

LEADERSHIP Excellence

Warren Bennis



THE MAGAZINE OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, MANAGERIAL EFFECTIVENESS, AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY

April 2013

**Effective
Leaders**

**Innovation
Pros**

**LeaderShift
Are You Ready for It?**

Oliver DeMille
Consultant



"LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE IS AN EXCEPTIONAL WAY TO LEARN AND THEN APPLY THE BEST AND LATEST IDEAS IN THE FIELD OF LEADERSHIP."

—WARREN BENNIS, AUTHOR AND USC PROFESSOR OF MANAGEMENT

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Prickly Pursuit

As big cat-like, predatory leaders pursue the prickly prey of market porcupines, they soon learn that the quills of these quiet creatures can be mightier than their tooth or claw.

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Vision and Voice

These distinguish real leaders.



by Ken Shelton

ONCE AGAIN, AFTER EDITING this issue of *Leadership Excellence*, I sense that many compelling visions and voices—some new and others familiar—are emanating from the ennui of current society. If there be a common chord in the cacophony, it's the clarion call for change, the bailiwick of leadership.

My tri-fold role as editor is to 1) prospect articles from among the top thought leaders in my field of awareness, 2) select from among the best visions and voices, and then 3) edit to fit some space assigned.

I often liken the editing task to packing luggage for a trip. The small suitcase that is the 20-page LE template only holds so much content. Some months, I opt to run fewer articles and edit less. Other months, like this one, I feel compelled to run more articles and edit ever more tightly.

When once I was honored as *national editor of the year*, I remarked that *good editors edit for authors* (often at the expense of readers), *great editors edit for readers* (often at the expense of authors).

I confess that every month I cause our contributing authors considerable pain, as I pare articles to fit space. I apologize, yet acknowledge that in most cases, the readers benefit. *Less* is usually *more*.

The "more" of this month's collection of articles is this: real, genuine, authentic leaders cultivate, and then express and execute, their *signature vision and voice*—which then becomes indelibly imprinted, like an inked fingerprint, on the minds and hearts (souls) of all *stake-holders* (those who have some *stake* in the success of the enterprise). Great leaders translate this amorphous *stake* into either a literal or figurative sense of brick-and-mortar *ownership*. Truly, no one ever washes a rental car, and no non-stakeholder ever washes a *rental company*.

I take our moniker, *Leadership Excellence*, seriously (not an oxymoron), since it carries the signature of *Warren Bennis*, who surely is no moron. And, although I am a card-carrying Mormon, I keep *Leadership Excellence* an *open forum*, despite the constant pressure to play past favorites and paying sponsors.

Waste Not, Want Not

Sadly, the legacy of many leaders is

waste: the waste of time, talent, resources, potential, and opportunity. However, only in rare cases of total malfeasance and malpractice, can this waste legacy be pinned solely on the chests of a few leaders at the top. Indeed, if we are to pin this long tail on the "donkey," we usually have many "asses" to choose from, at all levels of the organization.

I'm pained to read the *press release* by Owen J. Sullivan, CEO of *Right Management*, that most workers (86 percent) intend to seek new employment—a *sign*, says Sullivan, of considerable job dissatisfaction. Why this level of "unprecedented" discontent? "The constant drumbeat of downsizing coupled with the expectation to *do more with less* has added stress. Ongoing economic uncertainty and volatility around job growth and job security have warranted the exploration of new positions. Management must be proactive to retain top performers."



Owen J. Sullivan

Half Right. Monika Morrow, SVP of Career Management at *Right Management*, notes that most people expect to get their next job by *person-to-person networking* and that "this tracks well with actual outcomes. Face-to-face contact is how more than *half* of our candidates find new employment."

Interestingly, *half* of new employees experience *buyer's remorse* after taking a job offer; many employers also question whether they have made wise hiring decisions; *one in eight* new employees were failures in the last 12 months, according to Scott Erker, SVP for DDI. "Both unemployment and the number of open positions hover at uncomfortably high levels—while organizations and candidates are shaky about the decisions they made in staffing and accepting roles."

Why all these hiring mistakes? Many are blamed on over-reliance on hiring manager evaluations and on candidates overselling their skills. "An unpleasant surprise after a candidate becomes an employee is that *the new hire isn't cut out for the job*," says Erker. "Information about candidates goes undiscovered. Hiring managers need to get to the truth about a person's fit for the job. To avoid *quick quits*, be real in describing what it will be like on day 5, 50 and 150 for that candidate. Painting a rosy picture or pulling a bait-and-switch once they're on the job means you'll be filling that position again in 6 to 12 months." LE

Ken Shelton
Editor since 1984

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Innovation Pros

Where do game-changing ideas come from?



by Gary Hamel

WITH PRACTICE, A middle-aged boomer with little athletic ability can become a respectable golfer. And once or twice a round, that diligent amateur will hit a shot that is the equal of anything you'll likely see on the PGA Tour. Gray-haired dogs really can learn tricky new tricks.

That's why I'm optimistic that your company can dramatically improve its *innovation performance*. With the right tools and training, you can turn *ordinary employees* into *extraordinary innovators*.

Progressive CEOs know that innovation is a company's lifeblood, but few put every employee through an intensive training program aimed at boosting their innovation skills. Sure, companies have electronic suggestion boxes, slush funds for new ideas, pipeline management tools, and innovation awards—but without well-trained and highly skilled innovators, much of the investment in these innovation enablers will be wasted.

Why do so few companies invest in the innovation skills of their frontline people? Many senior managers subscribe to a sort of *innovation apartheid*. They believe that a few fortunate souls are genetically equipped to be creative, while everyone else is a lunkhead, only able to come up with a few suggestions for incremental improvement.

I see how leaders come to such a conclusion. Daily they're bombarded with new ideas—most of them either woefully underdeveloped or downright batty. Soon, they believe that *all those dopey ideas must be coming from dopes*.

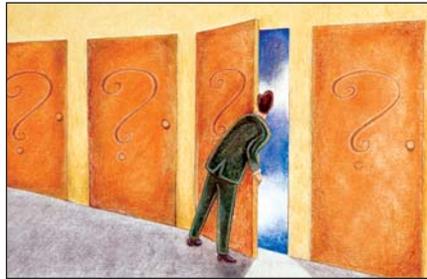
When a company sets up its first *idea market*, executives soon discover that most ideas are either incremental no-brainers or flaky no-hopers. When I try to convince them to invest in systematic innovation training, I hear: "We have *too many ideas* already. We can't begin to fund them all." "But," I ask, "how many of those ideas are radical and practical, feasible potential game-changers?" They reply, "We don't have many of those." *That's the problem*. Although innovation is a *numbers game*, where *quantity matters*, so, too, does

quality. To improve the quality of your *innovation pipeline*, you must improve the quality of your *innovation thinking*.

Perceptual Habits of Innovators

You can't teach people to be innovators unless you know where game-changing ideas come from. You need a *theory of innovation*. Why do some people see opportunities that others miss? *Successful innovators throw new opportunities into sharp relief*. Their perceptual habits enable them to pierce the fog of *what is* and catch a glimpse of *what could be* by paying attention to four things that usually go unexamined.

1. Unchallenged orthodoxies. To be an innovator, you have to challenge beliefs that everyone takes for granted—long-held assumptions that blind incumbents to new ways of doing business. Mental models tend to converge



over time. As executives read the same magazines, go to the same conferences and talk to the same consultants, the intellectual gene pool becomes a stagnant pond. *Success accelerates this process*. Effective strategies get translated into *operating policies*, which spawn *best practices*, which harden into *habits*. Fossilized strategies create opportunities for less orthodox competitors to upend industry rules. Innovators are natural contrarians, and with a little practice, anyone can learn how to uncover and challenge long-static beliefs. Ask these questions: *In what respects is our business model indistinguishable from that of our competitor? To what extent is our valued proposition, service bundle, pricing, customer support, distribution, or supply chain undifferentiated? What aspects of our business model have remained unchanged for five years? When you identify a convergent belief, ask, Does this rest on some inviolable law of physics, or is it an artifact of our devotion to precedent?* By systematically surfacing these invisible dogmas,

you can turn *reactionaries* into *rebels*.

2. Underappreciated trends. Innovators track *emerging trends*, to nascent discontinuities that can reinvigorate old businesses or create new ones. They don't speculate about what *might change*; they're not big on scenario planning. They attend to little things that are *already changing*, but go unnoticed or discounted by industry stalwarts. They search for *emerging discontinuities*—in technology, regulation, lifestyle, values, and geopolitics—and harness them to overturn old structures. This requires not so much a *crystal ball* as a *wide-angle lens*, learning in places competitors are not even looking and building a strategy that leverages a powerful trend that your competitors barely perceive.

You help people uncover the harbinger of change by getting them out on the fringe where they can have a first-person encounter with the future. To zero in on potentially important discontinuities, *ask five questions*: 1) as you think about culture, politics and technology, what things have you read, seen, or experienced recently that have been surprising, perplexing or disconcerting? 2) which of these anomalies seem to have some momentum behind them? Do you see these trends expanding in scope or accelerating? Are they blooming if not yet booming? 3) how might these discontinuities play out? What chain reactions might be set in motion? 4) which of these discontinuities aren't yet topics of conversation in your industry? Which ones were missing from the agenda of the last confab you attended? and 5) how might we exploit these discontinuities in ways that would wrong-foot our competitors? By addressing these questions, you can spot the next wave and ride it.

3. Underleveraged competencies and assets. Every company is a bundle of skills and assets. Typically these things are embedded in legacy business models, but if repurposed, they can often serve as platforms for innovation and growth. Innovation is stymied when a company defines itself by *what it does* rather than by *what it knows or owns*—when its self-conception is built around *products and technologies* rather than *core competencies and strategic assets*. To innovate, see your organization as a *portfolio of skills and assets* that can be endlessly recombined into new products and businesses. To uncover *hidden wealth*, ask these questions: What are the skills and assets we have that are *relatively unique* and (b) *create customer value*? Where else might these skills and assets add value or be used as game-

changers? As you see your company and others from this perspective, opportunities for innovation multiply.

4. Unarticulated needs. Serial innovators spot the inconveniences, encumbrances, and vexations that customers take for granted, and that industry veterans mostly ignore—and then amaze customers with *something they never imagined*, but having once experienced it, *can't imagine living without*.

To amaze customers with the unexpected, you must first uncover their unspoken needs. Customers are prisoners of the familiar. So asking them what they want seldom yields new insights. Instead, you have to *observe them*, up close and over time, and then *reflect on what you've learned*: Where are we wasting our customer's time? Where are we making things overly complex? Where are we treating customers like numbers instead of people? Where are we forcing them to solve problems we should solve for them? Excavating *unarticulated needs* requires two skills: 1) the ability to read emotional states of customers as they interact with your company and its services or products (witness those *emotions and real-time reactions* firsthand); and 2) the ability to generate ideas for *reengineering the customer experience* in ways that astonish and enthrall. Train people to apply analogies from other industries. Ask, *what does Disneyland, Singapore Airlines, Fandango, or Lexus do to engender great customer experiences, and how might we apply those practices?*

Ask colleagues or customers to identify a product or service that *dramatically reshaped their expectations*—something that made them go “Wow! Amazing!” Identify an experience that provoked good feelings. Next, ask, *What unique attributes of that experience made it so memorable? How did it defy your expectations?* Having extracted the distinctive elements of each experience, you can ask, *How might we leverage this idea to re-define customer expectations in our industry?*

Innovation trailblazers' perceptual routines help them see beyond the ordinary—by turning *industry dogma* on its head, amplifying weak signals, exploiting competencies and assets, and tuning into customer emotions. To build your capacity for game-changing innovation, view the world with fresh eyes.

Until *you step up* to this challenge, your company will be filled with *innovation duffers* whose ideas rarely find the fairway. LE

Gary Hamel is Leadership Excellence #1 ranked thought leader and author of *What Matters Now* (Jossey-Bass). Visit www.garyhamel.com.

ACTION: Amaze and delight your customers.

