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Will Living Better Help You Lead Better?

We live in a time when it is easy to feel overwhelmed by the relentless pace of change, the revolution in business models, and the complexity of global, national, and social dynamics that challenge the very nature of long-term planning. Some leaders respond by working harder and asking their colleagues to do the same. Many however are discovering that for them to lead better, they actually have to live better; to model balance and create an environment where other leaders and teams are equipped for the long run, not just the next quarter.

We see a wide range of responses to such complexity: meditation, purpose-driven leadership, wellness programs, and even deep recommendations. Each contains some kernel of truth, yet few are comprehensive or systemic. Many fall victim to faddish followership or are forgotten as attention goes to the next new thing. When implemented well, these approaches do work and dramatically change how we lead and how others follow. Some initiatives quietly stay the course, become part of the company DNA, and over time impact how the company performs.

For some readers everything above is intuitively obvious, while others haven’t yet seen sufficient evidence. They may think that such efforts can only work in big companies with vast resources or only during good times and not when crises occur. If you or someone one you know might think that way, then this issue of People + Strategy is for you.

This issue is devoted to comprehensive efforts to change the way we work, live, and engage with our workplace lives. You take a cue from your leadership and respond accordingly.

Our first three feature articles lay out the case for embracing a lifestyle that allows leaders to be more grounded, more conscious, ready to discover how to integrate the different things that matter in life, and set the stage for a different kind of leadership. Stewart Friedman has decades of experience, research, consultation, and teaching in this domain. Notice leadership virtues have been with us for eons; the benefits of mindfulness might even be seen as a subset of this classic framing of leadership. Citing the work of Robert Quinn, we are reminded about the reality of deep change: to change others we first need to change ourselves.

This issue of People + Strategy is full of different perspectives and contributions. I offer my own reflection on the topic in Insight into Action. If my comments resonate with your own thinking, let me know. If you see something I missed, I’d like to know that as well.

Our final contribution is an interview with Mirian Graddick-Weir, CHRO at Merck & Co. HRPS Executive Director. Lisa Connell talks with Mirian, capturing some of the lessons learned from a well-lived professional career, along with sage advice for rising HR leaders.
Perspectives | POINT | COUNTERPOINT

Mind Your Leadership or Fail
By Anna Tavis

By Andy Lee

“H”as Mindfulness Become the New Kale?1 a provocative HuffPost headline calls out.2 In the 2016 trend generated over $4 billion in sales. Do 100,000 mindfulness books and 700-plus new apps claiming to help you eat, walk, and commune more mindfully have anything to do with the hard work of managing organizations? We convened six mindfulness experts to inquire whether the 2,500 year old Buddhist tradition might indeed be the best antidote for the neck-breaking speed of digital disruption. All agreed that not only do leaders need to pay attention to the present to be effective, but having a mindful leader actually helps the entire organization be successful. Where Andy Lee, our lead contributor, assumed the position of the Chief Mindfulness Officer at the Fortune 500 healthcare giant, Aetna in 2016, his appointment made national news. Led by the CEO Mark Bertolini, Aetna embraced mindfulness as the centerpiece of the company’s leadership culture. Lee’s discussion here explains exactly how much responsibility leaders have in creating a culture of psychological safety. To be clear, leaders still have to manage; being mindful is not enough. However, to build a sustainable innovative culture at scale is the work of a mindful leader.

Jacqueline Carter of the Potential Project concurs with Lee but adds that the best antidote for the neck-breaking challenges, the ability to collectively under stand, manage, and transform our present mind is a fundamental skill for navigating and adapting to change. That is what is essential now.

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References


Matthews Birk, who teaches leadership at NYU and is on the leadership team of New York’s Skill Mind Meditation Center, asserts that meditation practice is the only way to achieve the desired state of mindfulness for leaders. Birk quotes the words of the billionaire investor Ray Dalio, who attributed his success to a large degree to his meditation practice, “a hook of a return on an investment for 20 to 40 minutes a day.”

Michael Carroll, the author of The Mindful Leader and Aims to Work, presents a healthy counterpoint to the unequivocal affirmation of psychological safety at work. Innovation requires courage, he argues. Leadership demands that we negotiate our paradoxes and conflicts fearlessly and at times abandon safety to engage at the edge of conflict.

Christopher Reina, who teaches leadership at VCU and is the founder of Leading Without Ego, argues for the importance of dropping one’s ego when leading. To lead without ego, according to Reina, means to be aware, to filter the “pulls and pushes” of an ego, and always keep it in check. It is hard work and it requires practice.

Jeremy Hunter, founding director of the Executive Mind Leadership Institute at Peter F. Drucker Graduate School of Management, concludes this discussion with the compelling story of Geraldo, an imposing real estate executive. Hunt er shows how hard it is for leaders to become mindful yet how critical it is for each one of them to find their own way. Hunter’s ending provides a perfect summary to this collective reflection.

We teach people to think but not to see, let alone see themselves. As leaders stand down massive climatic, technological, and social challenges, the ability to collectively under

By Andy Lee

“Y”ou are responsible for the mood of your team,” Chris Majer, executive coach and consultant, told me in 1999. I was a fairly new manager, doing my best to lead a team in a fast-growing company. This idea was foreign to me—and at the same time, it made perfect sense.

I had learned that leadership is best described in terms of activities that can be measured on a 360-degree feedback survey. If you get feedback that you need to do more of one thing and less of another, you make adjustments. But Majer’s observation was qualitatively different. It spoke to noticing and responding to what is going on in the moment. And it recognized the importance of the subjective, affective, non-behavioral aspects of leadership. To subvert an ancient saying, leadership behaviors are like a finger pointing to the moon. If you focus on the finger, you’ll miss what’s really important.

What really matters? Research conducted at Google found that the single most important contributor to team effectiveness is psychological safety. That “team members feel free to take risks and be vulnerable in front of each other.” It’s the belief that it’s ok to say what’s on your mind—that your boss and coworkers won’t think less of you if you say something dumb, and they won’t take offense if you offer a critique. This simple state of mind is more important than role clarity, coworker dependability, and even the meaning and impact of the work itself.

Since the release of this research, business journals have been quick to offer lists of actions that leaders can take to accomplish create psychological safety.2 But I believe that another leadership tool does list won’t get us from here to there. Rather, what’s required is fundamental. It’s the capacity to notice how people around us are feeling, how they express themselves, and how they interact with each other. And the ability to respond, in the moment, in a way that moves the team toward a sense of openness, candor, and non-judgment.

At the end of the day, if you’re not tuned in to what’s going on around you in real time, it will be very difficult for you to change it. That’s why I believe that the practice of mindfulness is a critical skill for all leaders, especially those who want to cultivate a sense of psychological safety in their team.

Mindfulness is defined as paying attention to your present moment experience, with an attitude of openness, curiosity, and non-judgment.3 It is a quality of mind that can be brought to any activity at any time. It is an inherent human capacity, and it can also be strengthened through exercises such as meditation, and through work practices like taking brief mental breaks throughout the day, avoiding multitasking, and simply paying close attention to what you’re doing when you’re doing it, whether it’s analyzing data or having a conversation.

The practice of mindfulness has a range of positive effects on wellbeing and effectiveness including enhancing focus, improving communication, and reducing stress and burnout.4 In addition, over time mindfulness practice can lead to some deeper changes in our relationship to the world around us. These changes are especially relevant to helping leaders to create a sense of psychological safety. Perhaps the most important of these is the “quieting” of the ego.

Mindfulness practice leads to less preoccupation with the self, and a greater awareness and consideration of the world around us. Through mindful ness practice people become less concerned with maintaining and protecting their image of themselves, both in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. This leads them to demonstrate less defensiveness, blaming, and credit-seeking, and a greater sense of humility, generosity, and kindness towards themselves and others. In my personal experience as a coach and leader, the quieting of the ego through mindfulness practice is a powerful tool for the creation of psychological safety. This is true for everyone, but it has special relevance for leaders, who play a critical role in cultivating this quality in their teams. Mindfulness does this in several important ways.

Authentic self-presentation. Mindful leaders become less focused on how they are perceived by their team, and more comfortable presenting themselves in a way that is open and authentic. They become more open to acknowledging their areas for growth and more willing to admit mistakes. Team members learn that this is safe for them to do as well. As a result, critical conversations such as project debriefs, performance reviews, and high-stakes problem-solving conversations become far more productive.

Openness to others’ ideas and contributions. Mindful leaders become more relevant to helping leaders to create a sense of people’s point of view. They begin to see the world through the eyes of others. They engage in real listening, and with an attitude of openness, curiosity, and nonjudgment.

Mindfulness is defined as paying attention to your present moment experience, with an attitude of openness, curiosity, and nonjudgment.

By Anna Tavis

Andy Lee

1 “Mindfulness” is the formal word that describes the practice and state of mind. In this article, we use the term “mindfulness” as a general description of a state of mind that brings new awareness and perspective to an experience, and leaves people feeling centered and balanced.

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mental of the ideas that are presented, and tend to give credit readily for good ideas. This allows them to bring their own ideas more readily with less concern about what might happen if they are not accepted. It also increases the upside to sharing ideas as mindful leaders are more likely to give credit.

Focus on the best outcome for the team. Mindful leaders don’t focus on the situations less in terms of implications to themselves, and more in terms of implications to their teams and beyond. They help their teams figure out how to safeguard their position and reputation, and more focused on how to promote the effectiveness of the team. This culminates a sense of trust within the team, where even the frazzled aspects of work life such as politics, organizational change, and the competition for resources, can be discussed without fear of misinterpretation or reprisal.

One might observe that these qualities are not so different than those suggested by other approaches to leadership. The difference is that when they arise from the cultivation of mindfulness over time, they are more rooted and reflexive, and not just another set of learned behaviors to “check the box” on. They become a part of who leaders are, not just what they do. And this is readily perceived by others.

To be clear, simply practicing mindfulness alone will not produce the “mindful” part of leadership. Leaders still need to set goals, inspire others, and manage resources. But when these things are done within an environment of psychological safety that is supported by mindful practice, the results of leadership activities are amplified, as is the effectiveness of the people being led.

Andy Lee is Chief Mindfulness Officer at Aetna. He can be reached at alee@aetna.com.

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**COUNTERPOINT**

Why Mindfulness Is Important, But Not Enough

By Jacqueline Carter

W e agree with Andy Lee: Mindfulness is a powerful leadership tool. As Professor Joshen Rech of Singapore Management University found, there’s a direct correlation between leaders’ mindfulness and the wellbeing and performance of their people.1 Based on extensive research, however, we at the Potential Project have come to the conclusion that mindfulness on its own isn’t enough to effectively address the many current challenges that leaders face.

After having assessed 35,000 leaders, interviewed 250 executives from companies like Microsoft, Google, and Lego, and read through thousands of studies on leadership and neurology, we’ve conclusively found that in addition to mindfulness, leaders need to cultivate a greater sense of offshoots and compassion.

Together, these three mental traits—mindfulness, selflessness, and compassion—more fully address the issues of motivation, engagement, trust, and retentive that plague many organizations. And while mindfulness has been extensively explored as a leadership practice, selflessness and compassion are rarely discussed as critical leadership qualities. Let’s take a closer look at mindfulness.

Mindfulness is a powerful starting point for any leadership journey. Mindfulness provides leaders with stellar focus and discipline, enabling high productivity. And, as Lee points out, it provides leaders with the ability to be truly present with people intentions—true connections. It is also the foundation for greater awareness of the nature of thought and how sometimes, our mind can lead us astray. Mindfulness gives us the ability to better manage our mind and as leaders, direct it towards things that are beneficial for yourself and your organization.

Selflessness in leadership is the wisdom of getting out of your own way; not getting your own egoistic tendencies prevent you from being of best service to your team. According to research by Dacher Keltner, professor of psychology at University of California, Berkeley, leaders are more likely to engage in rude, selfish, and unethical behavior.2 Cultivating selflessness counters these inclinations. It is defined by a strong sense of humility and the ability to be of service to others. Selfless leadership is about understanding that failure is a success if an ability to skillfully develop the potential of people.

Compassion in leadership is the quality of having positive intentions for others. Researchers from the University of North Carolina Business School found that compassionate leaders are perceived as both stronger and better leaders.3 With compassion, a leader increases trust and social cohesion because they are clear they looking out for the best interests of the team. People are more likely to go the extra mile for a compassionate leader because they know they have their back.

But don’t be fooled into thinking that compassion is about always being nice. Compassionate leadership is also about being tough when making difficult decisions. It requires wisdom and courage.

Leaders need mindfulness, selflessness, and compassion makes you more human and less leader. It makes you more you and less your title. By bringing more humanity into our leadership we can create happier, healthier, and more productive work environments for ourself, our people, our organizations and beyond.

Jacqueline Carter is International Partner and the North American Director with Potential Project and co-author of *The Mind of the Leader—How to Lead Yourself, Your Organization and Your People for Extraordinary Results*. She can be reached at jackie.carter@potentialproject.com.

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8. Stoll, B. (2015). The Mindset of the Leader. In his study *Managerial Cowgur*. Harv. Hordstein concluded that seeking harmony in organizations, while worthy at times, is often a primary killer of innovation, initiative, and creativity. "What often emerges under the pressure to get along, he writes, and play and play well together is an uncontroversial package of rules about how to act and what to think, distinguished only by their blandness... Conventional practices prevent you from being of best service to others... Leading is hard. Meditation is simple (not to be confused with easy) and it can be done anywhere without any tools. Sit down, don’t move, and simply observe your breath as your mind calms down. There’s a growing awareness at the very senior levels of leadership that there is no alternative to the mediation practice. Many of those who have tried different things before mediation agree that this is the key to becoming a great leader... Dalio calls meditation the single most important part of his success and “a check of a return on investment” and making 20 minutes a day for 20 to 40 minutes a day. “In working and speaking with leaders that have a regular routine I have noticed more have had to find one who would disagree.”


Ironically, preferring a false safety over the risks of engaging conflict can produce silence when we need to be heard. This is what most of us fall short because we operate on mindless autopilot which takes us away from the present moment. As Lee discusses, mindfulness is about paying attention to the present moment with openness, curiosity, and nonjudgment. In other words, mindfulness is about being fully present. And it’s about being present with a little less “you” in the equation. It is a simple idea, but just like good leadership, the simplicity of mindfulness gets lost in everyday life as we lead and make the most effective leaders seek to become aware of the ego and its reactions, beliefs, and even painful past experiences nonconsciously frame situations and steer actions. For Geraldo it was experiencing nonconsciously frame situations and steer actions. For Geraldo it was experiencing.

Michael Carroll, a former executive with Disney and Simon & Schuster, is author of The Mindful Leader and Awake at Work. He can be reached at mcarroll@maketeamwork.net.

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Leading Without Ego

By Christopher S. Reina

L eaders often want to know exactly how to do to be more successful. Therein lies the problem. It’s not what they can’t do, but how they can do it. Across the diverse audiences I have spoken to, there is surprising agreement that it comes to one thing that makes the best leaders. The answer is simple—the best leaders make people feel valued. However, most of us fall short because we operate on mindless autopilot which takes us away from the present moment. As Lee discusses, mindfulness is about paying attention to the present moment with openness, curiosity, and nonjudgment. In other words, mindfulness is about being fully present. And it’s about being present with a little less “you” in the equation. It is a simple idea, but just like good leadership, the simplicity of mindfulness gets lost in everyday life as we lead and make the most effective leaders seek to become aware of the ego and its reactions, beliefs, and even painful past experiences nonconsciously frame situations and steer actions. For Geraldo it was experiencing nonconsciously frame situations and steer actions. For Geraldo it was experiencing.

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References
Total Leadership: Improving Performance in All Parts of Life

By Stewart D. Friedman

You can be a committed A-player, a good parent, an attentive spouse, and a healthy person with time for community engagement and hobbies. How? Stop trying to juggle—it’s not about balance—and start integrating. Pursue harmony among the different parts of life to improve performance in all of them while enhancing your leadership skills.

Start with a clear view of what you want from—and can contribute to—each domain of your life (work, home, community, and self). Carefully consider the people who matter most to you and the expectations you have for one another. Then experiment quickly with some incremental changes and see how they affect all four domains. If an experiment doesn’t work out in one or more areas, make adjustments or put an end to it, and little is lost. But if it does work out, it’s a small win. Back up enough of them and you’re well on your way to a life that’s less stressful and more productive.

The Total Leadership Experience

Total Leadership is a novel synthesis of ideas that have emerged from two traditionally separate fields: the study of leadership and the study of how individuals can find harmony among the different parts of their lives. It’s an approach for developing leadership and it offers a proven method for integrating work and the rest of life. It is designed to work for anyone at any organizational level and in any career stage, for anyone who senses they are succeeding in one aspect of life while under-performing in the others, or living with too much conflict among life’s different roles. Total Leadership seeks what I call “four-way wins”: results for developing leadership and it offers a proven method for integrating work and the rest of life.

