, CSP (Certified Speaking Professional), Founder and CEO of KEYGroup© and die-hard Steeler fan, the Pittsburgh's Super Bowl-bound team is the perfect model of a great and productive culture, one that she calls a Vibrant Entrepreneurial Organization, or VEO.

-MORE-

“The Steelers are going to Super Bowl XL because everyone in the Steelers organization -- the Rooneys, Coach Cowher, the players, the medical and administrative staffs, and the team managers -- works together like a VEO,” says Sujansky. She constantly drives her clients to become VEOs themselves, adding, “Businesses who want to survive and thrive in today’s workplace would do well to keep a close eye on this team.”

Sujansky says five distinct characteristics make the Steelers a stand-out organization:

**Every Steelers player knows the big picture and how to take risks.** “Every player on the Steelers team knows the big picture before the season starts,” Sujansky says. In particular, she points out that at training camp, Coach Cowher and his staff begin communicating and implementing their plan for reaching the Super Bowl. Once the season begins, game plans are developed, communicated and put into action for each opposing team.

In game planning, the coaches study the opponent and the Steelers to develop strategies to achieve two major objectives. First, they exploit the opponent’s weaknesses and minimize their strengths. Second, they make the most of the Steelers’s strengths and minimize their weaknesses. Game planning evolves as changes are made right up to game time, and adjustments are made during the game. Each player is responsible for executing his part of the plan.

Because all the players get the big picture and understand the plan, they know what risks to take, when to take them and how to take them. And they accept responsibility for the consequences of their decisions. “Look at Jerome Bettis,” Sujansky says. “He trusts his instincts, and, if the need arises, he adapts his moves at the last minute. And Big Ben Roethlisberger knows when to risk going deep, throw to a secondary receiver, run himself, or take a sack when necessary.” The play-by-play, minute-by-minute decisions all come together in the context of the game plan and the team goals.

-MORE-

**The Steelers culture typifies a new face of loyalty.** “Since 1969, the Steelers have had only two coaches -- Chuck Knoll and Bill Cowher -- while other teams have gone through multiple coaches,” Sujansky points out. “Cowher’s teams have experienced successes and failures during the past 14 seasons, but the Rooneys have stood solidly behind him.”

In short, the Steelers win the loyalty of their coaches and players and keep it. “That’s why Jerome Bettis, one of the most outstanding running backs in the AFC, took a salary cut just to finish his career with the Steelers. And that’s why star wide receiver, Hines Ward, chose to stay with the Steelers, when he could have signed with another team for significantly more money. It’s not by accident that Hines smiles a lot on the field.”

**The Steelers support high productivity while minimizing stress.** The rules of the game as well as the evolving speed and strength of the players combine to make football one of the most physically challenging and stressful professional sports in our society. All the planning and conditioning in the world cannot change that physical stress. “But the Steelers get rid of unnecessary stress by emphasizing team before self,” says Sujansky. “No prima donnas here. Every player on the team knows he can depend on every other player to get his job done. In an environment where everyone understands the big picture and his role in the game plan, there is no need to second guess anybody else, and every player can produce at his maximum best.”

**The Steelers have produced a winning tradition.** “Can you imagine playing for the Steelers and not playing to win?” Sujansky queries. “The Steelers winning tradition didn’t start yesterday. It started when Art Rooney purchased the franchise 73 years ago and set in motion a strategy for success that embraced his vision and values. Over the years, the Steelers organization became the first team in the NFL to win four Super Bowls as well as back to back Super Bowl Victories in 1975 and 1976 as well as in 1979 and 1980. The Steelers trip this year to Super Bowl XL continues that tradition of success.”

-MORE-

**The Rooneys and Coach Cowher have raised communication to an art form.** “They continuously discuss goals, values, strategies and personnel and candidly assess performance outcome. In addition, coach Cowher is an artist when it comes to communicating with his players,” Sujansky says, noting that he huddles with them on and off the field and listens to their input. “He knows just how to give corrective instruction rather than just pointing out players’ mistakes. He communicates in ways that set his players up for success, not failure. And when he talks with reporters, he avoids negative talk about individual players and instead, focuses on what the team does right and what it does wrong.”

“It’s never an accident when a team makes it to the Super Bowl,” adds Sujansky. “The team and the Steelers organization work together as a cohesive VEO, and that’s why they are so successful. All Pittsburgh companies--really all companies *everywhere*—should follow their lead. I am proud of our team and I think they have a lot to teach the business world.”

-XXX-

**Joanne G. Sujansky, PhD, CSP (*Certified Speaking Professional*)**

For over twenty-five years Joanne G. Sujansky, PhD, CSP, has been helping leaders to increase business growth and profitability by creating and sustaining what she calls a Vibrant Entrepreneurial Organization. Her expertise, insight, wisdom, humor, and practical solutions have made Joanne a highly sought-after speaker for keynote addresses, seminars, conferences, and workshops. She has brought fresh concepts and effective techniques to executives and audiences in over thirty countries around the globe. Client favorites include the following topics:

- *Keys to Creating the VEO*
- *The One & Only Thing Competitors Can’t Steal*
- *Culture: Your New Competitive Advantage*

Among the organizations that have called upon Joanne to deliver speeches, develop custom presentations, and provide consulting services are: GlaxoSmithKline, International Federation of Training and Development Organizations, PPG Industries, Inc., U.S. Steel Corporation, PA Recreation & Park Society, Inc., American Express-Sweden, AT&T, Meeting Professionals International, U.S. Postal Service, IBM, Society for Automotive Engineers International, T. Rowe Price, Mayo Clinic, and Volkswagen, Audi, Porsche.

Joanne has authored numerous articles and books on leadership, change and retention, including:

- *The Power of Partnering: Vision, Commitment, and Action*
- *The Keys to Putting Change in Your Pocket: Tips for Making Change Work for You*
- *The Keys to Conquering Change: 100 Tales of Success*
- *The Keys to Mastering Leadership: 101 Practical Tips*
- *The Keys to Motivating & Retaining Talent*
- *The Keys to Unlocking Your Potential*
- *Activities to Unlock Leadership Potential*

Joanne, who founded KEYGroup<sup>®</sup>, is an award-winning entrepreneur. Earlier in her career, she held management- and director-level positions across several different industries. She is past national president of the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), and is a recipient of its highest honor, the Gordon M. Bliss Award. An active member of the National Speakers Association (NSA), she has received its highest earned designation, Certified Speaking Professional (CSP).

Her energy and sense of purpose translate into winning presentations that audiences applaud. Packed with plenty of take-home value and on-the-job applicability, you can count on Joanne's presentations to provide you with the keys to unlock the leader within you, your team, and your organization.

**For more information, please visit [www.keygroupconsulting.com](http://www.keygroupconsulting.com) or [www.joannesujansky.com](http://www.joannesujansky.com).**