Change the Culture

This is how we do things here, now.



by Susanne Biro

MY PARENTS WERE European, Austrian and Hungarian. Growing up, if someone came to our house, everyone had to come out from wherever they were, say hello, and immediately offer that person a drink (preferably alcoholic). If the person stayed for more than 30 minutes, we had to offer them food and even (or especially) if they declined, feed them. Providing drink and food was seen as a sign of abundance and wealth. We had it to give away, and my parents took great delight in sharing what we had. If a guest refused our offerings, we (especially my mother), took offense. “What’s wrong with my cooking?” she would demand. “Mom, maybe they just aren’t hungry,” I tried to reason in front of our uncomfortable guest. She couldn’t conceive of it. Now when I enter a home and I’m not offered a drink, I find it strange, even rude.

Culture colors how we interpret everything, and we’re mostly blind to it.

Culture is the mostly unspoken, *this is how we do things here*, and it encompasses the, “This is who we are as a people. These are the values we hold dear. This is how we treat each other, talk to each other, regard each other. This is how we show respect and disrespect, and this is how we come together to get stuff done.” Every people has a culture. And we know immediately when we are not in a familiar one.

Five Guiding Principles

Once a culture is established, how can we change it? This is no simple task. However, here are five guiding principles that can help you:

1. Communicate, and then communicate again. If real estate is location, location, location, then attempting to lead culture change is communicate, communicate, communicate.

2. Clarify the story for yourself: the company is moving from what to what exactly? You should craft this story using nothing more than three power point slides: a slide that tells the story

of the past, a slide that encompasses the realities of today, and a slide that paints a vision for a better tomorrow. It is irrelevant whether or not you actually use the slides to communicate with your audience. The purpose of this exercise is to ensure you are crystal clear on the key elements of the story and can tell it in an interesting, visual way.

3. Consider your new title as Chief Marketing Officer. Think: logo, tagline, and headline. For example, when Lou Gerstner Jr. took over IBM, he used this simple phrase to communicate the complex change the business would need to undergo to survive: “We used to be a computer parts company. We are now a service company that, by the way, just happens to have some computer parts.”

4. In your communication, clarify that this is a break from the past and what the future will look and feel like. Consider incorporating a ritual to get

people to understand that the past is no more. Kenny Moore of KeySpan Corp. held a funeral to say goodbye to the company as it once was.

5. Live the new cultural values and norms impeccably. You must live them, and be an ambassador for them.

Catch any words or actions that are not aligned with the

new culture and appropriately redirect behavior because everyone is watching to see if this change is real. As the saying goes, *All that is necessary for evil to exist in the world is for good people to stand by and do nothing.* If you do nothing when people continue behaving in the ways of the past, you say to everyone that *the change is not real.* Consider how *The Broken Window Theory* can be useful: If a window is broken, and left unrepaired, people walking by will conclude that no one cares and no one is in charge, sending a clear signal to all that *anything goes.*

We often complicate things more than is necessary, or helpful. Indeed, *there is brilliance in simplicity.* Great marketers know this—it’s why companies spend millions of dollars to whittle the complexity of their ideas, products and services down to a simple sentence or logo. Changing your culture is a complex task—and this is why you must speak about it simply. LE

Susanne Biro is a senior leadership coach with Bluepoint Leadership Development and co-author of *Unleashed! Expecting Greatness and Other Secrets of Coaching and the Leader As Coach* workshop. Email susannebiro@bluepointleadership.com.

ACTION: Follow the five guiding principles.

Engaging Culture

How can leaders create one?



by Marilyn Jacobson

DRAMATIC CHANGE connected to *globalization* and *hyper-connectivity* is altering how organizations are led. Leaders must adapt their style to position for the future.

Profound questions persist:

- **What is the leader's role?** Leaders must partner, collaborate, involve, and dialogue (not rely on one perspective).
- **What can leaders do to achieve the innovation required?** With product, process or service, *new thinking* is needed.
- **Where will the talent, skill, and experience come from?** It is likely already there, but *not acknowledged or developed*.
- **How can leaders be at the forefront of innovation and still make the numbers?** It's now obvious *they must do both*.
- **Is it possible to move from a past-oriented mindset (best practices), when agility is now a prime asset for success?** Meeting the future will make what was done yesterday ancient history.
- **Will leaders give up the influence and power they have gained?** One leader has said, "I never had so much power until I started giving it away." That should be the prevailing attitude.

How do leaders deal with these questions? Change can be *transformational* or *progressive*, but it must be *deliberative* and *collaborative*. The shift is from what I must do to what we must do now to succeed. Leader attributes that are strong in involvement and engagement, not command and control, and structures that enable continuous cross-functional exchange are most likely to succeed. While innovation is critical and linked to technology and design, people ultimately make the difference, since they are the only sustainable competitive advantage.

The *need for change* is indisputable, yet leaders must ask *six questions* that interfere with their resolve: *What is my role? What can my organization do to achieve the level of continuous innovation required? Where will talent, skill, and experience come from? How can we be at the forefront of innovation? How can we move from a past oriented mindset to become more agile? Am I prepared to give up the influence and power I've gained?*

The Leader's Role

The leader's role is three-fold:

1. Strategy. How can you approach strategy development alone, or with your Leadership Team, or with a few senior executives? The strategy *retreat* often leads to more of the same—*moving backwards*, not forward. Such *strategy* is often based on setting ever-higher revenue goals. It's foolish to emphasize *numbers* without attention to *opportunities*. To assess *possibilities*, the right people need to be included. Often missing at the strategy table is logistics/supply chain, delivery channels, technology, sales and service—the *essence* of the enterprise. Considering a range of perspectives improves decision-making. Leaders need to seek several viewpoints to *seize opportunities*. However, with participation comes the need to



gain alignment and engagement.

Currently, strategy deliberation begins with a parade of presentations. Research and delivery of these presentations absorb unconscionable time, and inevitably focus on past events, not future challenges. *Informed dialogue* is a better way to surface and weigh fresh alternatives, seeking input from trustworthy sources, including experienced employees who know the business and are energized partners in seeking and evaluating trends. With reliable knowledge and experience, leaders can better map and execute a functional strategic plan. Today, determining strategy is a cooperative effort.

2. Collaboration. Making the case for partnering and collaboration is happening in a surprising place—architecture. Danish architect Bjarke Ingels and his firm must operate in a high-tech, high-drama, new-design world. He asserts, "If you're a sculptor, you can work with a hammer and chisel on a block of marble until it looks like a woman you

are trying to portray. If you are an architect, you cannot do anything with your own hands." Now a whole team must understand clients, politicians, and city officials. "Your capacity to communicate ideas is your hammer and chisel." *Spectacular results* can occur when team effort is involved. The days of a single *genius at the top* may be over.

3. Innovation. An inclusive organization that is determined to be a winner requires people who can be bold, risk-taking and ready to challenge themselves and others. Cultures that look for doers who can contribute at a high level encourage discovery and dialogue, choosing to capitalize on change rather than fear it.

Create a workplace that facilitates encounters and idea exchanges with others. Finding, supporting, and leveraging synergies within the organization spurs new avenues for thought, research, and experimentation.

Risk is a constant threat to innovation. It's difficult for *short-term thinkers* to foster a plan that takes time and capital to execute. Some executives would rather sabotage than support proposed change, fearing, loss of income, power and status. Managing expectations helps; however, *the path to the future* is not only a *new product line* but a *new culture* that can be expressed in values that drive creativity and technology.

4. Skills and experience. Since organizations already have employees who desire to contribute at a higher level and possess requisite talents, skills, and capabilities that have been dormant or ignored, *the search for essential resources starts internally*. Building trust and confidence makes people feel respected and appreciated. *Culture that is conducive to exchange of ideas draws A players who want to work with other A players*. Hiring and development practices lend authenticity to stated intent and values.

The transition toward flatter, agile organizations requires eight leadership attributes: 1) breaks down barriers—eliminates silos; 2) involves/engages employees; is collaborative—focuses on *we not I*; 3) studies the environment—sees patterns and opportunities; 4) creates a *learning culture* where people are always in *discovery mode*; 5) builds a diverse organization—skills, talents and mindsets; 6) asks often, tells little, listens much; 7) seeks *continuous dialogue*; and 8) provides a work setting that enables interaction and innovation. **LE**

Marilyn Jacobson, Ph.D., is a consultant, executive coach, and author of *Turning the Pyramid Upside Down: A New Leadership Model*. <http://marilynjacobson.com>.

ACTION: Create an engaging culture.

Ace Adaptability

Lessons from a hermit crab.



by Brian Klapper

I RECENTLY DINED WITH the CEO of a financial services company who candidly expressed his reluctance to take his company on what he knew to be a necessary *transformational journey*. His fear was one many executives face: the transition would leave the company exposed, vulnerable, and in a state of flux for many months.

The CEO said: "I feel like a *hermit crab*, causing me to wonder whether we can afford to go down this path."

Hermit crabs use *vacancy* chains to find new shells: when a new, bigger shell becomes available, hermit crabs gather around it and form a queue from largest crab to smallest. When the largest crab moves into the new shell, the second biggest crab moves into the newly vacated shell, thereby making its previous shell available to the third crab, and so on. He said, "When we begin our transformation, we'll be left without a protective shell, and if the new shell is ill-fitting or if I can't rally enough support to move, we would be stuck without a shell."

His concern is justified, as 70 percent of change efforts fail, largely due to an inability to generate the company-wide buy-in necessary for lasting transformational change. Yes, leaders who attempt to adapt risk failure; however, those who refuse to adapt ensure failure. He eloquently summed up the concerns of many transformational leaders: What happens if I lead but nobody follows. Although I recognize the need for change, how do I engender the necessary broad-based support. My leadership team isn't aligned around the scope and scale of the required change. We struggle to execute even the smallest of projects. How can we make large-scale changes? The employees always nod their heads; yet, when push comes to shove, they resist everything.

Adapt or Else

In 1917, *Forbes* published its first list of 100 most valuable companies. A century later, only 15 of them still exist (with several struggling). One

company, US Steel, which in 1917 had three times the holdings of the second closest on the list, today has an adjusted value of just *one-fifth* that of 1917. True, it has entered its second century of doing business, whereas 85 of the 100 were acquired, or went bankrupt. Still, US Steel's employs less than *one-fifth* the people it did in 1917.

Sony. Enjoy your jog this morning listening to your Sony Walkman? Of course not. In the 1980s, the Walkman was as hot as the iPod has been for the past decade. Sony also dominated the market for TVs, video recorders, and other consumer electronics. Then came more *adaptable competitors* like Apple, LG, Samsung, and others that *responded to consumer wishes and evolving technologies*. The result? Sony still succeeds in some spheres, but lost big in others.

Research in Motion. Adored by hoards of business people, Blackberry was once the top smartphone, but lately Blackberry is declining. Arrogance, poor management, quality issues, outages (just as the iPhone 4S went on sale), and lack of innovation have led



to plummeting stock prices and dwindling sales. The potential to dominate the consumer electronics market was handed off to Apple, Google, Samsung, and other more adroit companies.

As leaders embrace this truth, they must have a clear plan to *remove the obstacles* preventing change from taking root. This *checklist* is an action plan for reducing resistance:

- Ensure that top leaders have passion for the change and also the ability to carry it out. Make sure they are active, passionate and visible.
- Articulate a vision and develop a plan that is easily understood and consistent with company goals. Leaders must be fully immersed in the details of the plan and not delegate this step.
- Build a *cadre of closely-aligned sponsors* who are focused on the change, committed to it, and can deliver the message and carry-out the change.
- Make sure the change leaders really know what they are doing. They must

possess the necessary skills and expertise in change management activities.

- Define the *project objectives*—ideally 30-day start and end dates; and time dedicated to the effort. Don't under-staff these large-scale change efforts.

- Ensure *alignment* through one-on-one meetings, group discussions, data review, and *fact-based analysis* of issues.

- Set appropriate expectations for all stakeholders of what will happen, how all employees will fit in, and what can be achieved as a result of the change.

- Create a genuine desire for change among employees by rousing organizational energy, including collective motivation, enthusiasm, and intense commitment. Everyone must answer the question: "what's in it for me?"

- Cultivates *intrinsic* (not *financial*) motivation. Ensure the vision is owned by everyone, not just the management team, that the change is meaningful to everyone, and provide employees with an outlet to contribute to the story.

Focus on the *key influencers*. Give ownership of the change to the organization. Provide choice, delegate authority, provide timely feedback, and create a *culture of collaboration*.