You can also be a systems thinker. But even if you’re not, you can apply the Total Leadership approach to help you improve your performance and well-being in all parts of your life. Here’s how.

Manage Boundaries

David is a VP accountable for a multibillion-dollar P&L. (All names and titles are disguised.) For years, he felt a relentless tension between work and family. “I spent most of my waking hours at work,” he explains, “and I always shut down from work at home.” But keeping things separate like this hurt his relationship with his wife. They talked about the kids, nothing more, because that was all they had in common. And at work, David never had enough time to prepare for all his meetings.

So he devised an experiment. Before leaving the office each day, he’d look at the next day’s schedule and pick one big meeting to get ready for. On his drive home— at a decent hour—he’d think about what he could do and say at that meeting. When he got home, he’d run some ideas by his wife. It worked beautifully. “This gave us something new to talk about each day, it gave her more understanding and harmony,” he says. “Sometimes you need to break away from work for a while.” And his wife has more understanding when work does have to come first. In the long-term, this means that I’m a more engaged leader for Target without an unmanageable tension between my wife and my work.”

Be the Change

Changing old run-yourself-ragged norms isn’t easy. But by modeling new behavior, senior executives at Target are accelerating a wellbeing movement. Take Joan, who now runs the company’s largest P&L. She admits she “saw a couple of coworkers raised” when she first told her team that she comes in late two mornings a week so she can “go to the gym and have breakfast with my kids.” Joan started this pattern as an experiment and she kept it up because it was effective, not only by more closely connecting her to her family but also by noticeably improving her focus and performance at work.

David also finds this to be true. His boss supports his experiments and asks for regular updates on them. “She’s also given me tips and shared what she’s learned in her experience,” he says. “I talk to her about all this to hold myself accountable. She’s reminded me that each new job in my career will be bigger and more demanding, so it’s critical to get better and better about managing my commitments as I continue to develop.”

When senior leaders in an organization take highly visible steps to reduce stress and improve performance (as David, Joan, and their managers and others at Target have done), employees feel more free to generate experiments of their own. Slowly, the culture changes as people at all levels discover it makes good business sense to take care of all the things that matter in their lives.

The Total Leadership Experience

Total Leadership is a novel synthesis of ideas that have emerged from two traditionally separate fields: the study of leadership and the study of how individuals can find harmony among the different parts of their lives. It’s an approach for developing leadership and it offers a proven method for integrating work and the rest of life. It is designed to work for anyone at any organizational level and in any career stage, for anyone who senses they are succeeding in one aspect of life while under-performing in the others, or living with too much conflict among life’s different roles. Total Leadership seeks what I call “four-way wins”: results for developing leadership and it offers a proven method for integrating work and the rest of life.

Work-life balance is a misguided metaphor for grasping the relationship between work and the rest of life; the image of the scale forces you to think in terms of tradeoffs instead of the possibilities for harmony. And the idea that “work” competes with “life” ignores the more nuanced reality of our humanity. It ignores that “life” is actually the interaction of all the roles we play. Of course, you can’t have it all—complete success in all the corners of your life all at the same time. No one can. But our research shows that, while it can seem impossible to bring the four domains into greater alignment, conflict and stress aren’t inevitable. Greater harmony is possible.

Jenna’s Journey

“I like my work,” wrote Jenna at the beginning of a Total Leadership workshop some years ago. “It gives me a sense of purpose, an opportunity to encounter and influence people in ways that make me feel good about the world I’m living in. But spending so much energy on my career has made other areas of my life fall short of my expectations.”

A 48-year-old mother of three children, Jenna worked at the time as a manager at a small real estate consulting firm in Philadelphia. She enjoyed considerable success. And, yet, like many people, she wasn’t satisfied with how things were going

Total Leadership is not an abstract idea; it is a structured method that produces measurable change. It’s an approach for developing leadership and it offers a proven method for integrating work and the rest of life.
in her life. She reflected further: “Work infringes completely on the quantity and quality of the time I spend with my family. I’ve missed out on too much of my children’s lives. And I’ve allowed other areas of my life to suffer. I’m too busy to read, go hear live music, or do other things I love, and I’ve only managed to promote my physical health—like walking in the woods—for short periods. I can’t help thinking my work suffers from the dissatisfaction I feel elsewhere.”

Jenna had numerous responsibilities beyond work. She had many people who mattered to her and to whom she mattered, starting with her partner of 20 years and their adopted children, who were 17, 15, and 9. But her sense of overwhelming responsibilities and pitched satisfaction had been growing, and it was exacerbated by the fact that Jenna’s father was dying of pancreatic cancer. She wanted to change her work situation to free up time to care for him with her sister, with whom she had always been close, without sacrificing precious time with her partner and children. In the old days, the only way she knew to achieve some satisfaction in her life at work and in her life away from work was to trade off one area for another, in a chase after some kind of balance. But that search—with the demands of employees, kids, partner, sister, and father—seemed more and more futile.

After four months of practicing the Total Leadership program, though, Jenna changed. She exchanged her frequent feelings of being distracted and irritable for feelings of being more fully engaged both at work and in her life beyond work. She no longer felt passive. She reduced internal conflict that had been weighing her down and began to focus on things that really mattered to her.

Most importantly, Jenna began to think of herself as a leader in all parts of her life. She discovered, in a frank conversation with her boss, that he cared for her as a person and wanted to support her desire to attend to her father. He encouraged concern about her health. This emboldened her to take steps to work with colleagues and connect with her family and community in new ways, enabling support by ensuring that others benefited also from changes she was making. She’s a new kind of leader.

Like Jenna, most people want to be better leaders and have richer lives. Some feel unfulfilled and unhappy because they’re not doing what they love. Some don’t feel genuine. Too many of their daily activities are inconsistent with who they want to be. They’re unconfident and so they lack a sense of purpose infused with meaning. Despite such frustrations, and others (like feeling disconnected or without optimism about the future), many of us feel compelled to make our world better—to lead more effectively in all aspects of our lives. The concrete steps laid out in Total Leadership show you how to do this.

Diagnose Your Situation

Before you can design smart experiments to better integrate the four domains of your life, you need to figure out what’s most important to you and identify your biggest pain points. Before you can design smart experiments to better integrate your lives. The concrete steps laid out in Total Leadership show you how to do this.

Experiment in Pursuit of Four-Way Wins

The most fruitful experiments help you make improvements across the four domains. At work, you may want to increase productivity or reduce costs. Goals for home and community may include strengthening relationships and contributing more to social causes. For self, it’s often about becoming healthier and finding greater purpose. How can a single experiment help you check off several—or all—of those bones? Some experiments improve one domain directly and others indirectly through ripple effects. For example, being more disciplined about your diet will have a direct impact on your health, but it may also give you more energy for your work and raise your self-esteem, which in turn may make you a better parent and friend. Other activities—such as running a half-marathon with your kids to raise funds for a charity sponsored by your company—will feed all four domains simultaneously. Whether the benefits are direct or indirect, achieving a four-way win is the goal. That’s what makes the changes sustainable: Everyone gains. Keep in mind that some benefits may be subtle or delayed, far-off career advancements, for instance, or a contact that might ultimately offer valuable connections.

Pace Yourself and Gauge Your Progress

It’s not practical to try out more than three experiments at once. Typically, two turn out to be relatively successful and one goes haywire. So after you’ve brainstormed possibilities, narrow down the list to three or four options that will:
- Give you the best overall return on your investment
- Cost the most in regret if you don’t do them
- Allow you to practice the leadership skills you must want to develop

TOTAL LEADERSHIP EXPERIMENTS

Tracking and Reflecting

Keeping record of activity, thoughts, and feelings (and in some cases distributing it to assess progress on goals, increasing self-awareness, and maintaining priorities).

Planning and Organizing

Taking new actions to better use time and plan by, for example, using a new tool for organizing, creating “to do” lists that involve all domains, or engaging in new career planning.

Reinventing and Restoring

Attending to body, mind, and spirit so that life tasks are undertaken with renewed power, focus, and commitment.

Appreciating and Caring

Having fun with people (e.g., by doing things typically outside of work with co-workers), caring for others, and appreciating relationships as a way of bonding at a basic human level.

Focusing and Concentrating

Trying to be physically or psychologically present when needed to pay attention to those who matter most. This might mean saying “no” to opportunities or obligations.

Revealing and Engaging

Sharing more of your self with others—and listening—so they can better support both your values and the steps you want to take toward realizing your leadership vision.

Time-shifting and Re-placing

Working remotely or during different hours to increase flexibility and thus better fit community, family, and self activities while increasing efficiencies.

Delegating and Developing

Reallocating tasks in ways that increase trust, free up time, and develop skills in self and others; working smarter by reducing and/or eliminating low-priority activities.

Exploring and Venturing

Taking steps toward starting a new job, career, or other activity that better aligns your work, family, community, and/or self domains with your core values and aspirations.

SAM’S EXPERIMENT: EXERCISE THREE MORNINGS A WEEK WITH MY WIFE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life Area</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Improving alertness and productivity</td>
<td>No caffeine late in the day, better morale on my team, more productive sales calls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Spending more time with wife</td>
<td>Fewer arguments, feeling closer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Increasing strength to participate in athletics, fundraising events with friends</td>
<td>Three 10K fundraising walks completed this year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>Improving self-esteem</td>
<td>Greater confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SAM’S EXPERIMENT: CHART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Focus of Attention</th>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VOLUME 41  |  ISSUE 4  |  FALL 2018
The main point is to have practical ways of measuring progress and learning from your innovative efforts.

is to have practical ways of measuring progress and learning from your innovative efforts. The key is to design such innovations in ways that are customized to your own situation. Doing so increases your confidence and competence as a leader of innovation. Indeed, that was a prime motivator for the initial creation of this program: empower people to take real action to make things better for all parts of their lives. Depending on your goals, your metrics may include cost savings from reduced travel, number of e-mail misunderstandings averted, degree of satisfaction with family time, hours spent volunteering at a teen center, and so on. They can be objective or subjective, qualitative or quantitative, reported by you or by others, and frequently or intermittently observed. Highly ambitious experiments usually fail because they’re too much to handle. When the stakes are smaller, it’s easier to overcome the fear of failure that can inhibit change. And you open doors that would otherwise be closed. You can say to people, “Let’s just try this. If it doesn’t work, we’ll go back to the old way or try something different.” Those who might be affected by the change will be more receptive if they know it’s not permanent and if they have a say in whether it’s working according to their needs.

Measurable ROI
Total Leadership came to fruition when I was recruited to head up leadership development worldwide for Ford Motor Company, where I served for over two years. We started with 35 high-potential managers from across the globe. They followed all the steps in the Total Leadership program and, in the span of about four months, implemented changes that touched work and the other parts of their lives. Their experiments produced a combined $5.8 million in cost savings, $0.7 million in new revenue, and $0.5 million in productivity gains. In addition to the quantifiable dollar results, these business professionals improved their relationships with customers and colleagues and felt more satisfied with their jobs. They felt more deeply connected to their families and their communities, especially since they had drawn them into the process of change. They reported feeling healthier and less stressed. They were making better use of leisure time. And they were feeling better about the company, and more excited about tending their futures to its future. They accomplished this by reframing the idea of business leadership and applying new skills and insights at work, at home, and in their communities.

RESULTS: IMPROVED PERFORMANCE (% GAIN)
Increase in Meeting Performance Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESULTS: IMPROVED SATISFACTION (% GAIN)
Increase in Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work</th>
<th>Home</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RESULTS: ENHANCED TOTAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS (% INCREASE)

1. Be Real
   18 Know what matters
   12 Clarify expectations
   10 Focus on results

2. Be Whole
   11 Embolden values consistently
   07 Help others
   22 Resolve conflicts among domains

3. Be Innovative
   10 Align actions with values
   10 Build supportive networks
   12 Challenge the status quo

Be Real
- Act with authenticity
- Genuine
- Purposeful
- Grounded

Be Whole
- Act with integrity
- Connected
- Supported
- Resilient

Be Innovative
- Act with creativity
- Curious
- Engaged
- Optimistic

Suppose that Sam, the business professional described in his four-say chart, has decided to try exercising three mornings a week with his spouse to address the pain points he identified in his four-say chart. In the sample scoreboard on the previous page, he spells out his experiment’s goals and how he’ll track progress in achieving them. As you implement your own experiments, you may find your initial goals or metrics were too vague, so refine your scoreboard as you go to make it more useful. The main point becomes more closely aligned with their values. They work smarter with greater focus and commitment. They achieve the results that matter to them most in all areas of their lives. I have asked thousands of participants to compare how they assess their satisfaction before and after they’ve taken themselves through Total Leadership.

Their levels of satisfaction increase by an average of 14 percent in their work lives, 29 percent in their home lives, and 31 percent in their community lives (see left). Perhaps most significantly, their satisfaction with their own interior lives—physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual—increases by 42 percent. Similarly, they report that their performance in meeting expectations of key people at work, at home, and in their communities has improved, respectively, by 9, 15, and 12 percent (see above left). And they are better at meeting their own expectations for themselves, 25 percent better.

Both satisfaction and performance improve in all parts of life. Total Leadership is not an abstract idea; it is a structured method that produces measurable change. You become more focused on the things that matter and so you feel more grounded, more like the person you want to be. You generate more support and feel more connected to the important people in your life. You become more resilient in response to the vagaries of our turbulent world. And you become more open to discovery and so feel more hopeful, indeed enthusiastic, about the future and your power to shape it. The chart above shows the results of how people change in their perceptions of themselves as leaders after going through the exercises of Total Leadership alongside others with whom they provide mutual coaching.

Total Leadership Skills
Mobilizing people toward valued goals is what effective leaders do, whether or not they have people reporting
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
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We are living in an age of continuous disruption and acceleration, which is outpacing our ability to cope with change. As a result, many people and organizations are at risk of being left behind. We must perform for today and transform for tomorrow. But to do that we need a fresh approach to leading ourselves, teams, and organizations.

According to the newly launched Conscious Index (research commissioned by Healthy Companies International), 82 percent of Americans feel there would be less turmoil in the world if leaders were more conscious. 89 percent believe that conscious leaders drive significant organizational improvements, including 87 percent believing that conscious leadership leads to better financial performance. But we have a serious perception gap: 94 percent of C-suite executives believe they are very or somewhat conscious while only half of working adults observe highly conscious behavior in their leaders.

As organizational psychologists and executive advisors, we have long researched the contemporary challenges of effective leadership. Combining previous research from Healthy Companies with new provocative data, we have developed a compelling set of insights and solutions for today’s leaders. Our research provides two core capabilities: “Grounded” is the foundation which helps leaders stay centered yet agile in the face of disruptive change. Being “Conscious” results in leaders being highly awake, aware, and adaptive. Leveraging these two core capabilities results in an accelerant that ensures purposeful forward movement. Being both grounded and conscious is the new leadership imperative.

Being Grounded: The Foundation

The current approach to leadership is obsessed with how we perform in the short term, often at the expense of who we are as human beings. But in today’s fast-changing, unpredictable world, this has huge consequences for all of us. Clearly, what you do and how you perform are critical. But real success comes from who you are as a person—your purpose, values, relationships, and character—and that influences your behavior and actions. Who you are drives what you do and how you perform.

Who you are refers to individual aspects of yourself as a person—what we call your healthy roots. There are six of them: physical health, emotional health, intellectual health, social health, vocational health, and spiritual health (see below). When people focus on the roots of who they are, they have a clarity and honesty about themselves and what they can accomplish. The result is leadership that is highly personal, deeply grounded, and strong enough to handle the pressures of relentless change.

By planting seeds that ground yourself, you strengthen the deep-seated roots allowing you to withstand the winds of change. They include:

- **Physical Health**: Keeping you agile in a fast-paced world.
- **Emotional Health**: Helping you stay both tough and nimble in uncertain times.
- **Intellectual Health**: Providing the tools for learning and staying relevant in a complex environment.
- **Social Health**: Ensuring you have the relationship skills needed for living in a connective world.
- **Vocational Health**: Helping us balance meaningful work and competition in a demanding age.
- **Spiritual Health**: Connecting to the larger environment, and building trust, gratitude, and generosity in a world rife with cynicism.

Ultimately, much like the human body, where a complex web of respiratory, cardiovascular, and other systems work together, the roots of grounded leadership form an integrated whole. Yet each of the six roots predict job performance as rated by bosses, peers, and subordinates. At the same time, you can’t expect the impossible: Not everybody excels at all six areas of health.

A case in point is Apple’s Steve Jobs. By no means the perfect grounded leader, at times he neglected his physical, social, and emotional health. But he also possessed enormous intellectual, vocational, and spiritual health, allowing him to transform seven different industries, from personal...
We each have a natural intelligence—right in the front of our brain, the neocortex, home to our conscious mind, and tap into your creativity, you need to overcome the pitfalls of being too narrow. Learning to Think Big helps you move from being close-minded to being curious and expansive. Organizations today need people to learn faster, rise above the din, and see the larger picture. That’s particularly challenging in today’s digital world, where seemingly unlimited access to information makes us distracted, and impatient. 

The antidote is adaptive and innovative thinking. 

Key practices for Thinking Big: 

**Be your own drone.** To rise above the noise and view the bigger picture you need, in effect, to become your own drone, finding ways to peer over the horizon. You’ll be able to see emotions, events, and relationships clearly as data that can inform your next moves. 

**Leverage your personal ecosystem.** One tool you can use is learning how to leverage your most valuable asset, your personal ecosystem—your personal brand, your positive relationships, and your networks. To Think Big you need to create a perpetual motion machine of ideas, energy, and relationships. 

But you can only accomplish this with a high-functioning personal ecosystem. 

Develop a Google mind. That means learning how to learn and being relevant all the time. This capacity requires a growth mindset allowing you to think with a broader view, seeking out uncertain situations, and choosing action over inaction. Some years ago, at Healthy Companies, we conducted a project with the Darden School of Business at the University of Virginia to figure out how great growth leaders succeeded in today’s accelerating world. The big differentiator between success and non-success was their Google mind. 

Practice “and” is the new “or.” Succeeding in a complex world requires having a complex mind. For that reason, simple either-or thinking doesn’t cut it anymore. The alternative is to learn to think in paradoxes and contradictions. Conscious people create more choices by holding opposing ideas in their heads at the same time.

Few people in the business world are more aware of the importance of the sharing economy than General Motors’ Chief Talent Officer Michael Arena. His mission is to guide GM’s leaders to build thousands of personal ecosystems that net the network and how people are connected.”

“Talent Officer Michael Arena. His mission is to guide GM’s leaders to build thousands of personal ecosystems that net the network and how people are connected.”

“With that in mind, Arena has created GM’s Innovation Exchange Lab, an intranet of people and ideas crisscrossing the company. It allows the best ideas and brightest minds to work collectively, rather than in silos or direct competition with one another. Tapping into this collective intelligence is key to transforming the culture within GM. Says Arena, “It’s all about the network and how people are connected.”

Ultimately, for Arena, building a personal ecosystem
Step Up: Reach Your Highest Potential

Many of us approach the world too cautiously and in a small, self-centered way. As a result, we fail to unleash our personal power, something that is central to bold and responsible change leadership. By Step Up, we catapult ourselves into a much bigger version of ourselves, taking advantage of opportunities that we might otherwise have missed and being willing to take risks.

Key practices for Step Up:
- Champion your higher purpose. Conscious people possess a higher purpose, allowing them to merge doing good with achieving their goals. Ultimately, purpose is the connection between what we do and why we do it. In fact, surveys show that three out of four executives report their principal driver in life is the belief their work has purpose and meaning.
- Lead with constructive impatience. If you want others to Step Up, you better start with yourself. That’s the heart of constructive impatience. By becoming more conscious, we learn to be our own personal agents of change. Some of us tend to be constructive by nature, building psychologically safe environments for ourselves and others. Others are naturally impatient, challenging our limits, pushing ourselves to expand capabilities beyond what we imagined possible. But the two parts are intrinsically bound together to create positive energy and results.
- Make civility your guide. In a partisan and polarizing world, the essence of civility—being courteous and considerate—is the core of all relationships. Incivility, on the other hand, is contagious and poisons relationships. When people work under a cloud of negativity, they stop taking risks, make more mistakes, and fail to collaborate. Conscious people realize there is a human being on the other end of every connection.
- Help your garden grow. In a garden, everything has a purpose: You can build strong roots, weed out bad company, and attend to your buds and flowers. Similarly, becoming more conscious lets you nourish leadership in others, nurturing the inherent desire to learn and grow. Our job as leaders is to enable our human gardens to grow.

In the fall of 2012, New York City’s Mayor Michael Bloomberg was looking forward to easing into private life and running his brand-new super PAC. Then Super Storm Sandy hit.

The storm’s rising tides shut down the entire city, flooding the subway and streets along the Hudson River, destroying homes, and upending lives. Today, Bloomberg, the founder of one of America’s largest private companies, is focused on creating a better world, making it his mission to awaken others to the challenges of climate change. The personalization of Stepping Up, instead of choosing the luxury of a wealthy, quiet life, he decided to become a champion of change.

Today, many companies are transforming their businesses. But will they succeed? At Lee Hecht Harrison we can help your business thrive in an ever-changing world. Our solutions help organizations bridge the gap between strategy and implementation, achieve individual commitment aligned to organizational objectives and quickly change the mindset and capabilities of your workforce.

We’re ready to make a difference for you.

Learn more about our approach at LHH.com.
MedStar: A Case Study in Transformation

As CEO of MedStar Health, Ken Samet leads a $6 billion nonprofit health care system, the largest system in the Washington, DC, and Baltimore region. In 2008, he set out on a journey to transform the organization from a group of independent, acute hospitals into a comprehensive distributed care delivery system. Ever since, Samet has been forging strategies and initiatives that emphasize MedStar 2020—a single comprehensive strategy for the future. Samet realized early on that his primary job was to connect with 30,000 associates and 6,000 physicians. To achieve this, one of Samet’s best tools has been himself and his natural authenticity.

“I think you have to be comfortable in your own skin,” says Samet. “I’m privileged to have the opportunity to do this role. By the same token, I understand it’s not about me and there’s a lot of smarter folks around me. All of a sudden, you stand up and you’re not real. And it doesn’t take but a few times for folks to actually say that was all bull—just like that.”

Samet’s challenge was to develop a cadre of grounded and conscious change leaders at all levels of the organization. His goals were to:

• Strengthen agility and resilience in an uncertain world
• Deepen keener awareness of self, others, and the environment
• Lead and accelerate change more effectively
• Model and champion a new change ready culture
• Increase collaboration, connections and performance

Over the past 10 years, Healthy Companies has worked closely with Samet, his executive leadership teams and thousands of managers who lead this transformation. Through those efforts, the company developed a leadership benchmark for the organization—the MedStar Leader of the Future. A combination of retreats, assessments, personal development plans, coaching performance support, and other tools helped to accelerate their learning. An important aspect was focusing on education and development specifically for physicians and nurses across the organization.

When the organization was ready to scale, over 3,000 of the company’s managers went through a four-day leadership program. A four-day certification process enabled the organization to use its in-house experts to help deliver the program. The goal of these efforts was to create a common language across the company leading to a higher level of consciousness and capability. Today, MedStar Health is benefiting from its long-term, systemwide investment. There are significantly more leaders in the pipeline, engagements scores are up, and quality and safety efforts have continued to rise. The company continues to navigate through the challenges and uncertainties of the U.S. healthcare industry with sustained business and financial success.

Ultimately, organizations that want to survive and thrive in today’s world of disruption and accelerating change face a clear choice: Create transformational leaders schooled in the critical elements of being Grounded and Conscious—or fall further behind. We believe this is the next human intelligence required inside organizations of the future.

Bob Rosen, Ph.D., is a trusted CEO advisor, organizational psychologist, and author of eight leadership books, including the New York Times bestseller Grounded and his most recent book, Conscious: The Power of Awareness in Business and Life. As CEO of Healthy Companies, he has advised top executives in global 1000 companies around the world.

Emma Kate Swann is an organizational psychologist and executive coach. As Vice President of Leadership and Transformation at Healthy Companies, she works building communities of conscious leaders around the world. She is the co-author of Conscious Leaders Outperform Their Peers

#### Conscious Leaders Outperform Their Peers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Leadership Actions</th>
<th>Tap into a Higher Purpose</th>
<th>Foster Productive Relationships</th>
<th>Seize New Opportunities</th>
<th>Drive High Performance</th>
<th>Unleash Human Energy</th>
<th>Forge a Shared Direction</th>
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2030: global talent shortages of 85.2 million skilled workers means $8.5 trillion won’t be added to the global economy. What can nations, organizations and leaders do now to avoid the crunch point?

Find out more at kornferry.com/future-of-work
How to Help Leaders Create a Productive Life Rhythm
By Scott Eblin

Leaders control the weather. That might sound like a grandiose statement, but most executives, when they stop and think about their own experience as both leader and follower, recognize its truth. Designated leaders have a disproportionate impact on the climate of their organizations. How they forecast and manage the weather is highly predictive of how everyone on their team will show up. If they show up sunny and bright, then their teams are likely to be full of positive energy. If they show up stormy and cloudy, everyone around them will likely buckle up and hunker down. The weather system the leader creates is highly predictive of how those around them will perform and, ultimately, the results they’ll produce. That’s why it’s critical that leaders make a conscious effort to consistently show up at their best. To lead at their best they have to live at their best. Unfortunately, the pace and demands of business and life in 2018 make it challenging for leaders to do that. The constant nervous system. The most effective leaders hit the sweet spot between the gas pedal of fight-or-flight and the brakes of rest-and-digest. Research originated by Herbert Benson of the Harvard Medical School demonstrates that the rest-and-digest response can be activated by rhythmic repetitive motion such as walking, breathing deeply, or stretching. Adopting simple routines that activate the parasympathetic nervous system can help leaders mitigate and lessen the impact of the chronic fight-or-flight that the demands of their life can induce.

Optimizing Your Life Rhythm
In addition to the immediate benefits of incorporating rhythmic routines into their lives, I encourage the leaders I work with to apply the concept of rhythm as an organizing principle for their life. For decades, there has been a lot of emphasis on and discussion on about achieving a sustainable work-life balance. I think this is the wrong metaphor and the wrong goal. The ultimate comment on the futility of pursuing work-life balance can be found in the quote from former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson, “Everybody’s got a plan until they get hit in the face.” It’s the same dynamic with the perfect plans that leaders develop for work-life balance. Irreversibly, the demands of work and life hit them in the face and the perfect plan gets blown up.

What seems to be a more helpful metaphor for leaders is to develop an awareness of and focus on their life rhythm— not work-life rhythm, their life rhythm. When you listen to an orchestra play a piece of music, you observe rhythm at work. Over the course of the piece, the rhythm changes. It slows down. It speeds up. As you listen more, you notice that at different points along the way, different sections of the orchestra are more or less prominent. The strings come in and out. The horns do as well. The percussion section is suddenly active and then not so much. In the end, all of the elements work together to produce a memorable performance.

My experience shows that the same experience works for leaders. They are encouraged by the idea of understanding the elements that they need in their life to create and sustain an effective rhythm. Based on the research I did for my books, The Next Level: What Insiders Know About Executive Success and Overworked and Overwhelmed: The Mindfulness Alternative, I encourage them to consider the things they need in their life to make it more likely that they can live at their best and, consequently, lead at their best.

I want them to be clear about what the 100-percent version of each of these looks like and accept the fact that it’s a rare day when they’re going to get 100 percent of all the elements that help them be at their best. That’s why it’s important that they know what their backup options are when they don’t have a perfect storm. For instance, in my own life, a daily yoga practice is critical to being able to live and perform at my best. My optimal yoga session is a 75- to 90-minute class with a great teacher. I’m fortunate that I usually get that a few times a week, but because I have a lot of travel, it’s rare when I get my 100-percent yoga solution every day of the week. That’s where backup options come in. Some days my yoga practice is working through a 45-minute routine streamed over my computer in my hotel room. Some days there’s not even time for that and yoga comes in 10 or 15 minutes of poses that I lead myself through. Are those 45-minute and 10-minute days 100 percent of what I’d like to get? No, but doing 40 percent or even 20 percent of what it would be at my best is better than zero percent.

If you know what your 100-percent solutions for living at your best look like, you can make mindful choices about what the 20- or 30-percent solutions would look like on the days when you’re life rhythm precludes optimizing everything.

Staying on Course with a Life GPS®
To help my clients identify the elements they need in their life to live and lead at their best and stay accountable to themselves to follow through on that knowledge, I introduce them to a one-page personal planning tool called the Life GPS®. There are three basic questions that I encourage my clients to ask and answer when completing their Life GPS®:

• How am I at my best?
• What are the routines—physical, mental, relational and spiritual—that I need in my life to make it more likely that I’ll live and lead at my best?
• What outcomes would I expect to see in the three big arenas of life—home, work and community— if I were consistently living and leading at my best?

Anyone who uses Google Maps or Waze understands the value of having a GPS in your pocket or purse. It’s sort of fascinating how quickly we’ve come to take such amazing technology for granted. When we open up the app and enter the address of where we want to go, a system of satellites in geosynchronous orbit over the Earth are somehow honing in on our location and iterating back and forth against that reference point to continuously adjust our route to make sure we get to the destination even if we take a few wrong turns or detours along the way.

In a much lower-tech way, the Life GPS® performs a similar function. When leaders get clear about their answers to the three questions in the Life GPS®, those answers become a reference point that they can iterate against to stay on course in their journey of living and leading at their best. Here are some of the methods I’ve developed over the years to help them do that along with some case studies of the impact the Life GPS® is making for the leaders I work with.

At Your Best on the Dance Floor
Harvard Kennedy School professor Ron Heifetz likes to remind leaders they can either be on the dance floor or the balcony, and it’s important to intentionally shift their perspective between the two. This principle helps support leaders in how they perform at their best. From the dance floor perspective, most executive leaders have calendars that are “packed and stacked.” When I ask them how many meetings they have over the course of a day, they usually note anywhere between eight and ten. That’s a lot of mental gear shifting that leaders must do if they hope to consistently show up at their best. Most leaders acknowledge they often show up for their sixth or seventh of the meeting of the day unprepared.
Invariably, when I run with this exercise in a roomful of 100 or so leaders and ask, “How many of you have a better idea of what you’re going to do and how you’re going to do it?” about 90 percent or more of the hands go up. On the debit, people always talk about how it’s helpful to just stop and think out loud about what they want to do and how they want to do it at their best. The same study that described themselves in those moments. They’re looking for words or concepts that come up more than once. Those common denominator words are the ones that most likely describe them at their best. That in turn, expands the top of their LifeGPS® and become the reference point that the leader can refer back to as they reflect on what they need to adjust to stay on course.

Routines That Help You Be at Your Best

In summarizing the work of Aristotle, the philosopher Will Thruston wrote, “We are what repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.” To restart that principle in the context of the LifeGPS®, if you want to live and lead at your best, you need to engage in routines that support and reinforce that state. To keep things simple and memorable, LifeGPS® breaks routines down into four essential domains—physical, mental, relational, and spiritual. In working with clients as they select the routines to make the difference for themselves, I encourage the leaders to hope to create through their life, I encourage them to keep a few other principles in mind:

Look for routines that are easy to do and likely to make a difference. This principle is about building and sustaining momentum. There are many routines a leader could adopt that would make a difference, but are too hard for them to actually do, or do not even bother to. For instance, they would probably make a big difference in my life if I got up at 5:00 am every morning for 90 minutes of exercise. Since I’m not an early morning person that would be hard to do; I wouldn’t follow through and would feel like I failed. Start with the easy routines that make a difference.

Look for routines that have a positive impact on the physiological systems that are regulated by the rest-and-digest response. As I discussed in a moment, in life there are three areas that are negatively affected by being in fight-or-flight. All of these routines are easy for most people to do and make a significant difference in living and leading at one’s best.

1. Movement

In the context of the LifeGPS®, movement is the killer app for the physical domain. Over the past several years there has been study after study that the question, “Why am I here?” Some form of a regular routine of reflection is a proven (over millennia) way for leaders to bring forth the best-case behaviors that keep them aligned with their purpose.

There are many different ways to reflect on a regular basis, one that has proven to be accessible for just about everyone is to reflect on what in their life they’re grateful for. The act of shifting their thinking to what they’re grateful for mitigates the fight-or-flight response and the intrinsic interplay of emotions that do the same thing. When that happens, leaders are in a much better position to align with their purpose by living and leading at their best.

The Outcomes That Are Expected to Follow

In his commentary on the Bhagavad Gita, Gandhi wrote, “With regard to every action, one must know that the result is expected to follow.” That quote informs the last of the three LifeGPS® questions:

What outcomes would I expect to see in the three big areas of life—home, work, and community—if I were consistently living and leading at my best?

My clients have found that when they are clear about the behaviors they exhibit when they’re living and leading at their best and establish routines that reinforce those behaviors, the quality of their outcomes improve. Let me share three stories.