- Address behavioral and emotional components of change. Don't focus solely on the tactical and operational aspects and neglect the human component. Ease employee fears about loss of jobs, loss of control, and the ability to perform in the new environment.

- Get in the trenches to help and role-model the *desired mindset and behaviors*.

- Build a culture of innovative thinking that promotes the freedom to experiment and ignore red tape.

- Trigger a sense of optimism around the change initiative. Most participants find that change can be thrilling.

- Expect and plan for *resistance* by identifying where it might come from and how it might manifest itself.

- Provide consistent, timely communication to address the *reasons for change*.

Embarking on *enterprise-wide transformation* is challenging. However, the complexity can be reduced to *four essential elements*: a compelling story, powerful leadership, effective communication, and a timely pace. You improve your odds of success by getting these four elements right. Hermit crabs are some of the oldest life forms; they survive because they are hardy and adaptable to any situation. Use the adaptability of the hermit crab to inspire your team. LE

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ACTION: Remove the obstacles that prevent change.

Leading in High Heels

Get to the top without falling down.



by Debora McLaughlin

CLIMBING THE WOMEN'S Leadership summit isn't easy. You face varied terrain, the air is thinner, the climb tiring, and even if you make it to the top, you can find it lonely up there—you in your high heels while everyone else is wearing wingtip oxfords. The temptation is strong to *change to fit in* or to *give up* the struggle. But as Ursula Burns, CEO of Xerox, has said, "You can probably be somebody else and follow all your life, but you can't be somebody else and lead."

As a woman leader, you need to be seen for who you are, to be heard and to get noticed. You begin to lead with influence and impact when you *discover your passion*, then share and defend it.

What keeps women from seeking high summits? Women often get the message that they need to change to fit in. While speech coaches, image consultants, and branding experts provide beneficial services, it is rare to see male counterparts sent off to executive presence school. The idea of refining their public speaking or dressing to impress rarely seems to enter their minds. Is the message of *not good enough* keeping women from the climb?

Only 21 women are running Fortune 500 companies (up from seven 10 years ago), and women account for just 2 percent of top executive positions and 6 percent of VP executive positions.

Women-owned businesses are less likely to hit the \$1 million mark and more likely to fail. Women also encounter a *green ceiling*. Despite identical personal qualifications and firm financials, female founders/CEOs are perceived as *less capable*, and IPOs led by females are *less attractive to investors*.

Clearly more work needs to be done to change perceptions and to re-ignite the *renegade leader* in women themselves.

How to Start the Climb

Successful women take *three critical steps* to grow their careers. The case studies illustrate how these three steps can reshape a career's trajectory.

1. Know who you are—show up as yourself each and every day. Case Study

1: Due to her firm's growth, Laura's company is considering adding a peer Director to share her position. Laura is ready to take her team through the transition with ease. She has looked forward to proving herself and being promoted to VP. But now she sits in the conference room as other people discuss the changes in her career. She says nothing, but feels deep pain and anger. In that meeting, Laura chose to hide and let others make life-changing decisions for her. Coaching helped Laura see *who she was* and *why she could succeed on her own terms*. Armed with new conviction, Laura requested a follow-up meeting. She got the executive team to agree on their goals for growth and management; she outlined her team's needs to ensure a smooth transition; she met the executive team at their core



values, and then stated her ability to meet these goals with confidence: "I'm the leader for that role and let me tell you why." You will be more powerful and centered in your life if you know who you are. Find your deepest values. Stand up for your convictions and let your values drive your behaviors. Trust yourself; your inner GPS will guide you to *where you're supposed to be*.

2. Be heard—share your vision and inspire others. Case Study 2: Anne enjoys her role as VP but her recent DiSC assessment reports her as a *D, driver*. HR comments that at times, Anne's ambition is hard on her people, and a coach is hired to "calm her down, get her to be more collaborative." Anne is confused; she thought she was supposed to be a confident leader, a pillar others could rely on, and she's always done a great job. The gap between how Anne viewed herself and how she was seen by others was simply a lack of communication. Anne was trained to be a strong leader, to take command. In

coaching she learned to activate her authentic self to engage her team to the highest levels of performance. Anne began by sharing her vision with her team, telling them the story of her climb in the company and how, after achieving VP, she wanted to promote positive change and needed their help to do so. She asked her team to work with her *in collaboration*, to add their ideas to the vision, and to discuss what the team stood for and how that would show up in daily behavior. Her team responded positively, and *together* they claimed a team name, a set of guiding principles for behaviors, and shared goals and objectives. She now was the leader of a winning team.

3. Get noticed—own the stage and claim the spotlight. Case Study 3: Kelly loves her job as Executive Director for her non-profit but is thinking of leaving. The adversarial board of directors shakes her confidence. The board questions her decisions. Kelly feels that the board has taken over her job. In truth, somewhere along the way, she gave it to them. Beaten down by conflict, she seemed to shrink away until she was hardly noticed. When Kelly built her *conflict management muscle* in coaching, the directors marveled at her ability to calm the table, set direction and stay on course. Meetings are shorter, goals attained, and when voices rise, the board looks to Kelly for leadership.

Women tend to hold back and wait for permission to speak. You don't need permission to share your opinion, to express a concern, or to respond to an argument. Women tend to be collaborators, compromisers. This works well in building strong teams, aligning others to the objectives and accelerating performance. It doesn't work as well at the board room table when you have a difference of opinion to share. Strengthen your conflict management muscle; it will help you move onward and upward with greater ease.

Running in high heels isn't easy. Exercising leadership can be like wearing shoes that look great but feel uncomfortable? You have to wear the shoes until they fit your feet. Climbing to the top means challenging yourself to stand taller and claim your space; to command the attention of others; and to be unique by being authentic. While it's easier to *blend in* with the plain black pumps and wingtips, it's better to *stand out* with the Jimmy Choo's! LE

Debora J. McLaughlin, executive coach, speaker and author of *The Renegade Leader*, helps women executives (and a few smart men) break out of the status quo. www.therenegadeleader.com.

ACTION: Ignite your passion and spirit.

Empty Chair Leaders

They let us down, don't step up.



by Vince Molinaro

DURING THE 2012 US presidential race, the Republican Party tried to paint a picture of Barack Obama as an ineffective leader by using the metaphor of an *empty chair*. The *New Yorker* then ran a cover showing Republican candidate Mitt Romney at a Presidential debate standing next to an *empty chair*. The cover struck a nerve with readers. Emails flowed in, expressing both support and outrage. In the end, Obama won his second term anyway.

We all react viscerally to *empty chair leadership*—to leaders who fail to fill their roles effectively—they hold a title, but don't lead. We are filled with disappointment, even despair, and perhaps disillusionment. We all hope to be great leaders, to be led by great leaders, and to be part of great organizations. But often leaders let us down by failing to live up to their duties. Stories of great leaders and great companies serve as beacons of hope, but these stories tend to be the exceptions. More common are stories of *empty chair leaders*—those who are inept or motivated by personal gain. Such stories are fodder for humor, as things get so bad that all we can do is laugh. That's what the movie, *Horrible Bosses* was about—three friends each having a bad boss and devising plots to murder them. Is it really that bad?

The real tragedy is that we settle—we stop expecting more of followers and leaders. When we experience inept or unscrupulous *empty chair leaders*, despair can set in. We stop hoping or expecting *great leadership* of ourselves and others in our organizations.

This all suggests that leadership is broken—at a time when we need leadership the most. Given all our challenges, we can't continue to settle for mediocre leadership.

Three Things Are Wrong

Before we can move forward, we need to understand what's wrong with leadership today.

1. Leadership is disconnected. Yes, it can be lonely at the top, but it can also be

lonely in all management and leadership roles and ranks. Such roles impose a sense of separation. As a leader, you need to do difficult things at times; and while necessary, these actions tend to distance you from others. Many leaders are isolated from employees, peers, and colleagues. They're trying to do their best, but not feeling supported, not feeling a sense of community with their constituents. In fact, in large enterprises, leaders often don't know one another. They rarely have time to *connect* and *build relationships*. Leadership need not be so isolating. We don't get the best from our leaders that way.

2. Leadership is disappointing. Have you ever worked for leaders who disappointed you because they don't live up to expectations, they are just bad bosses, or they are bullies who mistreat people? This is the price we pay when we have *empty chair leaders*. People come to work each day wondering: how much of myself do I give my boss and how much do I withhold? It's time we stop tolerating *empty chair leaders* who cause employee disengagement.

3. Leadership is disgraceful. So many leaders have lost their way that we become accustomed to corruption. At times, these corrupt leaders drive public outrage because we know that the leaders have crossed a line. The outcry over leadership scandals only rises when we see these leaders walk away free and clear—with big severance packages. If public outcries fail to drive change, despair and apathy sets in. *Corrupt, empty chair leaders become a national disgrace*—as we continue to suffer the consequences.

So what's the fallout? Employee and consumer trust and confidence in leadership, boards, and organizations are in decline. We're losing faith in our leaders and institutions. As a result of our experiences with *bad leaders*, we've lowered our expectations of ourselves as leaders and of those we follow. While the scandals get the headlines, we see complacent *empty chair leaders* who lack vision, who don't inspire, who simply go through the motions. We sense that more leaders are unwilling or unable to lead effectively.

It's time we stop settling and start expecting more from ourselves as leaders, and start working together to redefine leadership for the future. **LE**

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ACTION: Expect more of yourself as a leader.



Developing Leaders

You're likely doing it wrong.



by Ryan Ross

YOUR PERFORMANCE IS only as good as your leadership. But the people who often make it to the top of large organizations tend to advance by pleasing their bosses with displays of loyalty and technical knowledge. Designated *high potentials* and *high performers* are often skilled at office politics rather than leadership—not exactly the type of person you want at the helm.

To address this problem, start by reexamining your notion of leadership.

Leadership is usually defined in terms of a person's *status* or as the ability to build and maintain a winning team. A good leader is simply *someone people are willing to follow*. People look for **four characteristics** in leaders:

- **Integrity.** People need to know that the person in charge won't take advantage of his or her position—won't lie, steal, play favorites, and betray subordinates. In a survey of more than 1,000 individuals, 81 percent said trustworthiness was the most important personality characteristic of their all time best boss. Conversely, 50 percent described their worst boss as deceitful.

- **Judgment.** The success or failure of organizations depends on decision-making. Most business failures are the result of bad decisions that are compounded by an unwillingness to evaluate the decisions and change direction.

- **Competence.** Good leaders are perceived as knowing what they are talking about, as being competent in the team's business. In hunter-gatherer tribes, leaders were distinguished by their moral qualities, their judgment, and their superior hunting ability.

- **Vision.** Good leaders explain to their team the significance of their mission and how it fits into the larger scheme of things. This vision clarifies roles, goals, and the way forward, thereby facilitating team performance.

How can you find someone with those qualities? Most companies rely on supervisor nomination, performance reviews, and other traditional methods to identify candidates as *high-potentials*. But, these measures are subjective, ignore the influence of politics, and tend to reward behavior that becomes

counterproductive at upper levels.

To identify candidates and incumbent employees with leadership potential, view traditional performance data within the context of personality.

Who you are (*personality*) determines how you lead. Targeted personality assessment provides the depth of unbiased information you need to identify and develop talented leaders, boost engagement, and drive results.

Personality should be defined in two ways: *identity* and *reputation*.

- *Identity* is *personality from the inside*—how you see yourself.
- *Reputation* is *personality from the outside*—how others see you. We assess *reputation* from two perspectives:
 - **Bright-side personality**, or *normal personality*, describes people when they are at their best and predicts *leadership performance* across all levels and sectors.
 - **Dark-side personality** describes people when they are stressed, bored, or simply ignoring their behavior that alienates subordinates and prevents managers from building a team.

What drives leader behavior are *core values*—the *motives, interests, and beliefs* that determine choices, what work people find fulfilling, how they operate on a team, and how they fit into an organization. Values also play a role in predicting leadership style—*reputation* describes *how* a person is likely to lead; *values* describe *why* they lead that way.

Finally, it is important to understand how leaders approach *problem solving*.

- *Cognitive ability* describes people's ability to solve problems and make business-related decisions using textual, graphic, and quantitative data.

This multi-dimensional approach to assessment paints a detailed portrait of participants' leadership capabilities.