Home. Melissa is a mid-level executive in a global retail who, in working on her LifeGPS®, concluded that when she’s at home she’s fully present for a young boy she loves. Often, she often found herself distracted at both home and work. Her attention wandered to work when she was home and often found herself distracted at both home and work when she was at work. Driving home from work one night, she told herself, “I need to think the question, ‘Why am I here?’” Some form of a regular routine of reflection is a proven (over millennia) way for leaders to bring forth the best-case behaviors that keep them aligned with their purpose.

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Community. Cristina is a managing director in a global pharmaceutical company who, when she’s living and leading at her best, gives to others. When I asked her to provide an update on any difference Life GPS® was making for her, she bubbled forth with the exclamation, “I’m diversifying my happiness!” When asked to elaborate, she explained that while she loves her job, she realized that she could give in her community more than she had been. She got on a website called VolunteerMatch and found an organization that connects mentors with families transitioning out of homelessness and have a child on the autism spectrum. Within just a few weeks, Cristina enrolled as a volunteer, completed the required training, and was matched with a family. She now spends part of her Sunday mornings helping an underprivileged six-year-old boy with autism improve his learning skills. Through this new routine of giving in the community, Cristina has developed a broader perspective that has had a positive impact on her life at home and at work.

What Works
In a Leading and Living at Your Best program conducted during the summer of 2017 with high-potential leaders in a major public accounting firm, the participants were asked to assess themselves on 46 factors related to the Life GPS®. The self-assessment covered overall performance, life satisfaction, and best practice routines in the physical, mental, relational, and spiritual domains. During the course of the program, participants crafted their own Life GPS®, engaged in peer and executive coaching, and met together in three virtual group sessions to share their action steps and progress with each other. Before program conclusion four months later, participants re-completed the opening self-assessment and showed significant improvement in their scores. The overall improvement on all 16 factors was 14 percent. Performance in physical routines improved 25 percent, mental routines by 22 percent. The opening scores on both relational and spiritual routines were higher, but each of these categories showed an improvement of 10 percent and 13 percent respectively on the closing self-assessment.

Since conclusion of the program in the summer of 2017, about half of the participants have been selected as partners of the firm. Many participants have reported ongoing benefits from following routines they established in the program and have also reported that they’re formally and informally coached their team members in using the Life GPS® framework to increase their capacity to lead and live at their best. Several leaders recounted that their team members viewed it as “a gift” and a positive sign that senior leadership is encouraging team members to discuss and follow through on changes that enhance their life rhythm for the good of themselves and the good of the firm and its clients.

What worked for these participants that can work for leaders in your organization? Three big factors appear to drive success for leaders who want to enhance their capacity to live and lead at their best:

Keep it simple. Just about all of the leaders who have success with the Life GPS® keep it simple. This goes back to the principle of choosing routines easy to do and likely to make a difference. In the high-potential program mentioned above, there was one manager in the program, for example, who wanted to improve his physical health and spend more time with his wife. Together they decided to schedule of at least three dog walks a week together in the evenings. Simple for sure, but it made a difference for his health and their relationship.

Peer coaching and support. We use peer coaching in every program; it is the most underutilized resource in most organizations. Participants pair up with a colleague they don’t know well and commit to 20 minutes a week—ten minutes in each direction—asking open-ended questions that help each other get off the dance floor and up to the balcony to observe what’s working, what’s not, and make necessary adjustments. Leaders who engage in peer coaching get better results and are grateful for the accountability and support it brings to their development process.

Time and reinforcement. Behavioral change and adopting new routines—even simple ones—takes time and reinforcement. Since conclusion of the program in the summer of 2017, over two-thirds of employers say breakthrough approaches in leadership are needed to manage the challenges of workplace automation and digitalization, according to Willis Towers Watson’s 2017—2018 Global Future of Work Survey report. To get additional insights and strategies for preparing your leaders to manage teams in an evolving work ecosystem, visit willistowerswatson.com/fow-report.
Beyond Engagement: Fulfillment as a Competitive Advantage

By William Schiemann

The unprecedented pace of change today is increasing stress and reducing focus both at work and home, upending work-life balance, accelerating talent obsolescence and fear, and reducing meaningful interactions at work. The result: increasing burnout, conflict, and turnover; decreasing innovation; and a majority of workers only partially engaged.

The goals of nearly all workers—achieving career and life fulfillment—and the goals of most corporations—higher productivity, quality, and customer service—are increasingly in conflict. This comes at a time when, for many companies, the ability to learn new things. In a representative study of 3,440 U.S. adults, the American Psychological Association found that money and work were key stressors for two-thirds of the population.

What Is Fulfillment and Why Is It Important?

Individual fulfillment is not another name for engagement. It goes beyond most definitions of engagement to a broader purpose. We define career fulfillment as achieving one's career goals and creating a productive workstyle that brings a sense of accomplishment, balance, impact, and happiness. Career fulfillment is one of the two most important drivers (the other being relationships) of overall life fulfillment, not surprising given that work often occupies more than 50 percent of waking hours for most.

In one in-depth study of more than 100 professional employees conducted by Metras Institute, nearly all interviewees said that fulfillment was paramount, and yet only 20 percent were highly fulfilled. Factors such as work-life imbalance, stress, fear of failure and obsolescence, and increasing work demands and stakeholder expectations were primary drivers of the work fulfillment gap. Nonwork factors such as major health setbacks, extended family obligations, and financial stresses frequently carried over into the workplace, often reducing focus, mindfulness, engagement, and willingness or ability to learn new things. In a representative study of 3,440 U.S. adults, the American Psychological Association found that money and work were key stressors for two-thirds of the population.

Take Jenna (names changed to protect privacy), a therapist who was recently married and is now expecting a baby while commuting two hours each day to work in Manhattan in a job that consumes at least nine hours per day, and then continues to respond to e-mails and team requests until late at night. He struggles to get home to say goodnight to his kids before they are asleep. Or Matt, who balances a medical career with new twins at home, sharing duties with her husband who also works long hours. She describes coming to work exhausted and going home drained from work demands that have doubled over the past five years.

These are the real lives of a large number of workers today, especially high-potential, high-performance people. Everyone wants a piece of them, and there is only so much to give. It seems easy to say they need to make choices, but the reality is that today there are few combinations of jobs and family lives that fit the utopian view of virtuous work-nonwork harmony.

This is not solely an American phenomenon. In a study of 9,700 adults across a wide range of industrial countries, Ernst and Young found that “approximately half (46 percent) of managers globally are working more than 40-hour weeks, and four in 10 say their hours have increased over the past five years,” leading to increased turnover. Lack of workplace or boss flexibility was a key culprit.

Much research points to the fact that people from all walks of life generally control 60+ percent of their own happiness and fulfillment—if they actively manage it. You need not be a victim of circumstance, unless you choose to be. Interestingly, we find that there is both a science and an art to achieving high fulfillment, and each has implications for leader and employee behaviors.

EXHIBIT 1. THE SCIENCE ELEMENTS OF FULFILLMENT

Science of Fulfillment

In studying highly fulfilling and productive people, we find that most of them exhibit behaviors consistent with decades of research studies on goal setting, planning, and performance management connected to success, happiness, and fulfillment. The elements of the science of fulfillment are listed in Exhibit 1:

- Life Goals: Life goals translate the long-term vision of an individual into clear life accomplishments. These usually include work and career, family, other relationships or associations, such as becoming a judge, having a large family, or traveling to all 50 US states or perhaps 50 countries during a lifetime.
- Values: Deeply held beliefs about what matters to the individual and the organization, and which ideally guide an individual’s behaviors.
- Lighthouse Goals: An intermediate goal—a stepping stone—on the way to reaching an individual’s life goal.
- Life Map: An organized and detailed map that displays the paths between today and tomorrow, connecting day’s actions with success drivers, lighthouse and life goals, and one’s vision.
- Personal Balanced Scorecard: A balanced set of measures that help guide priorities and actions.
- Integrated Life Plan—Work and Nonwork: A blueprint that connects today’s actions with tomorrow’s.

The greater the alignment between the individual’s life path and the organization’s goal path, the more likely employees will join, grow, and stay.

A short example may be illustrative. The map in Exhibit 2 represents a path with the type of tradeoffs many high potentials face. In this case, Toni was faced with a choice of whether to take another promotion which would have required living in Europe for some uncertain period, or staying put, which might have ended her future career advancement. She was highly regarded by the organization as someone they wanted...
to retain, but she considered leaving because she saw only an ups-and-down scenario. The company lacked clear career paths and a sense of security for expatriates who had taken overseas assignments. Weighed against her other life goals, she was internally conflicted. While she and her husband like travel, she also had children in high school whose lives would be disrupted. Alternatively, she would have to commute a long distance, leaving her husband to struggle with family matters.

She felt this would add even more stress beyond her current role, which was low in work-life balance. While she would have liked to have this conversation with her boss or someone in HR, she was afraid of being labeled un-promotable. She thought the only out was to answer calls from recruiters that came in regularly.

Being able to scope up to the bigger picture is critical. Toni is a case of someone with clear career and life goals, but she cannot see the path to her longer-term fulfillment. What Toni needed was a career mentor, clearer alternative career paths within the organization, and support mechanisms to reduce her stress levels, enabling her to be productive but also in balance with nonwork priorities. In fulfillment workshops we conduct, we discover that a large majority of managers only see the current and one likely next job within the organization. When we take them through a broader thinking process, they typically begin to see multiple ways to be successful within and outside the company.

In Toni’s case, working through a longer-term vision and connecting that to today’s reality led to the highlighted elements in Exhibit 2. For example, upon reflection and looking at other successful peers, she realized that she still had time to get the global experience and could seek a headquarters role for the next few years until the kids graduated, still giving her time to reach her ultimate goals. She realized that she needed to be more planful with her work and nonwork time and schedule time for stress-reducing activities. This healthy refresh of longer term thinking, being able to see alternative paths within the organization, coupled with stronger “art” skills she will soon discuss, enables an organization to retain employees they wish to keep. Many employees have not clearly thought through their goals, thereby delegating decisions like this to chance. The win-win is employees who, with full knowledge, elect a path that is consonant with the organization’s needs. When they end up on a path that is not and later see the misalignment, they are likely to leave.

Art of Fulfillment

If life were only as straightforward as the planning process described above. There are many blockades and setbacks along the way for most of us. The most fulfilled individuals have discovered and deployed practices and tools that we call the *art of fulfillment*, enabling them to become more intentional, increase resilience or grit, and leverage their passions to a much greater extent. Most of these skills and behaviors can be learned and applied regardless of personality, role, industry, or geography. Exhibit 3 lists the ten art areas that are often used by the most fulfilled people. While a full treatment of all 10 areas is given elsewhere,1 I would like to highlight several powerful factors that integrate multiple art areas and have implications for HR practices.

**Building Resilience.** Resilience and grit are important competencies for highly fulfilled individuals, but they also play a critical role in organizational performance and retention. More than 90 percent of individuals over 40 that we interviewed have had frequent intermediate setbacks as well as at least one major devastating setback—major illness, divorce, sudden job loss, or death of a loved one. Many managers we talked with described periods in which they or their employees were impaired on multiple personal or organizational levels while they managed and overcame these situations.

What is particularly interesting is that people we studied varied in recovery time after setbacks. Faster recovery people used a variety of approaches to overcome the setback more quickly—such as having a vision and life plan, good professional and personal networks, and the ability to reframe negative perceptions into positive opportunities.

**Building broad and deep networks.** Strong networks are an important tool for the most fulfilled people, assisting them both in preparation for and recovery from setbacks as well as support for daily life. Those who had at least one or two great friends or mentors who would bail you out of jail on Tuesday night—and a broad network of personal and professional colleagues were more resilient to setbacks. One HR professional we interviewed was a Fortune 500 star who took a new role with

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<th>ACTIONS</th>
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<th>LIGHTEST HOUSE GOALS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Network inside &amp; outside company</td>
<td>International assignment after kids graduate</td>
<td>SVP at Pharma by $5</td>
<td>Successful top leader, healthy &amp; strong family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan 50+ hour weeks</td>
<td>Look for headquarters role while kids are in school</td>
<td>Travel with family once per year</td>
<td>Healthy &amp; strong family life</td>
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<td>More proactive stress management, running, tennis, yoga</td>
<td>High Performance Reviews</td>
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<td>Combine business &amp; family travel</td>
<td>Support son’s music &amp; daughter’s sports</td>
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<td>Dedicate quality family time</td>
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**Energy and stamina are a big deal**—a foundation to overall fulfillment and organizational performance.

A startup in a different part of the country, only to see that organization—along with his job—took out only after 12 months. Finding a new job was more difficult than he thought. “I have been out 14 months with only a few interviews and no offers,” he told me. Limited to immediate colleagues within his prior firm, he slowly and painfully began his network acknowledgment that he should have been doing this continuously throughout his career.

Another category of relationships that were invaluable to many of our most fulfilled individuals are mentors. One VP of HR strongly advocates for having three mentors: professional, personal, and health. She describes each as being on her team, helping her navigate career and wellness goals in the context of her personal life goals. She and others describe the mentors as instrumental to growth and fulfillment in both good times and bad.

Organizational leaders can play a critical role in helping employees build internal networks and evolve mentors. The stronger the internal network, the more likely a challenged employee will have multiple lifelines to call upon when the going gets tough. The structure of project teams, participation in professional organizations, company-sponsored interaction events, and office design are among the ways in which networking can be encouraged. HR can play a lead role in determining which approaches will best fit organizational culture.

**Managing energy and health.** It turns out that energy and stamina are a big deal—a foundation to overall fulfillment and organizational performance. Lack of sleep, poor eating habits, low or no exercise, and continual mental, social, or emotional pressure without a safety valve all lead to reduced energy, health, safety, and performance. The research on stress is well documented. Too little stress or attentiveness can create boredom, which can cause employees to lose fingers on equipment or make other mistakes. What is more interesting is that too much continuous stress can lead to constant irritability, alcoholism and drug use, chronic fatigue syndrome, auto-immune diseases, depression, or suicide.6 At intermediate levels, without relief or recharging, workplace stress can cause 12-4 days of lost productivity per employee per year, 50 percent higher turnover, and many dysfunctional behaviors in the workplace—from simple chronic conflict to active antagonism or physical harm.7,8

**Call to Action: Four Strategies**

HR and business leaders must embrace, address, and leverage fulfillment if they are to compete effectively for talent today. Here are four strategies that will get the ball rolling:

1. **Develop leaders who are talent chefs.** The best chefs can receive a bag of ingredients—protein, carbs, vitamins-rich greens, herbs—and prepare a wonderful meal. Weaker chefs need a recipe they can follow by rote. In a fast food chain whose menu is often 100 percent, managers who are the best talent chefs are achieving rates below 60 percent while rote-managers often exceed 130 percent—a huge difference to the bottom line.

When we studied a group of these high- and low-perform
people and work. They are more likely to have a fulfilling life if they pursue activities that fit their values and interests.

2. Measure the whole employee—engagement alone is not enough. Traditional approaches to engagement have often taken a company perspective of what can be done to engage the employee. In contrast, fulfillment is done in a way that provides a best person-organization fit.

3. Measure the whole employee—engagement alone is not enough. Traditional approaches to engagement have often taken a company perspective of what can be done to engage the employee. In contrast, fulfillment is done in a way that provides a best person-organization fit.

4. Know thyself—what drives your fulfillment? One of the most effective actions is to understand what creates fulfillment in your life. Self-awareness is one of the most important leadership traits called out by leadership gurus. When leaders understand fulfillment and its relationship to work in their own lives, they are better equipped to discuss and connect organizational goals, roles, and skills in the context of fulfillment with others. And this requires reflective time and resources—articles, books, workshops, coaching—that HR is in a perfect position to support.

Conclusion
Fulfillment offers a new approach to frame the way organizations and people interact, with a goal of aligning both more effectively. The organization cannot be all it can be while its people are leading unbalanced lives that lack sufficient alignment, capabilities, and engagement to thrive. Similarly, individuals cannot thrive without a meaningful place to add value and grow. Fulfillment offers a framework to align priorities within and between work, home, and life. Winning organizations today are thinking more holistically about their people and providing the support systems that bring out the best that people have to offer by connecting with their path to fulfillment.

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References
The Next Frontier of C-Suite Performance: Wellbeing

By Lowinn Kibbey

In a world where one tweet can end your career and tarnish your reputation, today’s business leaders are living with an unprecedented level of scrutiny and responsibility. From delivering on quarterly results to taking a stand on the most important issues of the day, senior leaders are expected to perform on a stage that has never been more demanding. This high level of visibility and continuous expectation of excellence can be an incredibly isolating role that comes with an unprecedented amount of stress that can significantly impact leader’s physical, mental and emotional health.

Leadership Is More Stressful Today Than Ever Before

Before joining the C-suite, most leaders have been preparing for their leadership roles for decades, potentially rotating across different functions and geographies, leading business in hypergrowth or through difficult turnarounds. However, very few companies are preparing leaders to deal with today’s unique hyper-growth or through difficult turnarounds. However, very few companies are preparing leaders to deal with today’s unique hyper-growth or through difficult turnarounds.

Leadership is also more stressful today than ever before. From delivering on quarterly results to taking a stand on the most important issues of the day, senior leaders are expected to perform on a stage that has never been more demanding. This high level of visibility and continuous expectation of excellence can be an incredibly isolating role that comes with an unprecedented amount of stress that can significantly impact leader’s physical, mental and emotional health.

Why Does it Matter?

The fate of today’s leaders is important for two reasons. First, being a member of the C-suite can take a significant toll on a leader’s health and family life. This not only impacts the individual at home but can affect the way they show up at work, which in turn can affect employees and the entire organization.

Second, we know that employee wellbeing affects workplace productivity and engagement and the cost of employee burnout or disengagement is high. Annually, productivity losses related to absenteeism cost U.S. employers nearly $225 billion. Presenteeism, the problem of workers being on the job, but because of illness or other conditions, not fully functioning, appears to be even costlier than absenteeism. Lost productivity from presenteeism adds as much as $250 billion in costs to employers every year. If the leader is not doing well, how can the broader employee population be expected to perform at its best?

Vladimir Makatsaria, Company Group Chairman for Asia Pacific for Johnson & Johnson Medical Devices Companies, shared a particularly poignant moment in his life that illustrates the high personal cost of leadership:

‘There was a moment when I was taking my seven-year-old son to school, and he asked me what time I woke up that morning. I told him that I was traveling that day and wouldn’t see him for the next week. He asked me: ‘Why do you even have children?’

‘That was the turning point for me when I realized I needed to change. Even when I was home, I was often distracted and exhausted and wasn’t as present as I wanted to be for the most important people in my life: my family.’

This is not a unique story for leaders. Makatsaria was simply courageous enough to transparently share about this reality. Leaders Need a New Set of Tools

We know that the demands of today’s ‘always on’ and globally-connected world will likely not change—if anything, they will only intensify. This high level of visibility and continuous stress also requires a high level of personal resilience and an intentional focus on personal character. With the right tools and strategies, we can help today’s leaders not only survive, but thrive.

To that end, we need to throw out the old playbook and train leaders differently so they can stay healthy and build and strengthen their resilience and character muscle. At Johnson & Johnson Human Performance Institute (HPI), which was founded in 1991 and acquired by Johnson & Johnson in 2008, we’ve learned a lot about how to help people achieve peak performance and unleash their full potential through the motivating power of personal purpose. At HPI, we offer training to both Johnson & Johnson employees and others, including some of the world’s top performers such as Olympic gold medalists, military special forces, hostage rescue teams, healthcare professionals, and Fortune 500 CEOs.

HPI uses interventions that have been shown repeatedly to be effective in changing behavior and improving quality of life. The HPI model is also derived from extensive experience working with the world’s highest performing individuals, focusing on four dimensions of energy: physical, the quantity of energy you have; mental, the focus of that energy; emotional, the quality of the energy; and spiritual, the force of energy that comes from personal purpose and meaning.

Several years before I took on my current role, I was in a leadership position in a different operating company at Johnson & Johnson and I participated in the training at our HPI facility in Orlando. I still admit that my background as a Chemical Engineer had me fairly skeptical about the benefits of attending a holistic wellbeing program that purported to increase human energy. However, at the time, I had a young family at home and an increasing level of global responsibility at work that was creating mounting challenges and stress. I had a high level of energy and strong sense of purpose, but I experienced that at times my energy would suddenly disappear or my energy would show up in ways that I did not want it to—such as elevated frustration with others or ruminating on things over and over in my mind. What struck me most about the holistic human approach of HPI training is that it informed and enabled me to evaluate my energy not just as a physical manifestation but also mentally and emotionally. I began to think about my state of emotional energy before a tough conversation or my mental energy when I wanted to be focused and present at home with my kids. Most importantly I took away the powerful insight that energy capacity can be increased with training. No matter how physically active I am as an age, I can continuously build my total energy. The emotional quality of my energy; the focus of my energy, and my sense of purpose—this energy can strengthen until my very last breath.

It All Starts with Purpose

Being able to dial into purpose or having a personal sense of meaning in life outside of oneself is a critical part of wellbeing and is tied to psychological health; longevity; and preventive self-care. When we are connected to purpose, it is a powerful force in our lives. It’s the driving force that motivates you to put lifestyle-based rituals and practices into place for your physical, mental, and emotional health.

For individuals at all levels of the organization—it’s so important to be focused on and connected to a deep intrinsic motivator: what matters most to you no matter what. This not only helps to reduce the impact of stress when times are tough and increase resilience, but it also helps us make better and clearer choices.

That’s why it’s so crucial for leaders to take the time and really dig deep to understand and identify the values that will guide them even under the most intense pressure. Many senior executives will often identify the company’s values as

From retail to healthcare and beyond, technology is disrupting traditional business models across every industry and sector around the globe and nontraditional competitors are gaining market share. Senior leaders are expected to deliver greater and greater financial results at a more accelerated pace. Senior executives must not only see around the corner but also be a catalyst of change to drive innovation and continuously reinvent business models.

What’s also changed in the past several years is our expectation of how leaders deliver on these results. We see it play out in the news all too often: the successful business stepping away because of four they’ve led.

Once hidden in the corner office, executives are now visible to everyone and every move they make is analyzed by shareholders, board members, employees, politicians, the media, and more. Leaders are expected to show up fully engaged, authentic, and exhibiting almost flawless character, even in the toughest of times. These incredibly high expectations from multiple stakeholders are aimed at senior leaders, who may not be fully prepared for this new reality.

Given this high level of intensity, it’s no wonder that turn-over is so high. Consider the rate of CEOs alone: nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of new CEOs never make it to their fourth anniversary on the job—and, in fact, nearly 40 percent fail to remain on the job after 18 months. While there are many perks associated with the C-suite, it can be an incredibly isolating role that comes with an unprecedented amount of stress that can significantly impact leader’s physical, mental and emotional health.
Their own. While it’s important to work at an organization that aligns with your principles, those aren’t your values. It’s important to hold individuals in a sense of purpose and what brings meaning to your own life.

At HPI, we’ve created a program for executives called Premier Executive Leadership that enables them to codify the values that matter most and be very intentional about how they want to show up every day for their family and for their colleagues. In addition to focusing on tangible tools to increase physical, mental, and emotional resilience, we teach them the importance of developing a personal credo that enables them every day to be conscious of the character muscle that they’re building, whether it’s related to performance, empathy, or others.

“Identifying my purpose has helped me on the journey to be my best as a father, husband, son, friend, and business leader,” says Matsakas. “Most importantly, I’m more present and engaged at home so my son knows without question that he—my entire family—are my top priority.”

Physical, Mental, and Emotional Wellbeing

Leaders today need an expanded set of competencies that encompass physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. At HPI, we define wellbeing as a subjective experience based on personal evaluation of the presence of positive and negative emotions, satisfaction with life, fulfillment, and level of functioning in all areas of life: physically, financially, socially, and psychologically. We have identified a number of key activities that positively affect wellbeing.

Give yourself permission to sleep. As a leader it can be easy to succumb to the 24/7 pace of today’s business environment. However, you must make sure you are sleeping well and getting seven to eight hours of sleep each night. Lack of sleep can affect your mood, your memory, and even your judgment. The quality of your sleep not only impacts your performance today, but also, your energy and wellbeing over the long term.

Eat often and eat light. When you’re traveling extensively or meeting with customers and colleagues all day, it’s easy to go five or six hours without a meal. It’s important to eat healthy snacks in between meals to keep your glucose levels steady and manage your energy levels throughout the day.

For example, Matsakas learned through HPI that nutrition is crucial to the amount of unique demands his regional responsibilities required. “I often travel to China and India on business, and it’s typical to have late dinners,” he says. “I want to follow the typical to have late dinners,” he says. “I want to follow the

Integrate strategic movement into your day. We all know we need physical activity but trying to fit in exercise when we’re in back-to-back meetings can feel overwhelming. The secret is to break it down into five or six minutes of physical activity—what we call a microburst—every hour. You’ll feel recharged and that short burst of energy will help to sustain you throughout the day.

Mindfulness matters. Discriminated athletes know that taking short breaks—even ten seconds—during a game or match can enable them to perform at their very best. By taking a microburst every hour, you give yourself the opportunity to breathe deeply, reduce your stress levels, and reset yourself mentally. Doing this before a meeting, or most importantly, before you walk through the door at home, can help you refocus your energy so you can fully engage and embrace the people you know so much.

Build connections with others. Having connectivity to others is an important aspect of wellbeing. While it can be lonely at the top, leaders need to prioritize developing a social support network of people that you trust and have a shared sense of accountability for your success. It’s so important as a leader to have people around you who can help you understand how you’re showing up and others treating you.

Flex your character muscles. To elevate the “how” of your impact as a leader, you need to inventory your values and train your character. Leaders should actually exercise character “muscles” to create a balance of the performance and moral character that we all possess.

For example, consciously focusing on oscillating between accountability and empathy, confidence or timidity, and kindness or competitiveness. These attributes do not negate each other, rather when equal of strength, these character attributes balance each other out for healthy functioning—like the bicep and tricep of your arm.

“You are the first to demonstrate that an intensive two-and-a-half-day workshop intervention can produce sustained improvements in wellbeing over a period of six months. Specifically, the study showed improvements in employee vitality, or energy levels, and purpose in life, which are important components of wellbeing.”

In the study, six months after the two-and-a-half-day work intervention, the control group showed almost zero change in purpose while the intervention group showed a very strong statistically significant improvement in both purpose of life (p < .001) and vitality (p < .005). There have been studies on the value and importance of these components, but this is the first study to demonstrate they can be improved through a workplace wellness intervention.

The ROI on Fostering Wellbeing in the Workplace

We’ve seen firsthand the power of enabling wellbeing through workplace programs that go beyond offering healthy options at the cafeteria—not only for our executives, but for our entire workforce. With this strong correlation between purpose-driven leadership and increased wellbeing, improved resilience, and higher performance, we’re set to gain 100,000 employees—approximately 75 percent of our workforce at Johnson & Johnson—by 2020 through Energy for Performance (E4P) course, an internal training that is based on the course we offer at HPI. Employees can take the course for free, either as a webinar or in person, over the course of two days at company locations worldwide. Key pillars of the curriculum are learning how to align their focus with a personal mission and thriving in demand and stressful circumstances. As of Q1 2018, more than 50 percent of our people leaders (defined as an employee with at least one direct report that is a full-time employee) have completed the training globally. Not only is fostering wellbeing among our own leaders and employees the right thing to do to help them achieve their personal and professional best, but investing in human performance and energy management has demonstrated a proven return on investment. In a recent study among employees of Johnson & Johnson, attending the E4P course was associated with increased performance, engagement, and retention, and after completing the E4P course, 91 percent of our employee graduates say they anticipate gains in their productivity. This increased retention provides an estimated savings to the organization from reduced turnover costs! We estimate $60MM savings for the 30,000 employees trained through 2015, and anticipate $200MM savings by 2020 by training 100,000 employees.

Our data shows that for every dollar we invest at Johnson & Johnson in our employee health and wellness, we get four back in return. We see among our employees meaningful reductions in rates of obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, tobacco use, physical inactivity, and poor nutrition. It’s good for the individual, and it’s good for the health of the organization, too.

HR Leaders Can Help to Inspire a Culture of Wellbeing

HR leaders play a crucial role in helping leaders understand the multidimensional nature of wellbeing—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual—and fostering that mindset throughout the entire organization. While conventional solutions like implementing extra vacation days or establishing an onsite fitness center are certainly admirable, HR profes-
sions can help to inspire the C-suite to foster a culture of health and help them understand why it matters to the overall health of the company.

A culture of wellbeing starts at the top. When it comes to employee health and wellbeing, the C-suite needs to take ownership and lead by example. We aspire to have the healthiest workforce in the world at Johnson & Johnson. That’s because we believe that actively engaging employees in optimizing their health and wellness is part of our core responsibilities and an integral part of our culture—and it’s a key driver of our success. It’s a big goal and it’s one that is owned by leaders across the company, starting with our CEO. We hold ourselves accountable, as individuals and as a company, by setting specific targets across the enterprise that are reviewed regularly internally and reported publicly.

Give people the time and space to focus on wellbeing. At Johnson & Johnson, we provide employees with programs that encourage healthy eating and movement to providing important benefits to support healthy families. But we also know that availability doesn’t automatically create behavior change. Based on our more than 30 years of research, we know this type of change starts with a deep, personal, intrinsic motivator—one’s own unique purpose.

Companies can help by giving employees time and space to identify what matters most to them. Offering a science-based, holistic development program can help leaders and employees connect with a deep sense of purpose, establish the right priorities, and determine how they want to show up at work and outside of the office.

Reward the right behaviors. Are you incentivizing the right behaviors? Or are your top performers rewarded for driving short-term gains at any cost? Think about the touchpoints that leaders have with their teams. Are they supportive of employees during critical times, are they encouraging them to focus on their wellbeing, and are they enabling them to do so?

At Johnson & Johnson all employees—including our leaders—are evaluated through a formal performance review system that not only emphasizes “what” results they achieved, but “how” they achieved those results—modeling the right behaviors, listening to their teams, creating transparency, and having empathy.

We all have so much untapped potential, and we can achieve so much more by increasing our energy capacity. Helping to enhance the health and wellbeing of today’s leaders is not only good for individuals, but it is good for the health of families, customers, patients, and communities everywhere, and ultimately, for the health of the business.

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At Johnson & Johnson, we provide employees with programs that encourage healthy eating and movement to providing important benefits to support healthy families.
How a Small Organization Lives Better to Lead Better

By Leslie D. Wireback

M any organizations say they support the wellbeing of their employees and have programs that show they do, but the number of organizations where wellness, mindfulness, balance, and support for the wellbeing of all employees is engrained into the DNA is not as easy to tout. At Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority (LCSWMA), we are part of that elite group of organizations where it is holistically part of who we are and what we do. To many outside of our small region, we are unknown; however within our industry we are known for our reputation of innovation and excellence and are nationally recognized for exceptional practices and continually pushing the boundaries of transitional waste management to provide superior service to the residents of Lancaster and Dauphin County, Pennsylvania. With that background, it should come as no surprise that with the foundation of competitive wages and a healthy benefit package, we are known for our reputation of innovation and excellence.

How a Smaller Organization Steps Up

As a relatively small organization (110 full-time employees), we are faced with great challenges of trying to manage one million tons of waste annually, safely, and efficiently. It is our responsibility to provide the resources and work environment to ensure our employees have the means to excel and make great things happen each and every day. LCSWMA was an early adopter of wellness (at least for small organizations) by having an onsite fitness facility in the early 2000s. However, beyond having a fitness facility, one might not have been able to see how much LCSWMA valued wellness. The foundation of all of our employment practices is based on balance and overall wellbeing. LCSWMA is a municipal authority, however we have no taxing power nor do we receive any government backing for our operations. LCSWMA is a business and is a company for employees who work hard and strive to provide their family. The majority of our employees are providing for their family and providing employees with what they need to live well and support their family. The majority of our employees are providing for their family and providing employees with what they need to live well and support their family.

How to compete with what they are making because they basically have two full-time jobs. We want employees who value balance in life and who are not only working for a living but who want to continue to learn and improve. The first word in LCSWMA’s tagline is “Rethink” and that is what we did. When we wanted to continue to learn and improve. The first word in LCSWMA’s tagline is “Rethink” and that is what we did. When we wanted to continue to learn and improve.

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Through LUL, we were connected with a diverse set of businesses and governmental organizations that were trying to do the same thing. We quickly learned you did not need to reinvent the wheel. Learning through other organizations’ trial and error saved time and money, and many times organizations would share communications and initiatives for free. We leveraged these partnerships to enhance our wellness program and weave them into the DNA of LCSWMA. An additional benefit of the coalition is that it is backed by sound medical practices and influence through the support of the local healthcare system and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Awards were developed to recognize the company’s dedication to wellness and initiatives. Therein lies our practice of balance and wellbeing.

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As a relatively small organization (110 full-time employees), we are faced with great challenges of trying to manage one million tons of waste annually, safely, and efficiently. It is our responsibility to provide the resources and work environment to ensure our employees have the means to excel and make great things happen each and every day. LCSWMA was an early adopter of wellness (at least for small organizations) by having an onsite fitness facility in the early 2000s. However, beyond having a fitness facility, one might not have been able to see how much LCSWMA valued wellness. The foundation of all of our employment practices is based on balance and overall wellbeing.