We often see a gap between *who people think they are* (*identity*) and *how others perceive them* (*reputation*). Hence, they seem to *say one thing, and do another*. This gap corrodes relationships, and inhibits their ability to *inspire followers*.

Personality assessment, feedback, and targeted coaching can provide people with *strategic self-awareness* of their strengths and weaknesses, how they relate to those of their peers, and how they're likely to affect performance.

Defining *leadership as the ability to build and maintain high-performing teams* allows companies to *identify good leaders*, avoid destructive ones, focus development, boost engagement and performance. LE

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ACTION: Define what you mean by leadership.

Change Agents

Look for four telltale traits.



by Natalie Foley

THE TERM *CHANGE agent* is used without thinking what kind of a person merits the title. *Change agents* are essential for growth and innovation, come from many backgrounds, and wield various titles. They can be *introverts* or *extroverts*, and found in any system—community, healthcare company, startup or foundation. They know the organization and industry well, and have high emotional intelligence (EQ).

Whether you call them *change agents*, *intrapreneurs* or *First Movers*, you need to identify and support them. As VP of an innovation and growth strategy firm, I often work with *movers and shakers* and have learned a lot about them:

What makes a change agent? Change agents thrive in ambiguity, unfazed by the uncertainty of their work's outcome or even the obscure process needed to get there. Uncertainty doesn't have to excite change agents, but it doesn't deter them, either. When a team is creating something new, early divergent thinking is critical, but the latter part of creating change means staying focused; a change agent is able to navigate both sides. A close sibling to the change agent is the big ideas person, and often, the two are confused. The change agent is the person who most often *sincerely* listens to the big ideas person and uses her ideas to stretch the team's thinking, when others may blow her off or see her as inefficient or impractical.

What change agents are not. They aren't gamblers or inherent risk-takers. *Gambling* implies high stakes against a known entity. Rather, *change agents* place small bets within uncertainty. Small bets (of money and time) allow them to bring clarity to the unknown by testing their assumptions. It's not risky; it's scientific. The greatest finds come from what they learn about their hypothesis, not from a specific outcome.

Four Telltale Traits/Tactics

Change agents serve as catalysts for innovation. They guide the team's

efforts and help them to overcome obstacles. One roadblock includes what we call *problem solving before problem choosing*. Teams may focus on how to solve a problem before understanding the true need and jump to solutions too early. Also, change agents see that sheer tenacity isn't always enough to get the job done; tenacity must be supported by a culture open to change. They create cultures ripe for change, using four key tactics:

1. Problem-choosing precedes problem-solving. They are great at problem-choosing, problem-framing and problem-solving, and they do it in that order. When a team chases the wrong problem, people disengage from the cause, challenge or team. Team members want to work on a problem where there's a deep, unmet need being tackled, a focused approach and the ability to be involved in creating the solution.

2. Waiting for a solution. Change agents don't become wedded to a solution and don't jump to solutions too quickly. They patiently come to understand the problem and then focus on *what need* is being solved for *whom*, without a care for *how* (the solution).

3. Leading through collaboration. Changing a system isn't a *thought* exercise; it's a *doing* exercise. It takes manpower and input from all parts of the system. Collaboration, when done poorly, is painful; when done well, it's inspiring, innovative and empowering. It's becoming the new mode of operation—technology facilitates it, Millennials want it, and the outcomes are better.

4. Learning as the unit of progress. Change agents *focus on learning*, not on outcomes. Creating change means *heading into the unknown*. When a change agent looks ahead to the next annual earnings report, she knows what will be learned (e.g., *What are customers' unmet needs, and what is the right business model to deliver on those needs?*) but won't know what the solution will look like.

Over time, change agents inevitably become the leaders. If they can't make change in your organization, they'll find a new organization—or create one.

Change agents are an *unstoppable force* with an *acute awareness* of how to enable growth. Give them the tools they need to spur innovation. LE

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ACTION: Identify and support change agents.

Effective Leaders

Combine attributes and results.



by Dave Ulrich and Norm Smallwood

WHEN WE ASK PEOPLE, *WHAT MAKES an effective leader?*, their responses tend to cover the same personal attributes: setting a vision, having integrity, communicating well, being bold, making things happen, etc.

This approach is *half right*. Yes, leaders need to have *effective attributes*—but they also need to *get results*. In fact, leaders need to deliver *five results* for five key constituents 1) *Employee*: Leaders increase employee productivity by building competence, commitment, and contribution. 2) *Organization*: Leaders build sustainable capabilities that shape organizational identity; 3) *Customer*: Leaders ensure customer share by creating long-term relationships that delight target customers; 4) *Investor*: Leaders build intangible value (about 50 percent of a firm's market value) by creating investor confidence in future earnings; and 5) *Community*: Leaders boost organizational reputation by becoming active community citizens.

Attributes and results are interrelated. Neither alone is enough. We connect attributes and results with *so that* and *because of*. For example, when a leader receives 360-degree feedback, which is about *individual competencies*, we pose the *so that* query: I must improve this competency *so that* I deliver a particular result to my stakeholders. Alternatively, another leader delivers results and should ask the *because of* question: I delivered this result *because of* this competency I have (or lack). Leaders need to know why leadership matters and link attributes to results.

What Makes an Effective Leader?

What must leaders know and do to make that important difference? We focus on the importance of *brand* as a metaphor for defining effective leadership. This draws on two conceptual shifts in leadership thinking:

- From a focus on *leader as a person* to a focus on *leadership as an organizational capability*. The metaphor of brand is more about *leadership* than about the *characteristics* of individual leaders.

- From a focus on *what happens inside the leader or firm* to a focus on *meeting customer, investor, and other external expectations*. The metaphor of brand starts from the outside and focuses clearly on business results.

This typology leads to *four approaches to leadership*:

- *Competent Leaders*: Determine and develop the knowledge and skills of the individual leader.

- *Leadership Systems*: Align selection, development, compensation, and retention systems to reinforce desired leadership behavior.

- *Celebrity Leaders*: Recruit famous leaders who are known to customers and investors, and who help draw attention and resources to the firm.

- *Leadership Brand*: Develop leaders who are recognized by employees and customers and investors for their ability to deliver results in a manner consistent with firm brand identity.

By integrating the other three views Leadership brand offers a robust definition of *effective leadership*. It translates *customer expectations* into *internal behaviors* so that leaders ensure employees deliver *the desired customer experience* whenever they touch the customer.

Leadership brand consists of two elements: 1) *Code*—the basic characteristics that every leader must possess; and 2) *Differentiators*—the *unique characteristics and behavior patterns* that enable enterprises to connect with outsiders and distinguish themselves in the minds of their customers.

From our research and experience, we estimate that 60 to 70 percent of the characteristics of effective leaders are shared across the board. We then created a framework, the *Leadership Code*, mapping two dimensions (time and focus) and placing *personal proficiency* (self-management) at the center.

Five Essential Rules

The Code captures the *five essential rules of leadership*:

Rule 1: Shape the future. Strategists answer the question *Where are we going?* and ensure that those around them know the direction. They *envision*, then *create* a future.

Rule 2: Make things happen. Executors focus on the question *How will we make sure we get where we want to go?* They translate strategy into action. They have *disciplines* for getting things done and *expertise* to get right things done right.

Rule 3: Engage today's talent. Talent managers answer the question *Who goes with us on our journey?* They coach and communicate with employees around *competence* (skills), *commitment* (engagement), and *contribution* (meaning). They help people develop themselves for the good of the organization.

Rule 4: Build the next generation.

Human capital developers answer the question, *Who stays and sustains the organization as newcomers join it?* They ensure that the organization has the long-term competencies required for future strategic success. They build the talent needed as conditions change.

Rule 5: Invest in yourself. Effective leaders are *personally proficient*: they take care of themselves *intellectually* (by learning), *physically* (by managing

their bodies and space), *emotionally* (by renewing themselves), *socially* (by connecting to others), and *spiritually* (by attending to personal values). They govern themselves wisely so that others willingly trust and follow them.

Four Summary Observations

After working with these *five rules of leadership* over a decade, we conclude:

1. *All leaders must excel at personal proficiency* to engage followers.

2. *Effective leaders often have one towering strength* (signature strength). They tend to excel in at least one of the four roles and are predisposed to one of the five areas.

3. *All leaders must be at least average in all four outer leadership domains*. It is possible to train leaders to *be strategic, execute, manage talent, and develop future talent*. The behaviors and skills can be identified, developed, mastered.

4. *The higher leaders rise, the more they need to develop excellence across all five domains*.

These five domains synthesize what makes *effective leadership*—they represent *the code, the basics* of leadership. LE

Dave Ulrich and Norm Smallwood are partners in RBL Group and coauthors of Sustainability Leadership: Seven Disciplines to Achieve the Changes Great Leaders Know They Must Make. Visit www.RBLGroup.com.

ACTION: Follow the five rules of leadership.



LeaderShift

Are you ready for it?



by Oliver DeMille

ONCE IN A WHILE IN history, a *LeaderShift* occurs. It usually comes unexpectedly, and it transforms the world for at least a generation. A *LeaderShift* is a basic change in *who the top leaders are* in society. Since *leadership* is so vital to any society's success, such a change has *huge impact* on business, politics, family, industry and other facets of life. Past *LeaderShifts* include:

- The switch from kings and chiefs to community fathers such as doctors, lawyers and town merchants.
- The 1880-1920's transition from city fathers to titans of industry, like Carnegie, Morgan and Rockefeller.
- The 1940-1970's shift from business tycoons to managers, spurred by the work of Edward Deming and innovators like Jack Welch and Sam Walton.
- The 1980-1990's transition from managers to leaders, influenced by sages like Buckminster Fuller, Earl Nightingale and Jim Collins.



Today, we're in the early stages of another great transition: a shift not from management to leadership, but from *institutional leadership* to *societal leadership*. The most effective leaders in the years ahead will look beyond the success of their organization and innovate ways for their company to effectively address *the needs of society*.

In this shift, *business leaders* are becoming the key *social leaders*, and as governments continue to mismanage and overspend, the rise of *business leaders* as *social entrepreneurs* will accelerate. The top leaders in society will be executives who utilize the unique efficiencies and competencies of their company to look beyond profits and restore failing society. This isn't to say that profit will become less important; in fact, as governments struggle, private-sector success will be more critical—business leaders will seek both financial success and societal impact.

Just as the American model of free enterprise drove the Soviet system of

totalitarian controls into the dustbin of history, the market approach of business leaders is distinguishing itself as the respectable and effective alternative to the top-down leadership practices of government finance, dis-innovation and dysfunctional bureaucracy.

In short, *Washington isn't going to fix our problems*. As society continues to decline it is increasingly turning to business leaders for help. Those who innovate in this trend will become the future leaders, and business leaders who don't fill this role will see their careers and companies fall behind (like those who stay stuck in *management* and refuse to embrace *leadership* principles).

Forward-thinking executives and entrepreneurs can prepare for the challenges of this transition. Currently, the *5 Laws of Decline*, as articulated by Orrin Woodward, are quietly undermining businesses and governments. Leaders can recognize these *laws of decline*—and effectively deal with them.

A dual leadership system has dominated our society, with the competing management of the economy and politics by an uneasy and unofficial partnership between government leaders and business leaders. This system is the first great casualty of the current *LeaderShift*, which is why our political institutions seem increasingly divided and divisive.

Due to the *LeaderShift*, this dysfunction in our governments will only escalate. Society will look to *business leaders* to fix things far beyond the traditional boardroom. The *Bottom Line* will be replaced by the *Directional Line*, measuring which direction each community, state, province and nation is headed and how this drives market success (or decline). Leaders and boards that ignore the *Directional Line* do so at their institutional peril.

Perhaps the most powerful force of the *LeaderShift* is the rise of a consumer populace that expects its companies and their leaders to take the initiative and exert leadership in the face of societal challenges. As this trend swells, it will revolutionize the future of leadership.

These two roles—*business leader* and *social innovator*—are increasingly intertwined in ways that few companies (or leaders) are prepared to deal with. Are you ready for the *LeaderShift*? Is your family, career, and company? LE

Oliver DeMille is author with Orrin Woodward of *LeaderShift* (Hachette Book Group). Visit www.oliverdemille.com.

ACTION: Participate proactively in leadership.

Start LD Early

When is the right time?



by Jack Zenger

I SPOKE ONCE WITH THE executive responsible for leadership development (LD) in a software firm that excels at identifying their top talent and providing development experiences to them.

Using repeated 360-degree feedback measures, they can prove that people who participate in their LD programs get higher scores on every leadership competency they measure. The payoff has been palpable. Top management, already supportive of their efforts, now have hard evidence that confirms the wisdom of their investment.

When I asked him what he would do differently, he replied, "*We'd begin this earlier in people's careers.*" I wonder, Why don't we start LD earlier? Would this make a difference? Would the investment in the development of younger leaders have a higher payoff?

We examined data on 17,000 leaders to learn their age when they participated in their company's LD process. We discovered that the average age was 42. Less than 5 percent were under 27, only 10 percent under 30. On average, supervisors would wait *nine years* before participating in any LD program!

Think of the advantage to be gained by starting LD activity at an earlier age. Fewer than 10 percent of leaders will have any *personal development plan* without the encouragement of some formal process sponsored by their company. Ponder the impact of leaders having an additional *nine years* of working on becoming a better leader.

Starting LD earlier has five benefits:

1. **Easier to learn** new principles and to practice them correctly at a younger age. Even *10 year olds* can quickly learn the principle of *focusing on situations, challenges and behaviors rather than on the individual in order to preserve their self-esteem and self-confidence* (and inform their parents when they fail to use this principle). If we want better leaders, let's find those interested in becoming effective leaders and help them accelerate their progress so they can excel in leadership roles (rather than have a sink-or-swim experience).

2. **Avoid acquiring bad habits.** I ski with my children and grandchildren

who learned to ski *at early ages* (I learned at age 41). They learned the basics early and well (*no bad habits*). People who have *excellent instruction at a young age* tend to perform at a higher level.

3. Longer time to practice. Practice makes perfect—if done correctly. Practicing bad habit ingrains them deeper. Simply practicing does not automatically create excellent skills. *Deliberate, focused and productive practice* makes perfect. *Perfect practice makes perfect performance*. Experts are created by starting early, having a guide or coach, and practicing about 10,000 hours.

4. The organization benefits from improved skills. Young managers practice leadership from day one. They are in the role, often in a *sink-or-swim mode*, rather than *deliberate, focused practice*. From day one, habits form. Attitudes are created. Practices coalesce. Everyone wins if the LD process starts when they are selected for management!

5. The longer we wait, the less success we're likely to have. People ask me, *With all the money and effort being spent on LD programs, why don't we have better leaders?* Often we simply wait too long to develop their skills. It may be possible to *teach old dogs new tricks*, but it's more difficult over time.

Here's my specific proposal.

1. Emphasize promotions from within. These promotions tend to fare better than bringing people in from the outside. At times it's the right thing to do, but it's more risky and expensive. Programs that identify those with leadership potential and provide that development clearly pay off.

2. Focus more on Gen Y (born from 1977 to 1998). Today we devote 3/4 of our development effort to Gen X (born from 1955 to 1976) and 20 percent on Gen Y. We would be wise to invest more in developing Gen Yers. Why? They have the highest scores on *driving for results!* On *Collaboration and Teamwork*, they rank at the 60th percentile (*higher scores than older generations*). And, they received the highest scores on *Innovation and Self-development*.

Nay-sayers argue that LD investments in young managers are lost when they move on. However, the organization gains from *better performance* while this person is employed; the odds of talented people leaving diminishes if they feel they're progressing; and, our talent pool in society improves. In this case *the rewards far exceed the risks*. LE

Jack Zenger is a partner in Zenger/Folkman and co-author of *How to Be Exceptional: Drive Leadership Success by Maximizing Your Strengths*. Visit www.zfco.com.

ACTION: Develop leaders at a younger age.

Primary Motivation

Discover what drives others.



by Steve Arneson

AS AN EXECUTIVE COACH I'm often told by leaders that they can't figure out their boss or colleague. They experience the *end result* of the interaction, but can't explain what is driving the behavior—and struggle to relate to, work with, understand, influence or build a solid relationship. They're frustrated, and don't even know why.

They're missing the core insight that explains their coworker's attitude or behavior. I call this *primary motivation*.

We're all centrally driven by a dominant attribute that determines much of our behavior. Our *primary motivation* is that underlying value, belief or perception that most of our actions true back to; our behavior can be explained and interpreted by our strict adherence to this one motivator.

Discovering the primary motivation for the people around you can make the difference between thriving and losing your way.

The key question is not *what*, it's *why*. When my clients share stories of not connecting with coworkers, I ask: *Why do you believe they're acting this way?* The goal is to get them thinking about the underlying motivation. I want them digging deeper to the core of this behavior, position or attitude. *Why are they doing this? Why have they taken this stance? Why are they giving off this vibe?*

If you can identify your colleague's primary motivation, you can interpret, adapt and relate to them successfully.

Three Common Motivators

Common work motivators include *job security, advancement, recognition, achievement, compensation, and a sense of belonging*. In particular, people seem to experience three of these motivators.

1. Security. Individuals motivated by *job security* generally don't like to take risks, challenge the status quo, or push for change. They'll do anything to stay employed, including keeping a low profile so they don't rock the boat.

2. Recognition. Some people are motivated by *recognition*, the spotlight;

they want (and crave) attention. They need *constant recognition* for their efforts and most of their behavior is geared toward getting credit for *anything* they're involved in. If you believe this is the primary motivator for a peer, look for ways to ensure they get recognition for partnering with you. Be aware of what motivates them, and acknowledge them for their efforts.

3. Advancement. This motivator goes beyond *wanting a promotion, or climbing the corporate ladder*. Sometimes it's more subtle, as with people who are overly concerned about their positioning on the team, or focused on becoming the boss's favorite. This is a *dangerous motivator* because it can lead to dysfunctional behavior, and impact everyone on the team. If you suspect that a colleague is motivated primarily by becoming the boss's favorite (at your expense), exercise caution, and try to coach your coworker into becoming a better team player.

Positive Motivators

Of course, not all primary motivators have negative undertones. Most people have *honorable core motives*.

They're driven by a desire to help others, or to achieve great results. Others just enjoy being part of a winning team, or are simply motivated to do their best work, each and every day.

Regardless of whether their primary motivation is devious or noble, it helps to figure out *where your coworker's behavior is ultimately grounded*. Gaining this insight will help you manage your boss more effectively or coexist with a peer. The secret is to *look beyond the behavior and determine what is lying underneath*; figuring out their primary motivation can explain much of their behavior, and may unlock other tactics. You won't always diagnose the primary motivation perfectly, but you'll likely be fairly accurate.

Also, identify the primary motivation for your behavior. Honestly articulate *what's driving your behavior*. If you're comfortable with what it is, let it continue to guide you. If you don't like what you see, adjust your goals and means of achieving them to something more principled. You just might like the changes you see in your behavior. LE

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ACTION: Identify your primary motivators.

Balance of Power

Lions and lambs lie together.



by Linda Kohanov

OVER 100 YEARS AGO, a budding naturalist noticed that *mutual aid* was a major factor in determining fitness for survival. Pyotr Alekseevich Kropotkin, an early fan of Darwin's theories, led research expeditions in Siberia and Eurasia, planning to add his observations to the scientific literature on evolution. But soon, he was confused and sorely disappointed. "I failed to find that bitter struggle for the means of existence, among animals belonging to the same species, considered by most Darwinists as the dominant characteristic of the struggle for life, and the main factor of evolution."

He was even more disturbed by the fast-growing relationship between Darwinism and sociology, emphasizing that he "could agree with none of the works. They all endeavored to prove that man may mitigate the harshness of the struggle for life between men; but that the struggle for the means of existence, of every animal against all its congeners, and of every man against all other men, was a law of Nature." In his experience, this *potentially destructive view* "lacked confirmation from direct observation." He cited hibernation, food storage, and seasonal migration as instinctual efforts to avoid competition. He emphasized that adult herd animals were dangerous prey. But the sheer numbers of non-predatory species living peacefully with each other was even more of a revelation to the Russian prince.

An over-simplification of Darwin's survival of the fittest concept is still used to justify predatory business practices and political movements, causing me to update my perceptions—and language—regarding the relationship between predator and prey. I began to study the benefits of non-predatory power, an emotionally and socially intelligent form of leadership, realizing that my staff and clients no longer had to associate strength, bravery, and protection with carnivorous metaphors.

A dramatic YouTube video, *Battle at Kruger*, captures an altercation between lions and water buffalo. A bull, a cow,

and their calf walk toward a watering hole. Several massive cats leap out of hiding and race toward the calf, pulling her down with such momentum that she skids down a hill and plunges into the pond. There a crocodile tries to steal this convenient meal away.

Working together, several waterlogged lions drag the bovine back to shore. Yet just as they're about to take that fatal bite, her parents return—with reinforcements—an angry mob of about 50 buffalo. One nervy bull leaps forward and scoops a lion up with his horns, tossing her six feet in the air. The rest of the herd gains leverage as a result, scattering lions in all directions, surrounding the now standing calf.

This video documents sophisticated nonverbal coordination between herbivores, with concern for a single youngster motivating the kind of *altruistic courage* we would call *heroic* in humans. Clearly, adult herd animals are not the dim-witted, *cowardly weaklings* they've been made out to be by philosophers and scientists who over-identify with their own predatory tendencies.

Horse Sense

Natural herd behavior illustrates that *power doesn't have to be harsh, exploitive, oppressive, or short-sighted when we temper ambition with well-timed acts of mutual aid and competition avoidance*. People are omnivores with characteristics of both predator and prey. The Bible prediction that "the lion shall lie down beside the lamb in paradise" points to a balanced human psyche in which the predatory aspect harmonizes with a gentler wisdom.

In competitive businesses, we need to cultivate the skills associated with mature, fully empowered, nonpredatory animals. The horse is a prey animal willing to endure the horrors of war and uncertainty of the unknown.

Many innovative leaders exercised courage, charisma, poise, endurance, and conviction through lifelong associations with silent, nonpredatory tutors. Alexander the Great, the Buddha, Genghis Khan, Joan of Arc, George Washington, Katherine the Great, Geronimo, Winston Churchill, and Ronald Reagan were accomplished equestrians who had close relationships with spirited, arguably heroic horses. Their mounts required—and fostered—an almost supernatural level of leadership presence capable of motivating others to face outrageous odds and create inno-

vative, highly ambitious empires.

At the same time, training and caring for horses demanded an understanding of how to *tap* resources without taxing them. In the process, some leaders adopted, then adapted, non-predatory behavior to deal more effectively with human beings. George Washington's ability to stand up to a larger, better trained, exceedingly well-funded, intensely predatory British army rested on a *physically and emotionally heroic form of nonpredatory power*. "Let your heart feel for the affliction, and distress of everyone," he advised. In Washington's courageous presence during the war, people endured incredible hardships because they *knew* he cared.

The Lion and the Horse

Insulated from nature, modern civilization treats people more like machines than sentient beings while overemphasizing predatory power. Hence, creative,

empathetic innovators are sometimes reluctant to step into leadership roles. Yet our troubled organizations need them.

We need to curtail rabid conquest and growth in favor of a *co-creative, mutually beneficial balance with nature and neighboring tribes*. Setting strong boundaries with aggressive herd members, leading, and negotiating with, even fighting, predators—can be achieved with *non-predatory approaches to power*.

Awareness is a first step: When promoting or hiring new leaders, notice how often the various candidates use predatory modes of thinking and behaving. Select people who exhibit *power and expertise combined with non-predatory tendencies*. Here's how these power principles play out in nature:

- **Predatory Power** nourishes self at others' expense; values territory over relationship; fights to the death; culls the weak; hides vulnerability; rules through intimidation; escalates fear; has a *competition/conquest* orientation.
- **Non-Predatory Power** supports individual and group needs *simultaneously*; values relationship over territory; stops fighting when aggressor backs off; shields the weak; leads through experience and curiosity; calms and focuses others during crisis; conserves energy for emergencies; has a *cooperation/mutual aid* orientation. LE

Linda Kohanov is the author of *The Power of the Herd* (New World Library). Visit www.NewWorldLibrary.com.

ACTION: Balance predatory/nonpredatory power.