LCSWMA is a municipal authority, however we have no taxing power nor do we receive any government backing for our operations. LCSWMA is a business and is a company for employees who work hard and strive to provide their family. The majority of our employees are providing for their family and providing employees with what they need to live well and support their family. The majority of our employees are providing for their family and providing employees with what they need to live well and support their family. LCSWMA has worked diligently to achieve the highest level of standards in wellness and continue to maintain that level annually. Despite receiving recognition for our wellness efforts, we wanted to continue to learn and improve. The first word in LCSWMA’s tagline is “Rethink” and that is what we did. When something failed, we took the opportunity to rethink, adjust, and make it better to fit our needs.
For years, initiatives were all driven by the HR department. When that became too rigid and unsustainable, we created a committee of employees from all of our locations who volunteered to help plan and brainstorm new and innovative ideas for the future. They provided feedback and promoted our initiatives throughout the organization at all levels. Committee members acted as champions for different challenges we offered. Whether it was a step challenge, weight loss, or drinking more water, our committee members encouraged participation, kept employees motivated, and celebrated successes.

We offer programs such as a Community Supporter program where employees receive weekly produce from a local farm. Through the committee we learned about barriers, such difficulty for paying for the season up front, so we offered to pay upfront and had employees payroll deduction the cost over the 20-week program. Another barrier was employees thinking that delivery held more produce than they could use each week. We paired employees together and had them share the weekly bounty. It was a win-win for employees, LCSWMA, and the farmer. Our employees got local, healthy food, and we supported a farmer in our community.

**ROI Depends on What You Value**

Generally, the first question asked about wellness programs in the business setting is what is your ROI? Most often the answer is not clear. Wellness research will often state claims of $3 to $9 return per dollar invested per employee. However, this ROI can be measured in many ways, and it can also become very complex. The simplest way for us to determine our ROI are not in direct measurement, but in connection to our employee engagement, streamlining our HR, and healthcare premiums.

Our engagements scores continue to increase, realizing an 11-percent increase from 2015 to 2018. Additionally, our average turnover has been 12 percent over the last five years. Of all the tangible improvements, the most important to us is to have happy and engaged employees. The costs of disengaged workers and turnover would be much more than any expense we have for wellness programs and initiatives. Health care was the most challenging to measure initially because as a small fully insured employer, we did not have access to claims information. We shifted our insurance to an HMO-based plan, and we have averaged an 8.8-percent increase in healthcare over the last 10 years. Our trend is mirroring the rates of medical inflation trends nationally.

Removing the volatility of health care premiums and having healthier employees is a win-win. Employees have always had the benefit of company physicals, which is necessary for the commercial drivers and a benefit we extended to everyone for their health. We not only extended the benefit to everyone, but we enhanced it to include biometric screening to monitor employee health. Through this screening, we have had many examples of early warning and detection for glucose problems, high blood pressure, and even cancer. Employees who received the early awareness through their company physical are always grateful for the benefit we provide and appreciative of the commitment to their health.

Fortunately, with the positive experiences we had with our health insurance program and surplus funds, we have been able to utilize those funds to budget and expand our wellness programs. Each year we commit to a year-long wellness initiative to support employees that rewards them for taking care of their health through physicals, dental checkups, vision exams, cancer screenings, and visits to the Employee Assistance Program.

In conjunction with taking care of their health, employees must also participate in challenges and choose to track exercise and/or nutrition to demonstrate their commitment to their health. We vary the themes as they are always built on the same foundation.

Our wellness efforts have become so strong and woven into the fabric of our organization over the last two years, we made the move to combine our safety and wellness efforts into one initiative. Safety and wellness go hand in hand and are what we do. Despite having a great safety record, our safety program did not have the level of internal recognition that we thought it deserved. We branded this promise internally as “Safe. Well. Happy.”

Our employees are committed to making LCSWMA a great place and helped develop an employee vision statement that represents who we are and what we value. This statement is impactful and highlights what we believe in. Anyone can brand a promise and create it with HR and marketing, but this statement came from our employees. It has created a connection with our employees that is invaluable. Everyone knows what the statement is and they were also part of making the statement come to life in our culture video. (View the video at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDacGmz5GW0). Defining our internal brand and promise to employees was the first step in defining who we are as an employer to enable us to better market ourselves to prospective employees.

**Lead by Example**

Our employees included wellness and balance within the definition of our culture, and that is a huge reason it works. They see it in day and day out. Our leaders, myself included, ensure that we are leading by example. I know I am not doing my best as a leader if I do not take care of myself. I have to prioritize it. It is just like managing any other area I am responsible for—it takes time and attention and must be constantly nurtured.

I ensure that even on the busiest of times, my staff sees that I pause and the take time to work out at lunch. It helps that it is with a personal trainer onsite, a convenience that LCSWMA offers, but a service I pay for myself. LCSWMA pays $15 per hour and I pay rollout deducted. Packing a healthy lunch, snacks, and drinking 100 oz. of water everyday also shows my commitment to health. I find joy in journaling each morning in quiet reflection at home, and then I find time during my commute to journal each morning. I even found an inspirational quote for the day on our planning board. It has helped us stay focused on the things that really matter.

Working long hours every day does not get you ahead. You get ahead by making smart strategic decisions and doing the best by your people. The rest usually takes care of itself. If even I am working on something that requires me to stay late or come in early, I realign with my staff that it is not what I expect of them. I also try not to make the long days a habit. Our work is primarily Monday through Thursday, and we have a half-day of operations on Saturday mornings, but our office is not open then. Our emails and phone calls all stay primarily within the core business hours. It is a testament to the balance everyone in our organization feels is a priority and knows that it is the best for our wellbeing as individuals as well as a company. One of my first bosses told me that it is what you do each day that matters, not how long you work each day. That stuck with me and is a value I believe in.

**Conclusion**

In summary, below are a few highlights of what helps LCSWMA live better to lead by example:

- **Support from the top.** Executive leadership has to believe in caring for the holistic well-being of employees and must also support, encourage, and lead by example.
- **Listen to employees.** Not all efforts are worth your time and money. Create a path of regular feedback from employees so that you know what is working and what isn’t. A simple way we’ve done this is to have an executive team member conduct a 360-degree review and an executive team member each spend a minimum of one lunch at each location per month. It is casual and no cost to sit in the lunch and engage with employees to hear what they have to say.
- **Make it easy.** Not all employees are going to want to work out with a trainer, or take yoga, or eat healthy, but the key is to make it easy for them to want to try it. Offer programs and activities at times and locations that are convenient for employees. Cost can be a barrier, so choosing activities that are low cost or free increase the likelihood that employees will participate.
- **Educate.** Everyone has a different education level and a different understanding of what wellbeing is. Providing continuous education to an employee can lead to a better life is important and simple. Employees are going to continually have to try to find ways to work well for work that we do. It is not one size fits all.
- **Encourage.** You do not have to be an expert to encourage employees to live a healthier life. Instill your company’s values in your employees, remind and encourage them on a regular basis, and change will happen. It is similar to the approach that the average smoker has to try quitting seven times before he or she actually quits. You want to continue to encourage the employees no matter how simple or how great the challenge is for them to be well.

Leslie Wireback is Chief Human Resources Officer at Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority (LCSWMA). She can be reached at LWireback@lcswma.org.
Helping Leaders Adapt When Serious Shift Hits the Plan

By Susan J. Mecca

Serious Shift Hits the Plan

C risis are frightening and common occurrences in our personal and professional lives. Our best strategies or plans disappear overnight, shoved aside by a life-threatening diagnosis, a natural disaster, a PR nightmare, a core product disaster, or initial stages of a crisis, where urgency and high stakes can intersect with ambiguity and uncertainty, the spotlight on a leader’s performance can seem harsh and unforgiving.

We’ve all seen examples of men and women who have led a company, an organization, even a country through a crisis in admirable ways. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada, is a current example of someone who shows up—regardless of the situation—with a measured response, a spirit of collaboration, and even humor. There are also far too many examples where leadership in a crisis has ranged from awkward or ill-advised to self-serving or even unethical.

Leaders are responsible for their wake—their words and actions (conscious or unconscious, intentional or amygdaledriven) send waves throughout an organization—especially in a crisis when employees are looking for direction. While Munoz’ desire might have been to show solidarity or political correctness, his internal letter appeared to the public as a clear attempt to shift blame onto the passenger. The ripples of his reaction, along with United’s first tone-deaf response on social media, have cost United money, customers, and public approval. It also raises the question of the impact his blaming behavior had on the customer-facing part of United Airlines. Will Munoz’ letter be taken as some brave attempt to adopt an adversarial approach to future customer concerns?

Time will tell. How can a leader get centered when everything is swirling around him/her? How can one send the message to the team—blamed Dao, labeling him “disruptive and aggressive”? Perhaps one of the most recent examples of a failure of leadership during an organizational crisis is Equifax. The company waited six weeks after becoming aware that 143 million of their customers had their sensitive data hacked, allowing three of their executives to sell shares of Equifax stock before the breach was announced. Equifax communications were ambiguous and their remedies self-protective—initially charging customers to freeze their data or requiring them to sell shares of Equifax stock were frightening and common occurrences in our personal and professional lives. Our best strategies or plans disappear overnight, shoved aside by a life-threatening diagnosis, a natural disaster, a PR nightmare, a core product disaster, or initial stages of a crisis, where urgency and high stakes can intersect with ambiguity and uncertainty, the spotlight on a leader’s performance can seem harsh and unforgiving.

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in a way that demonstrates that a quick reaction is less valuable/helpful than thoughtful, measured response? A simple measure involves closing the office door for five minutes and initiating slow, deep breathing to quiet the amygdala. Carefully considering the values to be reflected in the response, as well as recognizing a tendency to blame or attack, as a nonproductive action is a helpful way from a reactive to a strategic response. During high-stress times, finding a way to create some space between “stimulus” and “response” is critical. For example, helping the conversation move beyond immediate (and likely amygdala-driven responses) by asking questions about how we want to show up to the public, to our customers, and to our employees as we craft a response or strategy, and/or encouraging a break or time to reflect on the response. Even well-placed humor can break the cycle of fear-based reactions driven by our evolutionary defense system.

Get Resources
Effectively gathering and utilizing resources including expertise, knowledge, energy, money, and time creates a significant advantage for organizations, especially during trying times. Research demonstrates that, in multiple arenas, people who effectively leverage resources during times of crisis typically have better outcomes than the lone rangers or those who are afraid to ask for help, for fear of appearing weak. Having a personal community of support is critical in during a crisis.

There is an important caveat about using resources during a crisis. While it may be easy or feel comforting to round up the usual people, a crisis often requires a different level or order of thinking to arrive at potential solutions. While this is obvious in a medical crisis (where few of us are experts in the field), it is equally true with an organizational or personal crisis.

When pulling together your own personal crisis team, look not only for those who have provided clear thinking and solid wisdom in the past but also those who will ask hard questions and bring relevant expertise. To support the “how” of crisis leadership, a leader should include: people who will support the intentions that guide him, who will bring their best selves to the situation, and who have the skills and abilities that will augment his own. After all, remember the definition of a crisis—a situation that forces the individual to operate out of her usual comfort level and requires skills and tools she does not necessarily have. A leader should not expect to be able to solve this alone.

Get Information
The brain craves certainty, particularly during a crisis. Uncertainty triggers the amygdala’s alert system (explaining why extreme reactions driven by our evolutionary defense system can be so incapacitating). After all, remember the definition of a crisis—a situation that forces the individual to operate out of her usual comfort level and requires skills and tools she does not necessarily have. A leader should not expect to be able to solve this alone.

Navigating the information gathering process—stick to well-researched websites, respected thought leaders, and verify the data found, regardless of the source or how it aligns with personal biases. Blindly wandering around the Internet hoping for actionable ideas or looking to confirm opinions is likely to create an overload of unreliable information or discouraging examples of similar situations gone awry.

Second, track the mood impact that the information search is. One of my clients, anxious to find better outcomes for her husband’s cancer than the one his oncologists were suggesting, used her strong research skills to ferret out internet stories about radical remissions and experimental treatments. Unfortunately, she found significantly fewer positive outcomes than she had hoped, further fueling her desperation. Once she realized the emotional impact her searches were having on her mood, she significantly decreased her internet research.

Finally, handling information effectively during a crisis is as much as about the dissemination of information as it is about the gathering. Be equally intentional about how and when information is being shared. While transparency as a leader is critical for the immediate (and likely amygdala-driven responses) by asking questions about how we want to show up to the public, to our customers, and to our employees as we craft a response or strategy. Plus, as smart, competent people, we want to have all the facts, consider all the possible outcomes, and reflect on the wisdom they learned on their journey. As I began to look back over my notes, one of the themes that emerged was the depth the collective of which they made use of their natural strengths as leaders. The capabilies they brought to their cancer fight were, in a large part, the competencies that had made them successful leaders—focus, discipline, delegation, communication, and other important leadership skills. It was as if, in the moments following their diagnosis, they instinctively knew the assets within them they could rely on in this medical crisis.

While knowing and leveraging personal strengths in a crisis is crucial, so is understanding one’s weaknesses. As someone who has done personal growth work knows, it is under stress that we critical, too much of a look “behind the curtain” is not helpful either. Remember a leader who once sent a companywide email outlining a medical diagnosis that he had received. While his willingness to be vulnerable with his organization was admirable, the diagnosis was neither life threatening nor particularly relevant to most the organization. For most employees, his disclosure was just a case of too much information.

Get Strategic
A few years ago, I began the process of interviewing senior business leaders who had experienced cancer. Leaders from business, government, nonprofits, and the judiciary generously met with me to talk about their experiences with cancer and to reflect on the wisdom they learned on their journey. As I began to look back over my notes, one of the themes that emerged was the depth of the collective of which they made use of their natural strengths as leaders. The capabilities they brought to their cancer fight were, in a large part, the competencies that had made them successful leaders—focus, discipline, delegation, communication, and other important leadership skills. It was as if, in the moments following their diagnosis, they instinctively knew the assets within them they could rely on in this medical crisis.

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Leaders demonstrate an effective and strategic use of themselves, calling upon their core values, personal wisdom, strengths, and resources while maintaining their resilience and balance.
are most likely to slip backwards into our least effective (and least attractive) personality traits. At the outset of the crisis, self-reflection (and advice from trusted advisors) can be helpful about: What do I need to watch out for as we/I go through this tough time? How might I get in my own way? Add in some accountability by regularly asking for feedback or a heads-up should those old habits arise. Not only will this exercise help navigate this crisis more consciously and effectively, it is likely to serve as a potent bit of role-modeling for a leader’s team.

Get Intuitive

Steve Jobs called intuition “more powerful than intellect.” Tom Peters said, “The crazier the times are, the more important it is for leaders to develop and to trust their intuition.” It is a topic that many in business shy away from, preferring to rely solely on logic and facts to make critical decisions. Research on decision-making has found that there are circumstances when intuition is more valuable. Intuition is not particularly useful in decision-making where the data is well understood and options can be calculated or in making decisions with a long track record of experience behind them (and for which circumstances have not changed).

However, researchers have also found that intuition can be extremely important in a rapidly changing environment, such as in a crisis. In those circumstances, instinct or intuition can be critical, particularly when used in connection with analytical thinking. In those situations, people who combine both typically make the best decisions.

In a crisis, out of our comfort zones, and surrounded by well-meaning people with opinions about the best way to proceed, it is possible to lose track of one’s wisdom and gut instinct. Don’t let the wisdom of the crowd override intuition, especially if it has been useful and spot-on in the past. By taking some time away from the fray, doing some journaling, and paying attention to hunches and dreams can surface important guidance or information.

Get Self-care

Under the best circumstances, many leaders struggle with the concept of self-care. In a crisis, the concept of self-care can seem counterintuitive. Swirling from logistics, potentially disastrous outcomes, impossible decisions, and fueled by sense of urgency that a crisis perpetuates in our lives, finding time for self-care can feel impossible or unnecessary. In fact, we can become engaged in the crisis to the point of superstition—afraid a single moment of distraction might result in a preventable disaster. Medical staff in high-stress situations often experience the same dilemma. A pediatric oncologist once shared how wrenching the decision was to go home to time for self-care and that of his family ultimately led to exhaustion, divorce, and estrangement from his son.

There is a reason that flight attendants remind parents, and those traveling with people who need assistance, to first put on their own oxygen masks should cabin pressure drop. If the caretaker has passed out from a lack of oxygen, they can’t render care to the person in need. As leaders, this is a particularly crucial lesson. Taking the time to put on one’s oxygen mask is not a selfish act but rather a pre-emptive move to ensure ongoing effective leadership. Failure to do so can put a leader into the danger zone where exhaustion leads to poor decision making or disastrous off the cuff comments.