Turnaround

Why, how to take one on.



by Meg Whitman

AS I'VE TOLD EMPLOYEES at HP since accepting the role of CEO, there is no greater challenge in business than carrying out a turnaround. But there is also no opportunity as exciting as working to restore one of the most iconic companies in the world. It's why I took the job.

Turnarounds happen from the inside out. This starts with people—from the way we manage the business to how we communicate to how we serve our customers.

During my first full year as CEO, I've used every opportunity to lay out the *principles* to help drive the changes we need to make. These principles are neither new, nor surprising. They are, however, critical to creating the conditions in which a successful turnaround can occur.

It starts with execution. When I started, HP was suffering from the classic problem of having costs out of line with the company's revenue trajectory. No organization can turn itself around if it is failing in the basic blocking and tackling of business. We've brought stability back to the business through a range of actions, including improving operations, implementing an aggressive cash management program and putting in place clear strategies across the company. My message to our top leaders is simple: Results matter. Hit your numbers.

Run to the fire, don't hide from it. After years of constant changes in leadership and inconsistent strategies, one of my first priorities was to bring a sense of accountability back to the business and empower our employees. When it comes to fixing what's not working and focusing on what is, I don't want excuses. I want action. I don't hesitate to call our teams to inspect a situation I see. I'll always ask why we won, why we lost and what we could have done differently.

Transparency and credibility. When I say "no excuses," that goes for me and the entire organization.



Credibility among investors, customers and employees hinges on an ability to admit mistakes and to tell it like it is. A failure to provide an accurate picture of a situation also slows down your ability to capitalize on an opportunity or fix a problem. We took transparency to heart when we provided a frank assessment of the challenges facing HP and laid out our multi-year strategy at a Security Analyst Meeting in October, 2012. While we knew the event wasn't going to generate the prettiest headlines, we wanted our stakeholders to have a clear understanding of the journey we are on.

Communication, communication, communication. HP's founders built a reputation for being immersed in the business, constantly walking around offices and labs to engage with employees and ask questions. I encourage our leaders to lean on the side of over communicating. Don't assume your teams or customers know what's going on. Visit your people. Stop the emails and actually talk. Early on at HP, I made the decision to move our executives, including myself, out from offices and into cubicles. The message was simple: we have to communicate and collaborate as one HP if we are going to succeed.

Be a leader. This last point won't break new ground, but it's the most important: it is incumbent on every single leader at a company to actually lead. Employees read body language and care about leadership. That holds true for customers. Simply put, you don't stand a chance if you don't have the will to win.

Recently, we gathered the company's top 1,000 leaders for a leadership meeting in Anaheim. The *passion* and *enthusiasm* I saw there for the company was palpable. I left more energized and confident about our future than ever.

For any leader looking to drive change, my message is the same: There are no shortcuts. Success depends on consistency of leadership, focus, execution and most importantly, great products and services delivered in the way that customers want to buy them.

At HP, we're already seeing tangible proof that the steps we have taken are working, but we have much more to do on the multi-year journey ahead of us. I plan to provide ongoing updates on HP's progress on our turnaround. **LE**

Meg Whitman is CEO at Hewlett-Packard. Visit www.hp.com.

ACTION: Dare to take on a turnaround.

Leaders of Change

What breed of leader are you?



by Rose Fass

DIFFERENT TIMES CALL for different leaders: leaders in times of peace; leaders in times of trials, chaos, and war; leaders who maximize a time of economic progress; and leaders who lead their people through challenging recessions or a national crisis.

In business, some *visionary leaders* bring a new vision to companies and customers—they inspire others to follow their dream. Other *stabilizer leaders* follow the visionaries and run companies they leave behind, bringing *consistency* and *stability* after transformation.

Change agent leaders surface in times of transition to lead a transformation from *what was* to *what will be*. They know that something has to change, and they lead that change to transform their enterprise. They may not have a new vision, but they have a different path to achieving the vision. They can look a disaster in the eye and know that they can make a difference. They can take a country through war or a company through bittersweet change. They make decisions that upset the status quo—that may not be popular in the short term, but guard against mortgaging the future they need to create. They are brave souls and have the courage to *stand by their convictions*.

Change can be planned or thrust upon you—as a country, when an attack premeditates a war; in a business, when a new technology threatens to make you obsolete. A *change agent* steps up and takes this on when few others are willing to step up. Their credo: *If something needs to change, and you don't step up, then I will step in.*

Most people are not ready for change. In difficult times, they might hope for change, fear it, or deny that it will ever come—but *they are not prepared for it*. It requires someone who will lead through the chaos of transformation. The *change agent* leader doesn't *tell* people what to do, but shows them by demonstrating, "I'll go first!" and heads into that fire.

Leaders of change know that it can be *lonely at the top*. They can live with the isolation that often comes with a messy transformation. They often have an inner sanctum—a few supporters

whom they can trust. But, ultimately, these leaders know that the decision is theirs to make—and they make it.

One leader who fits the description is *Winston Churchill*, Prime Minister of Britain, who led his country through the Second World War. He epitomizes the leader who surfaces in times of change. He once said, “If you are going through hell, keep going.” This statement symbolizes the pain and the triumph of leading through change.

Churchill wasn’t classically charismatic, but he was a gifted orator who understood *the power of conversations* and how to use that power to lead his people through difficult times. He inspired a nation with his no-nonsense, straightforward, decisive style.

Conversation is the single greatest success factor in change. Every aspect leads back to it: the market leadership of the company, the leadership of the company, brand loyalty, and customer experience. Companies lose billions of dollars each year over *chocolate conversations*. Often we *think* we’re having the same conversation—only to find out that people walk away with a different perspective of what was said. *Chocolate* is a proxy for key conversations that get misinterpreted and result in unintended consequences—misdirection, poor execution, and lost opportunity. Executives need to learn how to lead change by transforming *conversations* to deliver *bottom-line results*.

Churchill was both clever and courageous. He lived with the isolation that comes with making difficult decisions. After the war, Churchill was defeated as Prime Minister in favor of Anthony Eden, a stabilizing leader; however, history credits Churchill with securing civilization with his powerful presence. He had the resilience and fortitude to stay the course, to stay on message. In fact, he *became* his message—he embodied his message: “*We shall not flag or fail. We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans, we shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air, we shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.*”

Change agents shift the mindsets of the people and get them to take action. Everything else is noise in the system.

I ask: *What breed of leader are you?* LE

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ACTION: *Be a courageous leader of change.*

Clarity Is the Cure for most corporate dysfunction.



by Chatham Sullivan

TURF WARS, LOW MORALE, bad politics, and misguided strategies: these kinds of dysfunctions and messy people problems consume too much of a leader’s time. When these issues become chronic and pervasive, it’s a tell-tale sign that something more fundamental is broken. The organization has lost sight of its purpose.

Beyond making money, every company has a purpose. Every company exists for a reason; it exists to solve a particular kind of problem in the world. Whether you are a pharmaceutical company carving out a unique way to treat patients or a global retailer satisfying a particular consumer desire, your market, your customers, and the people in your organization need to clearly know what the business is about. Just like individuals, companies must know “who” they are, what they’re doing, and why it matters.

In the face of conflicting visions and tough decisions that will have profound political, personal, and cultural consequences for the organization, leaders often flinch. As a result, their most carefully crafted strategies misfire, morale sags, and competitive advantage melts away.

Leader Must Do Three Things

To help an organization gain clarity on their purpose, leaders must do these three things:

- **Get clear about purpose:** Purpose isn’t a slogan or set of values. Purpose is strategic. It captures the reason the company exists by articulating the problem for which the company is the solution. It is an interpretation of what the world is about, what an important problem it is, and how you solve it. Think about Apple’s simple elegance in the clunky world of undifferentiated devices. Or, Whole Foods offering of organic, sustainable and nutritious food in a world of big industrialized agriculture. In each case, the company is righting what it sees as a wrong in

the world. It has a vision that it is willing to put its neck out for and for which you deserve the opportunity to make money.

- **Make the tough decisions:** Purpose is discriminating. To do one thing well you have to forfeit being other things. To do A you must give up B. Most leaders and companies try to be many things to many people, hedge their bets, and compromise. They end up without purpose and fall into the murky middle, a kind of no man’s land in the market that confuses customers and drives the organization crazy. Choosing A over B is an almost existential question for a business because it means that the organization is willing to accept the tradeoffs, risks, and the loss of being one thing over another thing.

- **Embrace the tradeoffs and the anxiety that goes with it:** Leaders often want to soft pedal the risks of choosing. But, what makes a clear purpose so powerful is that it means letting go over other things like killing off non-core products, confronting powerful



colleagues who stand to lose if the purpose were more sharply defined, and speaking uncomfortable truths about the business.

Defining purpose isn’t just a rational strategic decision, but a visceral coming to terms with what it means to say *yes* to one thing and *no* to another. It sounds so simple, but it’s the hardest thing to do when you occupy any leadership position.

What’s to be Won

Purpose is the lifeblood of business. Internally, purpose provides your organization with its motive and vital force, the organizing principle that gives order, meaning, and a sense of community to the culture.

Purpose is equally critical in the marketplace. Clarity of purpose enables customers to understand the unique value of your products and services versus their other options. In the market clarity generates value while confusion destroys it.

The bottom line is this: there are tremendous gains to be had to an organization that makes the pivotal choice about its purpose. LE

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ACTION: *Gain clarity on your purpose.*

The Advantage

Gain organizational health.



by Patrick Lencioni

ORGANIZATIONAL health (OH) is about functioning effectively by building a cohesive leadership team, establishing clarity among leaders, communicating that clarity to everyone, and having enough structure to reinforce that clarity.

The health advantage is massive: companies get more done in less time; they avoid losing their best people; they identify problems earlier and solve them faster; they beat rivals who waste time, money and energy infighting, which drives away good employees and customers. To gain OH, practice these *four disciplines*:

- **Discipline 1: Build a cohesive leadership team.** Without an aligned team at the top, your firm won't reach its full potential. Ensure the right people are sitting on the executive team and the number of members is 12 at most. Team members must commit to themselves and each other to do the ongoing work required to develop and maintain a high-performing team (avoid the *five dysfunctions*).

Review this Discipline checklist: 1) The leadership team is small enough (3 to 10 people) to be effective. 2) Team members trust one another and are genuinely vulnerable with each other. 3) Team members regularly engage in productive, unfiltered conflict around key issues. 4) The team leaves meetings with clear, active, specific agreements around decisions. 5) Team members hold one another accountable to commitments and behaviors. 6) Members of the leadership team are focused on *team number one*, meaning that they put the collective priorities and needs of the organization ahead of their own departments.

If two or more of these statements are false, address your *team dynamics*.

- **Discipline 2: Create clarity.** Create alignment at the executive level to build and maintain OH. Employees become frustrated when they have to navigate the politics and confusion caused by leaders who are misaligned. Even the slightest bit of daylight between executive team members can

damage employees below.

Address and answer these six critical questions (and eliminate all discrepancies among team members): 1) Why do we exist? The answer will yield a core purpose, or fundamental reason the company is in business. 2) How do we behave? This question examines behaviors and values required for success. 3) What do we do? This answer provides a simple, direct explanation of the business. 4) How will we succeed? This question requires the team members to develop a strategy. 5) What is most important, right now? The answer establishes a unifying thematic goal and action plan. 6) Who must do what? This question addresses roles and responsibilities.

Review this checklist to assess your need to address the six questions: Members of the leadership team know, agree on, and are passionate about the reason that the organization exists. 2) The leadership team has clarified and embraced a specific set of behavioral values.

3) Leaders are *clear and aligned* around a strategy that helps them define success and differentiate from competitors. 4) The leadership team has a clear, current goal to rally around and feels a sense of ownership for that goal. 5) Members of the leadership team know one another's roles and responsibilities and are comfortable asking questions about one another's work. 6) Elements of the organization's clarity are concisely summarized and regularly referenced and reviewed by the leadership team. If two or more of these statements are false, address the six questions that define clarity.