What does putting on one’s oxygen mask look like? James Loehr and Tony Schwartz in their book *The Power of Full Engagement* outline the importance of considering multiple areas where energy must be maintained—the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual—to be at the top of one’s game as a leader. Simple steps that will yield great dividends include eating healthily, avoiding excessive alcohol, getting enough sleep, taking multiple breaks during the day, breathing deeply, exercising, connecting with any form of spirituality that is particularly meaningful or supportive, and talking to friends.

One of the young leaders I worked withPR Week. Retrieved from https://www.prweek.com/article/1435619/timelinences of minimal profits and disappointing losses. Throughout that time, he and his team have remained resilient, self-reflective, and open to learning while challenging themselves and their processes. As a result their customers, who are large companies, have remained loyal and employee turnover exceptionally low. To maintain his own resilience, he exercises faithfully, eats a very careful diet, takes time away with his family, and connects with close friends and mentors on a regular basis.

Conclusion

For many leaders, crises and the inherent challenges that come with them can be a career proving ground. While the ability to create a sound business plan and execute business strategies are a day-to-day requirement, for many of the leaders, it is during times of crisis that their leadership will be under the closest scrutiny. Crises can be a time of tremendous growth for the leader, the team, and the organization. By staying present and intentional, bringing together the appropriate people and information, using our own skills strategically, listening to our inner wisdom, and taking the time to maintain our resilience, leaders (and their teams or organizations) can navigate through disruptive times with skill and success.

Susan J. Mecca, Ph.D., is a psychologist, speaker, and organizational consultant. She is the author of *The Gift of Crisis: Finding your best self in the worst of times*. She can be reached at drsusannebecca.com or susan@meccaconuting.com.

References

Theme of the Issue
One of the biggest challenges facing organizations today is the need to be agile. We live in the era of disruption, where the lack of agility is the kiss of death. John Chambers, Executive Chairman of Cisco, said, “If you don’t transform...if you don’t reinvent yourself, change your organization structure; if you don’t talk about speed of innovation—you’re going to get disrupted. And it’ll be a brutal disruption, where the majority of companies will not exist in a meaningful way 10 to 15 years from now.” A study from Washington University projects that an estimated 40 percent of today’s S&P 500 companies will no longer exist a decade from now.

This reality leaves organizations with a critical choice: disrupt or be disrupted. They need to adapt, in real time, in response to the changing demands of their environments. In the era of disruption, organizations need to be more liquid than static. This is where adaptive space comes into play. Adaptive space can be thought of as the relational and emotional freedom for people to freely explore, exchange, and debate ideas. It operates as a sort of free-trade zone for ideas, by tapping into the power of network dynamics. Adaptive space creates connections that serve to discover, develop, and diffuse new ideas into and across an organization. For organizations to be agile, they need to openly scan across and beyond the organization for the next big thing. Then they need to think about how to bring an idea into the world in a more tangible manner. Finally, they need to scale these concepts throughout the organization to enable a new normal by positively disrupting itself.

Topics to Consider
There are four types of connections that are critical. Discovery and development connections represent how various networks within an organization are relationally arranged to explore and experiment with ideas. While diffusion and disruption represent the day-to-day emotional connections within an organization that either encourage people to engage in innovative activities or challenge the status quo.

Topics may include, but not limited to, the following:
- How is social capital leveraged to more openly share, debate, and iterate on ideas?
- How can social capital strategies complement human capital strategies?
- What role does external pressure play in driving agility?
- How do HR professionals leverage design thinking to enhance discovery and development?
- How can HR create cohesive teams to facilitate the idea sharing and refinement process?
- What are the benefits of two-pizza teams, scrums, and agile development in driving speed?
- How can HR encourage more prototypes and testing to refine and improve ideas?
- How are social interactions used to facilitate the flow of ideas, information, and insights?
- How can HR practitioners help scale/diffuse ideas beyond a local entrepreneurial pocket?
- What role does network energy play in enabling diffusion and engagement?
- How do you breakthrough existing roadblocks and structures to gain formal endorsement?
- How are networks used to fight against the social controls that exist within organizations?

We are looking for articles that have the following attributes:

Strategic importance: Should be an article to educate business leaders about a concept, provide the basis for a decision, or influence their thinking.

Impact: Do not just present research findings, but also discuss applications and impact.

Actionable: Focus on solutions, not just descriptions of issues.

Grounded: Based on research, theory (with examples), or proven practice to provide a “proof of concept”; provides frameworks that can be applied in a variety of situations.

Point of view: Make a case for thinking about a topic differently.

Readable: Non-academic prose and minimal jargon.

Audience
The typical reader of People + Strategy is an internal human resource executive seeking actionable and practical advice based in sound evidence. Our reader wants to be challenged by new practices, approaches, and models. Our readers are experienced, knowledgeable, and work in and for a variety of organizations across the globe. They turn to People + Strategy for clear, actionable, and thought-provoking articles on current topics.

Submission Process
We encourage submissions of one-page proposals and article ideas first to the editors prior to submitting the completed article. All proposals will be reviewed by the editors and returned with comments. If accepted, we will then guide you on the development of your article.

Criteria for evaluation include significance of contribution to the field of human resource management; usefulness of knowledge; timeliness of content; originality; provocative nature of content; quality of the data supporting the points; logical; and well-written.

Writing Guidelines
Articles should range from 2,500 to 3,500 words. When applicable or available, include high-resolution graphics or charts with submissions to help present any complex information in a visual format.

Submission Information
All proposals should be sent to editor@hrps.org. Please designate in the subject line that the submission is for the Spring 2019 issue: Adaptive Space.

Nov. 10, 2018: Proposals due. Submit a one-page overview of the article concept with the author’s bio.

Nov. 17, 2018: Feedback provided. We will provide feedback and direction on your concept.

Dec. 8, 2018: Articles due. Submit a well-written draft ready to be edited.

Dec. 15, 2018: Feedback provided. We will indicate if the article is accepted, and, if so, what revisions are needed.

Jan. 12, 2019: Final articles due.

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Steering Through the Storm

By Julie V. Dinh and Eduardo Salas

Natural disasters are more than the sum of their parts, affecting the lives of people in all-encompassing and enduring ways. Because of these far-reaching effects, administrators with them—sharing the same risks and dangers, in particular—they are more likely to trust and respect authority. Leaders can thus signal their investment in the personal lives and stakes of their employees through their actions. During Hurricane Katrina, Jessica Lewis, a manager of a Walmart, helped build a path through her flooded store, salvaged everything she could, and distributed these free supplies to the public. Of the people led by her Chief Medical Officer, Lewis noted, “These values lead to a workforce that makes well-intentioned decisions in both routine and challenging situations. This not only empowers staff, but it also provides a reliable foundation in which leadership can trust.” Indeed, the commitment of leadership cannot be understated; leaders often have the greatest impact on their team’s functioning before they enter tight, time-critical situations. In aircraft management, the best leaders are driven to assume their authoritative role and continuously learn from their experiences.

What Sets Apart Strong Leaders During Crisis?

While strong leadership is essential to organizational operations, it becomes most critical during disasters. However, not all leaders are equally prepared to perform under duress. As Weick described following a catastrophic bushfire, “even the best leaders and the most team-conscious members can still suffer when structures begin to pull apart, leaving in their wake senselessness, panic, and cosmological questions.” Indeed, crises challenge the strength of organizations and test the mettle of leaders.

Perhaps the greatest teacher is experience; individuals are more capable if they’ve weathered storms previously. This is especially true for leaders in dangerous situations; followers are more likely to trust and respect leaders if they have already experienced trials by fire. Short of actual disaster survival, though, several characteristics distinguish what has been dubbed “in extremis leadership.” A specific and effective profile of leadership for life-threatening circumstances is based on his extensive military career and research in leadership, Retired Brigadier General and founding director of the Ann and John Doerr Institute for New Leaders at Rice University, Thomas Kolditz found that leaders under duress must be: inherently motivated to lead in difficult contexts; embrace continuous learning, share risk with their followers; adapt a lifestyle similar to their followers; and be highly competent in order to inspire trust and loyalty in others. These findings have been echoed by many other researchers, including by crew resource management scholars who study teams in similarly high-stakes circumstances (such as flight deck teams).

The best leaders are driven to assume their authoritative role and continuously learn from their experiences. While many have emphasized the importance of internally derived motivation, high-stakes situations add a unique layer of incentive; individuals are inherently motivated by the severity of crises. Great leaders harness this energy to respond, learn, and adapt quickly—characteristics essential during disasters. Under dire circumstances, leadership must be pragmatic and capable of shifting interpersonal relationships and leadership styles, depending on the needs of the situation. This includes moving between both autocratic and democratic leadership styles, and sharing or passing on authority to other members of the team when appropriate. Indeed, under rapidly-changing circumstances, team dynamics are constantly evolving—so too must leadership style.

One constant, however, is the fact that leaders are more effective when they are deeply engaged with their followers. When team members feel that their leaders are “in the trenches” with them—sharing the same risks and dangers, in particular—they are more likely to trust and respect authority. Leaders can thus signal their investment in the personal lives and stakes of their employees through their actions. During Hurricane Harvey, leadership at Houston Methodist had crafted a mission statement based on integrity, compassion, accountability, respect, and excellence. The commitment to this vision was proven when, during Harvey, leadership responded to unanticipated needs of its staff and providers, including the provision of critical resources and assistance.

What Steps Can Leaders Take To Prepare Their Organizations for Crisis?

Importantly, disasters do not only involve acute events, but expose histories of risk that compound them. Leaders can therefore substantially increase organizational well-being by investing in preventive measures, including creating strong organizational cultures and developing policies that minimize worst-case scenarios. The importance of preemptive leadership cannot be understated; leaders often have the greatest impact on their team’s functioning before they enter tight, time-critical situations. In aircraft management, the most highly rated captains spent more time building teamwork, including at early stages during team formation. Leaders can go above and beyond transactive coordinating by engaging with their followers and building strong relationships—ensuring that their organizations are a united front when disaster hits. Leaders can contribute to strong team identities by developing and acting upon organizational values. Prior to Hurricane Harvey, the Texas Medical Center and its constituent healthcare organizations had built uniquely resilient and value-based cultures. For example, Houston Methodist had crafted a mission statement based on integrity, compassion, accountability, respect, and excellence. The commitment to this vision was proven when, during Harvey, leadership responded to unanticipated needs of its staff and providers, including the provision of critical resources and assistance.

Accordingly, Methodist staff overcame serious challenges (including issues of transportation and housing) to maintain operations throughout the entirety of the hurricane. In a post-Harvey report led by its Chief Medical Officer, “these values lead to a workforce that makes well-intentioned decisions in both routine and challenging situations. This not only empowers staff, but it also provides a reliable foundation in which leadership can trust.” Indeed, the commitment of leadership...
Elicit feedback from followers. Maintain transparency and honesty in communication. Share similar stakes and lifestyles. Signal investment in employee well-being. Communicate expertise from prior experiences.

One key aspect of leadership during crisis, emphasized across all the areas of research we canvassed, was that of communication. Particularly because the value of such efforts may not be immediately clear or urgent to others. The Texas Medical Center’s investment in these steps ensured that its interactions were functional during even the brunt of Harvey. Administrators who understand the criticality of being well-prepared can make the difference between success and failure. One key to leadership during crises, emphasized across all the areas of research we canvassed, was that of communication. Intuitive as it may sound, leaders are valuable because of their ability to clearly, concisely, and authoritatively convey messages—and become invaluable for this very reason during crisis. To this end, leaders should ensure that their emergency plans involve reliable communication channels, building redundancy in the case of unexpected events and failures. This may even include unconventional means when necessary, as the Cajun Navy was a scrappy group of first-responders during Hurricane Harvey, operating largely through call help on mobile apps and social media. Likewise, leaders should consider all technological alternatives when reaching out in dire moments.

What Can Leaders Do in Times of Crisis?
Perhaps the most vital role of leaders is to guide their followers in the midst of chaos, ensuring the safety of their employees. Leaders must know the “right” time, place, and method of communication. However, it is important to note that being active does not just mean being physically present; it also entails being effective mentally. Leaders must know the “right” time, place, and method of communication.

In crises, we look to leadership for the central tasks of coordinating efforts, including making sense of dangerous and ambiguous contexts. Disasters can often overload the senses and thinking processes of those involved. In these moments of overwhelming information, leaders who can manage this sense-making to help direct their constituency. In a study of firefighters, Baran and Scott found that leadership under duress revolves around three such processes; distinguishing important events as emergent or persistent, understanding the role of risk and danger; and maintaining situational awareness and readiness to shift action. Leaders wield great power in shaping their followers’ responses to events, and can thus direct the attention and actions of their followers in a disaster.

An important caveat is that leaders should not simply communicate at their employees, but with them. They should strive to open clear and useful dialogues. Disaster response teams increase trust using the “attitude” of wisdom: wherein individuals trust knowledges and are comforted by the leaders’ wisdom or confidence and in combination with respectfulness in interactions. Accordingly, leaders should remain humble and accessible during crises. For example, executives can end their communications with an invitation to provide new information and feedback. By balancing receptiveness and authority, leaders can create atmospheres that elicit loyalty, feedback, and empathy—and consequently make strong, supported, and informed decisions.

Notably, however, leaders must also stay mindful of wisdom gleaned from emergency aircraft landings: put on your own oxygen mask before helping others. Event intensity and exhaustion take a toll on leaders, preventing them from performing well. Fortunately, the leadership behaviors described above can help buffer burnout, allowing leaders to engage effectively, personally and professionally, with their employees and their families.

Beyond developing transformational leadership styles, leaders can create atmospheres that elicit loyalty, feedback, and empathy—and consequently make strong, supported, and informed decisions.

What Can Leaders Do To Help Recovery and Rebuilding Efforts?
Finally, leaders can re-energize organizations through several avenues, including the consideration and provision of essential resources. Strong leaders exact policies to help their employees’ recovery (both personally and professionally) and corporate social responsibility initiatives to contribute to the larger community.

After Harvey passed through Houston, Rice University immediately developed and implemented several relief efforts. Campus leaders established a phone bank, in which volunteers answer systems to call staff, faculty, and students to determine safety, status, and needs. The provost also brought together multiple campus organizations to help organize and transport volunteers to assist community and campus members in need. The president of the school communicated openly and continuously with constituency, conveying leadership investment in the campus’ safety and recovery.

Across the rest of the Gulf Coast, local corporations provided emergency supplies, housing, loans for repairs—even emergency aircraft. The leaders of these organizations assume responsibility initiatives to help re-center their peoples’ thoughts and return to work. The personal toll of disasters has helped organizations provide necessary resources to their affected employees and call in additional reinforcements to close any gaps in service (e.g., transferring in other personnel to ensure smooth operations). These prepared leaders, adequately, leaders must be prepared to communicate and address the effects of disaster on their employees’ lives. Beyond developing transformational leadership styles, leaders can create atmospheres that elicit loyalty, feedback, and empathy—and consequently make strong, supported, and informed decisions.

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Perhaps the most vital role of leaders is to guide their followers in the midst of chaos, ensuring the safety of their employees. Leaders must know the “right” time, place, and method of communication. However, it is important to note that being active does not just mean being physically present; it also entails being effective mentally. Leaders must know the “right” time, place, and method of communication.

In crises, we look to leadership for the central tasks of coordinating efforts, including making sense of dangerous and ambiguous contexts. Disasters can often overload the senses and thinking processes of those involved. In these moments of overwhelming information, leaders who can manage this sense-making to help direct their constituency. In a study of firefighters, Baran and Scott found that leadership under duress revolves around three such processes; distinguishing important events as emergent or persistent, understanding the role of risk and danger; and maintaining situational awareness and readiness to shift action. Leaders wield great power in shaping their followers’ responses to events, and can thus direct the attention and actions of their followers in a disaster.

An important caveat is that leaders should not simply communicate at their employees, but with them. They should strive to open clear and useful dialogues. Disaster response teams increase trust using the “attitude” of wisdom: wherein individuals trust knowledges and are comforted by the leaders’ wisdom or confidence and in combination with respectfulness in interactions. Accordingly, leaders should remain humble and accessible during crises. For example, executives can end their communications with an invitation to provide new information and feedback. By balancing receptiveness and authority, leaders can create atmospheres that elicit loyalty, feedback, and empathy—and consequently make strong, supported, and informed decisions.

Notably, however, leaders must also stay mindful of wisdom gleaned from emergency aircraft landings: put on your own oxygen mask before helping others. Event intensity and exhaustion take a toll on leaders, preventing them from performing well. Fortunately, the leadership behaviors described above can help buffer burnout, allowing leaders to engage effectively, personally and professionally, with their employees and their families.