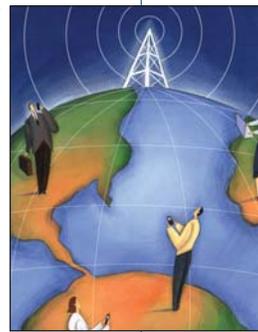
- **Discipline 3: Over-communicate clarity.** Once a leadership team is cohesive and clear around the six critical questions, they need to communicate the answers to employees over and over again. People are skeptical about what they hear unless they hear it repeatedly over time. For messaging to be consistent and absorbed by people, the leadership team can employ four communication strategies: 1) *Commitment clarification.* This strategy requires meeting discussions and decisions be reviewed for alignment and buy-in before being communicated. 2) *Cascading communication.* This provides a structure for personally disseminating information. 3) *Top-down communication*—this common communication flow needs to be consistent and sup-

ported by other communication vehicles; and 4) *Lateral and upward communication.* Acknowledge and leverage these communication methods without being too formal or prescriptive.

Review this checklist to assess your need to work on communicating clarity: 1) The leadership team has clearly communicated the six aspects of clarity to all employees. 2) Team members regularly remind the people in their departments about those aspects of clarity. 3) They leave meetings with clear and specific agreements about what to communicate to their employees, and they cascade those messages quickly after meetings. 4) Employees are able to accurately articulate the organization's reason for existence, values, strategic anchors, and goals. If two

or more of these behaviors don't exist, revisit your communication strategy.

- **Discipline 4: Reinforce clarity.** To be healthy, clarity must become embedded into its culture. All human systems must reinforce the answers to the *six critical questions* to keep them alive and ingrained in the organization. *Systems* in the fol-



lowing areas need to tie to the six questions: Recruiting and hiring, managing performance, compensation and rewards, and real-time recognition. Systems should be flexible, not overly bureaucratic, and reflect and reinforce the uniqueness of the enterprise culture and operations.

Review the checklist to see if you need to address the human systems: 1) New hires are carefully selected based on company values. 2) New people are taught about the six elements of clarity. 3) Managers have a simple, consistent system for setting goals and reviewing progress with employees. 4) Employees who don't fit the values are managed out; poor performers who do fit the values are coached. 5) Compensation and reward systems are built around the values and goals of the organization. 6) If two or more of these statements don't ring true, address your human systems.

Example: The New Pope

The events surrounding the election of Pope Francis remind me of the three qualities that all leaders must possess:

- **Sacrifice.** Right after being elected, a new pope goes to *The Room of Tears*—the place where “new popes have often been overcome with emotion at the thought of the heavy burden that has been given them.” We don't generally

imagine a newly hired or promoted CEO going into a room for solitary recollection or emotional processing, but it would make sense. After all, becoming a leader should involve weighty discernment and great responsibility. What could be more appropriate than taking time to come to terms with all that? Perhaps all new leaders should find their Room of Tears.

- **Humility.** Pope Francis, then *Cardinal Bergoglio*, had stated before the Conclave started that *he didn't want to be elected Pope*. His predecessor, Benedict XVI, made the same comment before his election in 2005, as have others. But when told about Pope Francis' comment, one reporter rolled his eyes and said, "Well, he may have said it, but I'm not sure I believe it. Can you imagine being the EVP of a company for years and then saying that you don't want to be CEO?" The reporter was suggesting, or assuming, that leadership comes about because of personal ambition and individual achievement, rather than humble service and acceptance of responsibility. *This is how most people see leadership.* The world would be a better place if more of its leaders accepted responsibility reluctantly and humbly, rather than clamoring for it and for the accolades that come with it. This would shift the emphasis of leadership away from *leaders themselves* and toward *the people they serve*. My high school teacher, Mr. Fanucchi, once commented, "The only person who should be president of the United States is someone who doesn't want to be." To me it made perfect sense when Cardinal Bergoglio said *he didn't want to be elected on the eve of becoming Pope Francis*.

- **Selflessness.** All of the Cardinals immediately defer to their new leader, a man who was one of their peers just moments before. It is often difficult when a peer is suddenly elevated to a position of leadership, and I've never understood why this seems easier for a new pope and his former peers. Then it hit me: *the Cardinals don't see the new Pope as having won a contest, but rather as accepting a daunting responsibility.* Pope Francis even asked his friends and colleagues from Argentina *not to attend his inaugural Mass and ceremony in Rome, but to use the travel money to attend to the poor.* It's testimony that this man sees his role as *a duty to be humbly fulfilled.* May we come to see our *positions of leadership* in the same, selfless way. LE

Pat Lencioni is author of *The Advantage*. Contact The Table Group at 925-299-9700 or email speaking@tablegroup.com.

ACTION: Gain organizational health advantages.

Moving Mountains

Major change is no cakewalk.



by Howard M. Guttman

ONE CANNOT MANAGE change, Peter Drucker wrote. "One can only be ahead of it. In a period of upheavals, change is the norm. But unless it's seen as the task of the organization to lead change, *the organization won't survive.*"

Since at least the 1980s, many senior executives have tried to get ahead of the change curve and transform their organizations to meet a complex and demanding future. The results have not been encouraging. Upward of 70 percent of change efforts fail to achieve goals.

To understand why the approach to change taken by *hierarchical organizations* doesn't succeed, consider the *polar-opposite approach* to change in High Performing Organizations (HPOs).

1. **The vision is a high-performance, horizontal one.** Rather than trying to bolt change initiatives onto slow, risk-averse hierarchical structure, with its top-down decision making, silos, and limited accountability, HPOs eliminate silos, distribute decision making, and create a sense of *WE accountability* and *collective ownership* at all levels. Leaders in HPOs transform the *senior team* into *like-minded, high-performing leader-players*.

2. **The goal is squarely on business results.** Change *per se* is not a key objective of HPOs. The fuel for the effort is a significant business challenge that must be met. What matters is accelerating performance to achieve better results.

3. **The focus is on tight targeting.** HP leaders shy away from big-bang initiatives aimed at transforming the entire organization relatively fast. They set their sights on *the performance and interaction of teams* and their members. Since teams are the basic work unit of the modern enterprise, the transformation process must *start with them*. Transform teams, starting with senior management, and *business results follow*.

4. **The emphasis is on building momentum.** The HP approach to change begins with the senior team. Once they are aligned, transformation becomes apparent in the behavior of team mem-

bers—in how they view themselves and engage one another. As you align teams—tier to tier and team to team—you create *how do we get into the club* momentum. The *entire organization* becomes a HPO entity.

To assess *how much change is required* to move toward the HPO model, examine three areas. How close are you to achieving these characteristics?

Area 1: Leadership

- The old leader/follower paradigm is replaced by the idea *everyone is a leader*.
- Leadership behaviors—directing, coaching, collaborating, delegating—are *adjusted* to meet *team members' needs*.
- Leaders have put aside the story that they alone get paid to make decisions.
- Leaders insist that team members hold them accountable for results.

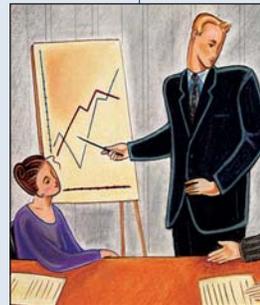
Area 2: Teams

- Teams are guided by *measurable goals*.
- Team goals/priorities are aligned with the business strategy.
- Roles and responsibilities are clear.
- Wins for the team and organization supersede personal or functional wins.
- There is an agreed-upon process for *making decisions* and *resolving conflict*.
- Team members hold one another—and the leader—*accountable for results*.

Area 3: Organizational Effectiveness

- Structure, systems, and processes—especially those relating to *information flow*—support interdependent decision making.
- Rewards go beyond *individual achievement* to reflect *team accomplishment*.
- There is a meritocratic, results-based culture that values *transparency, collaboration, discussion, debate*.
- There is an omnipresent urgency to resolve issues fast and effectively.
- The *learning environment* values skill acquisition, risk taking, and innovation.

Major change is no cake walk. It flies in the face of fear, resistance, comfort zones, and the entrenched conservatism of hierarchies. The magnitude of the task depends on your assessment of the three critical areas. HPO leaders know that *the only way to move organizational mountains is to create a compelling horizontal vision, tying change squarely to business results, targeting and pacing it, and building momentum so that change sticks.* It's the best way to lead change and survive going forward. LE



Howard M. Guttman is principal, Guttman Development Strategies (www.guttmandev.com), specializing in creating high-performance organizations and teams through senior team alignments, executive coaching, and leadership development.

ACTION: Assess yourself in these three areas.

Leading Change

Tips and traps to avoid.



by Barbara A. Trautlein

CONSIDER A SCENARIO: Acme Inc. is implementing a *new technology*.

• Executive Eric exclaims, "We need this technology to remain competitive! Why aren't we seeing ROI yet?"

• Project Manager (PM) Pam complains, "I got an edict to implement this new technology, when we haven't even finished our last major roll-out. It's a buggy new software release, and many key functionalities are inconsistent with our legacy systems. We don't have the resources to do this right."

• Supervisor Stu says, "Here we go again. Another *program of the year*. My staff rolled their eyes when I announced it, saying, 'We'll out live this change, just like the last one corporate tried to shove down our throats!'"

Sound familiar? Change challenges vary by level and role. For executives, the challenge is to lead the enterprise, transforming its operating systems and culture to be more competitive for the future. For PMs, the challenge is to design and implement a new technology with limited budget, staff, and authority. For supervisors, the challenge is to motivate the team to adopt new ways of working, even though you may lack the training or tools to do so.

No matter what position you fill, you can lead change more effectively when you understand how *Change Intelligence (CQ)* works at different levels.

Even if they are *open and participative*, most organizations are still structured *hierarchically*. Change leaders can exist at any level, but there are *predictable differences* in how people at the top, middle, and bottom relate to change.

Executives set the direction of the change, convinced of the need for it, but they tend to be isolated from direct impacts. Employees, though removed from the rationale behind the change, are often most directly impacted by it; an alteration in their behavior is usually a big part of the change initiative, and they can thus appear most resistant to it.

Supervisors and managers find themselves stuck or squeezed in the middle, sandwiched between the edicts of their bosses and pushback from their staff.

PMs have their own change leader challenges. Executives initiate change, and supervisors implement it. Like executives, PMs can influence an initiative's direction, but typically they're not yet strategic leaders. Like supervisors, PMs are accountable for *executing change*, but they have to operate on a more tactical level as they plan and coordinate the change process. This process typically involves people from many departments, working together on a project team, whose members often report to other managers and who have other, potentially conflicting responsibilities.

What is Change Intelligence (CQ)?

CQ is the awareness of your change leadership style and ability to adapt it to be optimally effective in leading change. Each change agent tends to lead with his or her Heart, Head, Hands (or some combination). Leaders who lead from the Heart connect with people emotionally (*I want it!*). Those who lead from the Head connect with people cognitively (*I get it!*). And those who lead from the Hands connect with people behaviorally (*I can do it!*). The combination of all three is what CQ is all about.

Research using the CQ Assessment indicates that executives tend to lead with the Head, PMs with the Hands, and supervisors with the Heart. About 48 percent of executives lead change by focusing on vision, mission, strategy (Head strengths). Almost 40 percent of PMs emphasize planning, tactics, and execution (Hands strengths). And 55 percent of supervisors place a premium on connecting, communicating, and collaborating (Heart strengths). Executives tend to attune to purpose to spearhead organizations toward brighter futures; PMs tend to process since they're accountable for adhering to schedule, scope, and budget; and supervisors tend to people as front-line leaders must engage in coaching and motivating their teams.

Use CQ to Lead Change

Effective change leaders flex their style when managing *sustainable change*.

Executives engage the Brain to scout out new opportunities, discover trends, and steer toward new horizons. However, at times they may neglect the map and the needs of the people whose help they need to realize their vision.

To avoid Head-oriented traps, executive change leaders should ask themselves:

• While you imagine new possibilities, are you keeping your feet firmly plant-

ed in the *here and now*? How can you translate your lofty vision to specific plans and tactical steps so others can confidently champion them?

• What's the potential impact of your vision on the culture? What do you need to do differently to ensure a committed and engaged workforce?

PMs help the Hands get things done, and their execution is usually backed up by step-by-step plans. While focusing on the details, such change leaders may neglect the big picture, and overlook the need for positive team dynamics. To avoid common Hands-oriented traps, PMs should ask themselves:

• Are you balancing execution with communicating the *why* of the change and *where* it's taking you? Do people focus on more than today's to-do list?

• Do you set structured time to meet

with key stakeholders to ensure that they're on board with the direction of your project? Your plan may be sound, but if you don't address the concerns of key players, they may not be supportive when the time comes for implementation.

Supervisor change leaders inspire the Heart, engaging

their team members and supporting the people around them as they move through a change process. However, such change leaders may not confront others who are not behaving consistently with the change or give enough emphasis to completing tasks and making progress toward challenging new goals. To avoid common Heart-oriented traps, supervisor change leaders should ask themselves:

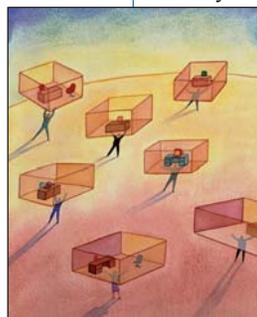
• Do you shy away from giving constructive criticism because you think it might damage your relationship? You need to reward positive behaviors and give people constructive feedback when they're not performing to expectations.

• Do your team members challenge you because you skirted the rules and didn't adopt new work practices when you were their peer? Show vulnerability and build trust by admitting your mistakes, explaining why you were wrong, and committing to model change-friendly behaviors in the future.

CQ leaders demonstrate the savvy to engage the Brain, help the Hands, and inspire the Heart—so people are empowered, equipped, and engaged to partner toward mission-critical transformation. LE

Barbara Trautlein, Ph.D., is a change leadership consultant, speaker and researcher and author of *Change Intelligence: Use the Power of CQ to Lead Change that Sticks*. www.change Catalysts.com.

ACTION: Gain and apply change intelligence.



Athena Doctrine

It represents the best in all of us.



by John Gerzema

TODAY, DESPITE WOMEN'S steady advancement, most leaders are men due to beliefs about gender, anchored by an expectation that men are meant to lead us. And yet the best leaders—those who are thriving—are those who hew to feminine qualities.

The essence of the modern leader has shifted to the feminine. People crave leaders who emulate the qualities most attributed to women: *Openness, sharing, compassion, flexibility and empathy.* Yet the amazing leaders we met were both women and men. These innovators are breaking from traditional masculine structures to lead a social, interdependent and transparent world.

People are frustrated by entrenched male thinking and behavior—codes of control, aggression and black-and-white thinking, which contribute to many problems, from wars and income inequality to reckless risk-taking and scandal. Nearly two-thirds of people we surveyed are dissatisfied with the conduct of male leaders and feel *the world would be a better place if men thought more like women.*

What does thinking like a woman mean? Interestingly, aggression and ego are poorly correlated to effective leadership and seen as decidedly male. While other masculine qualities like decisiveness and resilience are valued, feminine qualities of flexibility and collaboration are viewed as critical to building consensus and breaking gridlock. Also important is *expressiveness*—we want leaders to be *passionate, emotive, and relate to people.* And there is a strong desire for *patient, pragmatic long-term thinkers* who can think past expediency to foster *grand bargains* and good works.

Leaders who deploy such thinking create better businesses, organizations, and communities, with strong profit performance and purpose. They treat feminine thinking like an emerging form of innovation—and strategic advantage.

Great leaders see vulnerability as a strength, not a weakness. Every business story seems to include a *failure as a*



catalyst to success. However, much of this failure may be unnecessary: *If we were better at admitting what we don't know in the first place, there would be less failure and more progress.* Leaders who demonstrate vulnerability are more likely to align others, while saving time and money, and catalyze a breakthrough idea.

Take, for instance, Dr. Ijad Madish, a Berlin-based scientist whose vulnerability is reshaping his industry. Madish encourages scientists to *share what they don't know.* By disclosing the hurdles they face, scientists will discover *faster, better solutions* to overcome them—benefiting not only their work, but society as a whole. Today, ResearchGate has 2 million members from 200 countries.

Linked with vulnerability is another tenet of great leadership: Defying hubris. People in positions of power and influence tend to believe that *stature confers intelligence.* And yet, the leaders we spoke with were keenly aware of their strengths and limitations. They did not posture; they sought counsel from people before making decisions. For example, by conferring with its citizens,

Iceland's government is reviving the people's faith and restoring its credibility.

Another powerful and prevailing attribute in great leaders is honesty. As leaders, we yearn for ways to maximize ROIs—and *investing in honesty* delivers great yield. One example is *peer-to-peer lending*—proving that

by being open and honest, we can all benefit. When employees and communities open up to each other, regardless of rank or status, problems are addressed more quickly and solved more effectively, to everyone's benefit. *Winning* is a plural endeavor, not a singular one.

Wise, courageous, humane, and cooperative, Athena represents *the best in all of us.* We observe feminine traits producing broad benefits. *Athena businesses* make profits while creating lasting, mutually beneficial relationships with customers and communities. *Athena governments* serve all constituencies. *Athena nonprofits* find self-sustaining ways to do good. Embracing feminine values can change things for the better. Male or female, *we all possess feminine attributes*—but those of us who harness them will create sustainable solutions and be the leaders of tomorrow. **LE**

John Gerzema is executive chairman of WPP Group's BAV Consulting, and coauthor with Michael D'Antonio of The Athena Doctrine: How Women (and the Men Who Think Like Them) Will Rule the Future. E: jgerzema@bavconsulting.

ACTION: Adopt the Athena Doctrine.

Positive Leadership

Improve effectiveness and happiness.



by Modesto A. Maidique

WOULD YOU LIKE TO be a better leader? Would you like to be happier? If so, you're in luck. The scientific study of happiness and the systematic study of leadership are converging.

Although leadership and positive psychology are relatively new fields of scientific inquiry, *the study of leadership and happiness is as old as civilization itself.* For thousands, of years, historians have chronicled and analyzed the exploits of leaders such as Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar and philosophers have debated the merits of the Confucian prescription of filial piety and Aristotle's view of the good life.

While scientific inquiry of leadership is an expansive field today, its beginnings date back to 1948 with Ralph Stogdill's work on the *trait theory* of leadership. The same progression is seen in the study of human happiness based on the emerging field of positive psychology, starting with Abraham Maslow (*A Theory of Human Motivation*, 1943) which proposed the hierarchy of needs. In a later book, Maslow coined the term *positive psychology*. In 1998, when Martin Seligman, then President of the American Psychological Assoc., fed up with the pessimism of psychology and its focus on what is *wrong* with people, proposed a new branch of psychology that would focus on *how people can adapt and excel.* Research in *Positive Psychology*, proposes that people can become happier by embracing behavioral changes in how they act and think that will allow them to thrive.

For example, suppose you are in a leadership position but you are not feeling very happy. However, you have the good fortune of knowing Dr. Pangloss, a psychologist who has dedicated her practice to researching and implementing *positive psychology* to help patients. At your appointment you ask, "Dr. Pangloss, tell me just *one thing* I can do to become a happier person!" The advice is simple: "Workout at least three times a week for 30 to 40 minutes; in a few weeks your level of endorphins will rise and you *will* feel happier."

You heard that working out makes for better health, but you are intrigued

that research also shows that it will contribute to your happiness. The next day, the CEO of your company arranges for you to meet a friend, a highly touted *leadership guru*. After Dr. Faust regales you with his model of leadership and the painstaking research that led to it, you bring him down to earth by asking, "Could you tell me just *one* thing I can do to be a more effective leader." You hear familiar advice: "Workout at least three times a week for 30 to 40 minutes and your energy and resilience will rise and you'll be a more effective leader." At this point, you suspect that there is a conspiracy between Pangloss and Faust. It's true, however, that you have put on some weight and your energy has ebbed, as has your workout regimen. You consider the consequences of energy loss in leadership decisions.

Dr. Pangloss and Dr. Faust concur on other prescriptions to improve *leadership effectiveness* and *personal happiness*:

- **Develop a sense of purpose.** True: "If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there." Purpose provides anchors for vision and action, tempers the effect of disappointments, and enables you to celebrate success.

- **Keep your life and business strategy simple.** According to Leonardo DaVinci, "Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication." Having fewer but richer and more focused outlets for our energies is an effective business strategy and a boon for your personal pursuits.

- **Express gratitude frequently** to all with whom you come in contact. Make it a habit. The benefits of gratitude (the *G-factor*) lead to improved health, better sleep, and more vibrant relationships and more loyal team members.

- **Build stronger relationships** with your colleagues, friends and family to gain new understanding, capture innovation, and enjoy the journey.

- **Take setbacks in stride.** Don't become too attached to success—or to failure. There is a lesson to be learned at every peak and valley. Finding and realizing that lesson helps build *resiliency* and *tenacity* at work or in relationships.

- **Live a healthy and active life.** Exercise and healthy eating habits enable you to make more effective decisions.

Happiness and *leadership* are intertwined—things that make you *happier* also make you a *better leader*! This congruence between *happiness* and *leadership* could usher in a new era of *happier, more effective leaders*. LE

Modesto A. Maidique is President Emeritus and Executive Director of the Center for Leadership at Florida International University. Visit <http://lead.fiu.edu>.

ACTION: Be a more positive, energetic leader.

Power of Pretend

Harness it to develop leaders.



by Karen Phelan

THE NATURE OF HOW work gets done has changed. Gone are the strict hierarchies of workers and managers and the division of decision-making and tasks. Many people work in project teams, initiated by project needs and disbanded when the projects are over. Organizations are flatter and more fluid. All employees are expected to lead teams, manage work, and influence others to get results. Leadership skills—like influencing, communicating, motivating, inspiring, being politically savvy, and strategic in thinking—are needed by everyone, as *responsiveness* and *flexibility* are vital.

To keep up with increased workloads and the need for greater skills, companies will need to be more creative in developing people.

A simple, low-cost solution exists—pretending. It can help you develop new behaviors, practice new skills, and force you out of comfortable but ineffective management habits. *Pretense* is already used in training programs that rely heavily on case study, simulation, and role play because they provide a better learning experience than listening to lectures. These activities allow students to apply and practice lessons in a safe environment, then to experiment and receive feedback so that they can improve their skills.

I propose taking pretend out of the classroom and into the offices and meeting rooms. *By using some simple games of pretend, employees can learn, practice and assimilate new leadership skills and behaviors.* Using pretend games pushes the game players out of their comfort zone and into unfamiliar behaviors. It allows them to practice in a safe environment and to acquire skills by doing. It also invites the player's colleagues to provide feedback on the behaviors being practiced. These are benefits of *structured classroom training* without the classroom or instructor.

One game of pretend is to have the player choose and study a leader whose leadership style is unlike her own. For

a few days, that person acts out the behaviors of that leader. For instance, people who want to try a *no-nonsense style* may choose Jack Welch, or those with a need to learn a *servant leader attitude* may choose Mahatma Gandhi. In formal games, they're given instructions on the types of behaviors they should learn while pretending to be that person. They practice behaviors they may not normally use and try different styles. Their peers, team members, or direct reports are aware of the game and provide feedback on what worked well (and not) for that person.

Participants in the pretend game can take on roles to varying degrees. Those who are uncomfortable with adopting a whole persona can parse out one or two behaviors or attributes to try at a time. Those comfortable with acting may take on mannerisms, speech patterns, and appearance aspects as well to form *new behaviors*. Ultimately, with feedback, each employee decides what works for him to add to his repertoire of behaviors. The advantage of *pretend* is that each person has already practiced and perfected the new behavior with the help of colleague feedback.

The practice of pretending instills new leadership behaviors in a fun, engaging way. Games help improve empathy, flexibility, emotional intelligence, and creativity, and foster a *culture of feedback*, making it *acceptable (impersonal)* to provide feedback on behavior.

Using pretend games to provide feedback overcomes the discomfort many people feel when asked to evaluate another person or be evaluated. In our game, we *depersonalize feedback* by using *personas* to discuss and critique how to improve. *Feedback* assumes that the person giving the evaluation is right, when it could be just a difference in priorities, values, or beliefs. Without identifying these differences, feedback often falls on deaf ears. Pretend games bring *differences* to the surface. Also the games can help to build teams and improve meetings by sparking new behaviors and thinking and facilitating *feedback discussions*.

Adoption of *pretend* can lead to more creative ways of thinking and a more engaging culture. *Games of pretend* don't cost much in money, time or effort—all that's required is a little imagination. LE

Karen Phelan is co-founder of Operating Principals consulting and author of *I'm Sorry I Broke Your Company*. Visit operatingprincipals.com or karenphelan.com.

ACTION: Use pretend games to develop leaders.



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