Beyond developing transformational leadership styles, leaders can create atmospheres that elicit loyalty, feedback, and empathy—and consequently make strong, supported, and informed decisions.

What Can Leaders Do To Help Recovery and Rebuilding Efforts?
Finally, leaders can re-energize organizations through several avenues, including the consideration and provision of essential resources. Strong leaders exact policies to help their employees’ recovery (both personally and professionally) and corporate social responsibility initiatives to contribute to the larger community.

After Harvey passed through Houston, Rice University immediately developed and implemented several relief efforts. Campus leaders established a phone bank, in which volunteers answer systems to call staff, faculty, and students to determine safety, status, and needs. The provost also brought together multiple campus organizations to help organize and transport volunteers to assist community and campus members in need. The president of the school communicated openly and continuously with constituency, conveying leadership investment in the campus’ safety and recovery.

Across the rest of the Gulf Coast, local corporations provided emergency supplies, housing, loans for repairs—even emergency aircraft. The leaders of these organizations assume responsibility initiatives to help re-center their peoples’ thoughts and return to work.
zational procedures to allow for proper recovery, including allowing leaves of absence for those affected by these crises. Multiple-matched efforts underscored leadership’s advocacy for well-being, creating atmospheres of greater resilience.

Importantly, leaders can also extend goodwill beyond their organization through corporate social responsibility initiatives. H-E-B, a major grocery retailer in Texas, exemplified this spirit of generosity through its investment in specialized relief facilities. After both natural and manmade disasters, its full-time Director of Emergency Preparedness coordinates employees to assist communities using mobile kitchens, disaster relief units with pharmacy and business services, and other resources. During Harvey, its water tanks reached the hard-hit town of Port Aransas prior to FEMA’s arrival. Its extensive outreach efforts communicate a message of belonging, creating loyalty in their community and customer base. By investing in charitable efforts, leaders can not only give back to society, but also demonstrate that they are “walking the talk” of their organizational values.

We must not underestimate the importance of the disaster’s narrative. Returning to an earlier point, individuals must make sense of and communicate the experience of crisis. For example, those who factually state correct information (e.g., “they should have evacuated”) can be construed as insensitive towards victims, ultimately destabilizing leadership legitimacy.8 Once again, the importance of communication and perspective is underscored. As professionals in the science of management, we must continually seek to learn from our experiences—even when they are as difficult and heart-wrenching as natural disasters. If managed effectively, disasters need not become the end-all-be-all of organizations. They can also create incredible opportunities for leaders to connect and gowith their organizations, as shown by the many examples of heroism herein. By being active participants during disaster, leaders can rapidly develop the type of trust that otherwise takes extended interactions.9 Figure 1 summarizes the ways in which leaders can make the most out of trying circumstances. Though crises may rob individuals of certain agency, these points illustrate that leaders are never powerless; at every stage of crisis, they can enact measures that result in stronger outcomes personally and professionally. Disasters thus become a stage upon which leaders can truly “live better” outside company walls, modeling important organizational values and affecting change for employees.

Hurricane Harvey and other recent, increasingly frequent crises have brought the need for effective disaster management to the forefront, crystallizing the need for strong and thoughtful leadership. In these moments of madness, leaders can and should develop and implement important strategies to protect their employees. Using Hurricane Harvey and other disasters as templates, we’ve discussed how leaders can turn crises into platforms for positive and lasting impact: anticipating risks, implementing potentially life-saving policies, modeling prosocial behavior, and extending their reach beyond the workplace. Through comprehensive action, leaders can make sure that their organizations are not treacherous waters but safe harbors for their employees.2

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Executive Roundtable

Keeping Lives in Motion in Employee Wellness and Business Results

The Wills Group is a private, family-owned company that operates a number of businesses across Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia in the comfort and convenience sectors. The company owns and operates Dash In Convenience Stores, Splash In Eco Friendly Car Washes, and SMO Motor Fuels, which is the largest wholesaler of Shell Fuel in the United States. They also own SMO Energy, which is a leading provider of propane heating oil and HVAC equipment in the Southern Maryland region. The Wills Group was founded in 1926 and is headquartered in La Plata, Maryland. The company has always placed significant value on people and community.

Participants

Lock Wills
Chairman, CEO, and President

Joe Wills
President, SMO Energy

Tara Handy
Director, Corporate Communications and Programs

Blackie Wills
Executive Vice President, Dash In

Businesses today face disruption from many angles and at a pace never seen before. As innovative companies transform to become disruptors and not the disrupted, their culture is a crucial success factor for winning—strategy alone is not enough. When focusing on talent, why has wellness crept into the narrative for many companies? What is the relationship to employee wellbeing, culture, and accelerating the execution of strategy? Merrick & Co. Director of Services, Sonya Meagher, and Executive Roundtable Editor, David Reimer, recently sat down with leaders at The Wills Group to discuss how a company with a strong legacy can create a modern, strong employee experience that is scalable and sustainable.

People + Strategy: What has made The Wills Group successful historically?

Lock: When you’ve been around for 92 years, you must be doing a few things right. There are three areas I point to as it relates to our company’s success:

1) Our financial strength and discipline have been a strength of the company throughout its history.
2) Over the years we have had a strong bottom line as it relates to our strategy. We have been able to anticipate shifts in the market, allowing us to adapt our strategy to navigate those shifts and continue to grow.
3) We have always had great people, people who are superior to our compeition.

This remains an important piece for us, especially in this full-employment economy and “war for talent.”

P+S: How does that legacy influence your current strategy and your plans for the future in this ever-changing business environment?

Blackie: To begin with, we have to build on our legacy around people and translate that into the change in our business model. While historically we have been a brick-and-mortar business, today we are constantly looking for opportunities to develop an additional platform to better interact with consumers in order to become their preferred choice in the convenience retailing space. A lot of this has been driven as a result of e-commerce continuing to expand. We are focused on building capabilities for our digital transformation because we believe it will help us in the long run with consumers.

We are not going to move away from brick and mortar to totally e-commerce, but there is more we can do. We are rethinking how we go to market with respect to convenience in our stores. For example, how do we expedite the customer experience without reducing customer touchpoints? This can entail ordering ahead or mobile payment.

The environment is changing such that these become requirements to meet the customer demands. As such, we need to adapt our culture to the future of the workforce and the business.

Joe: It’s critical that we think about our history with our consumers, which has been much more transactional. When our customers go to purchase fuel, 9 out of 10 of them are paying at the pump and not going in the store. How do we shift that transaction such that they step foot in our store? And once we get them in the door, how do we ensure we are delivering a top-notch customer experience? This has been a big shift of focus internally for us in terms of how we are thinking about customer experience and delivering an ideal experience. The changes in our business that we are describing require us to keep the best of our legacy culture but also build new elements of our culture.

P+S: How does the increased importance of employee wellbeing fit into your desired culture?

Lock: We have to continue to look for ways to excel and have a great employer reputation. Wellbeing is a critical part of staying competitive.

Joe: This is the bridge between wellbeing and our business strategy. To deliver top-notch customer experience, we need employees who feel that they are being taken care of and feel empowered.

Lock: Employee wellbeing and delivering a great customer experience is a driving force in our cultural transformation. We have always had a set of philosophies and values that have guided the business, with a strong commitment to customers and employees. We embarked on our corporate rebirth two years ago, which helped us present our best self to our customers. The rebirth also made us take a look at how we are presenting ourselves to each other internally with our employees. As a result of this, a key priority for us became focusing on employee wellbeing. As part of the rebirth, we aligned around a new vision, mission, and purpose, and rallied around a philosophy of Lives in Motion.

Tara: Lives in Motion has resonated across the organization. Everyone says it, does it, and believes in it. It is a notion of people first, and we wouldn’t be able to serve our customers without first serving our employees. Part of the reason it is resonating so much is the empowering leadership team is walking the walk. Our leaders have identified employee wellbeing as an area of opportunity and are putting a greater focus on investing in our people. Having that commitment from the top allows it to permeate throughout the organization.

Lock: In order for us to keep Lives in Motion, we recognize we need to create a strong employee experience. Creating a positive work environment is not only critical for our current talent, but it’s also critical for us as we recruit potential new talent. While we know we still have areas for improvement, we are moving in the right direction. It requires consistent messaging, leadership example, and proactive recognition.

Tara: Continuous improvement is what it is all about—from the leadership team all the way down to the employee level.

Lock: We are identifying the behavioral changes we want to drive in order to improve the culture for our employees.

P+S: Can you share about the employee wellbeing program you are rolling out?

Tara: Some of the tools and resources we have for our employees are underutilized. As part of our cultural journey, we launched a new employee wellbeing program called b. well. It is comprised of four pillars: b. healthy, b. secure, b. present, and b. safe. b. healthy emphasizes boosting your physical wellbeing, promoting positive habits such as getting enough sleep, and making nutritious choices. b. secure provides resources for our employees to make smarter decisions about money. We want our employees to have a path to financial freedom and for their families to have peace of mind as it relates to finances. b. present centers around encouraging employees to take their feelings and emotions into account every day so they can be present in the moment all the time. Our intent is to promote a respectful and supportive work environment for every employee in the organization. Finally, b. safe is all about...
It is not something you can turn on and off, but you can encourage it by putting a focus on people and their well-being. That is what b. well is all about. We are demonstrating to our employees that we care about them and are putting them first. We value them for all the work they do at the office, but also for who they are outside of the office. It is critical to us that our employees do not feel they have to come to work just to pick up a paycheck, but rather they come to work and feel valued and part of the family culture that is core to our DNA.

Lock: Another key component to all of this is the community engagement work that we are doing. We believe that it is not just about how an individual can be well. It is about how that individual can be well and use that wellness to help others to improve the lives of those in our community.

P+S: What kind of community engagement work do you do as a company?

Joe: For 92 years we have done a lot for the community. As part of our corporate brand refresh, we reaffirmed our commitment to being active in the community. We formalized two main signature programs that we operate today. The first is eliminating childhood hunger. We have partnered with No Kid Hungry at the national level and have increased the number of nonprofits at the regional and local levels to try to ensure that kids can focus on being kids and not have to focus on where their next meal will come from.

The second signature program is ensuring that people have safe and healthy homes to live in. When you think about food and homes, these are core assets to their well-being. The b. secure aspect of b. well is going to be for our employees.

We are trying to help our folks get to a better place in their financial situation. Obviously, they need to continue to perform on the job, but we think we can help them get in a better place and move their lives forward towards their goals and aspirations. This ties back to our overall purpose of keeping Lives in Motion.

Tara: This is another example of how b. well links to our overall culture journey. The reason many companies are not successful in changing a culture is because they think culture is something that is created from the top down. In that model, like changing perceptions, takes a lot of time. I look at culture as being all around us—it is evident, it is how people come to work and interact with people.

Joe: When I think about b. well holistically, it is all about support. How do we provide support for our employees? How do our employees provide support for each other? By utilizing the four pillars of b. well, we will help to educate ourselves and each other on important areas. If you are not healthy, you are obviously not going to be able to maximize your contributions to the business, to your colleagues, to your family, or to the community. We have a theory that being fully engaged with ourselves and with the business is going to help raise the engagement level across the board.

Lock: The financial counseling assistance we already offer to employees is being used broadly and will only be further improved under b. well. For example, we are planning to ask our counselors to discuss issues such as having trouble taking care of a sick mother, and if that parent has gotten out of hand, or planning for college tuition for their kids. This assistance has been growing in awareness and is a testament to how important the b. secure aspect of b. well is going to be for our employees.

We are trying to help our folks get to a better place in their financial situation. Obviously, they need to continue to perform on the job, but we think we can help them get in a better place and move their lives forward towards their goals and aspirations. This ties back to our overall purpose of keeping Lives in Motion.

She had the support of the company and those around her to help her realize her potential, not only with her family but also with the business. The support that helped to build her and the company is the same support we are looking to provide to our employees in their day-to-day lives.

P+S: In developing the b. well program, did you have an idea that there was a sense of entitlement from the employee population or was this just a natural cultural evolution?

Lock: I don’t think we ever thought or talked about entitlement. We are in a competitive environment for talented people and it is related to the fundamentals of caring—b. well is a way for us to distin- guish ourselves in a competitive market. We are small enough that we can touch people on a personal level. We may make mistakes along the way, but the way we handle ourselves and correct our mistakes is the real test for how seriously we are about employee well-being.

Blackie: A key priority for us at the last couple of years has been attracting the best talent out there and making our current employees happy. Through this endeavor we have made great progress on the priorities we identified. I also think the employer brand we are trying to enhance will become stronger and more important as we realize how this everyday becomes part of our daily work activity.

Joe: I think the employee engagement scores Lock mentioned are the most tangible way to measure success. However, a lot of culture and wellness is intangible. I hate to say that you know it when you see it or feel it, but I think some of that is true. I am not 100 percent sure what it looks like, but I think the employee engagement scores will help to tell the story. I also think that the way we show up and the level of engagement we have across the organization from an intangible perspective will show if we have been effective or not.

Blackie: From my perspective, it will also show up in talent acquisition and retention. How do we continue to project the awareness beyond our current employees? We will know we are successful if there is heightened awareness about employee wellness throughout the Baltimore/Washington D.C. region as being a company that best illustrates caring for its people.

Tara: It is also about usage. Are there generous upticks in the number of employees who are taking advantage of all that b. well has to offer? More important, over time, have we moved the needle on culture? Ultimately, we want to create a more positive work environment for employees.

P+S: If you could look back in your own career, what advice would you give yourself in working smarter on how you managed your own life and energy?

Lock: The ability to shut down and disconnect is important to me personally. I don’t know that I have any particular piece of advice beyond making clear what your priorities are—both family and work. Sometimes there are com- promises and striking the right balance is something we as people struggle with sometimes. I think the extent to which you can talk about it is healthy and finding time to talk about it is important.
Feel good about relationships (with)

First, let me point out that Marriott’s global unity.

Global Unity Day is one of the dialogues about these values at all levels.

Marriott, our core values make us who we are. Our pride in our commitment to diversity & inclusion.

We are currently number two on the Top 50 List of Best Companies in our industry.

We embrace change. Success is never final.

We are constantly adding new brands, new global locations, and new guest experiences.

We act with integrity. We hold our

organization with transparency and legal standards in all areas: our guests, our employees, our supply chain partners, and our commitment to human rights and social responsibility.

We serve our world. We were among the first to embrace the need to make a positive and sustainable impact wherever we do business.

You can see how the Global Unity Day is simply an outgrowth of a long and robust corporate culture.

Emphasizing the power of relationships and the imperative to be kind as a foundation for wellbeing in both our personal and professional lives, Marriott International celebrates this holistic viewpoint. People + Strategy

associate editor Kathleen Ross spoke with David Rodriguez, executive

vice president and global chief human resources officer for Marriott International, about how Marriott emphasizes employee appreciation and global unity.

Putting People First Is the Marriott Way

P+S: The characteristics and mindsets at the heart of Marriott’s Global Unity Day are desperately needed in today’s organizations, as well as society at large. What was the key to getting started on the journey of celebrating unity, diversity, and kindness in both managers and staff at Marriott?

David: Global Unity Day is one of the core components of Marriott’s Diversity & Inclusion initiative. We take great pride in our commitment to diversity & inclusion. We are currently number two on the Top 50 List of Best Companies for Diversity. This commitment started with the leadership of Arne Sorenson, so it is firmly embedded in the DNA of the company.

In addition to being part of the Marriott family values and style, we serve in the hospitality industry, so being “people-centric” is imperative to our business model. We talk about “opening doors to everyone,” including our associates and our guests.

It is important for any organization to articulate their core values. At Marriott, our core values make us who we are. While they were initiated at the leadership level, we have ongoing dialogues about these values at all levels and across all geographies:

We put people first. J.W. Marriott was one of the first business executives who said, “take care of associates and they will take care of the customers.”

We pursue excellence. Since the beginning, we pride ourselves in superior customer service.

We brace change. Success is never final.

We are constantly adding new brands, new global locations, and new guest experiences.

We act with integrity. We hold ourselves to uncompromising ethical and legal standards in all areas: our guests, our employees, our supply chain partners, and our commitment to human rights and social responsibility.

We serve our world. We were among the first to embrace the need to make a positive and sustainable impact wherever we do business.

You can see how the Global Unity Day is simply an outgrowth of a long and robust corporate culture.

P+S: How have your leaders found ways to balance the need for performance with the desire to create a culture of kindness and wellbeing for your associates? Sometimes it seems those are competing objectives.

David: We think these two objectives go hand-in-hand. We believe that the fundamental trust of associates in the leadership of the company is what drives performance. We invest enormous resources in communication and training.

The most senior executives are routinely visiting our properties and spending time speaking with associates all over the world.

Successful associates think in business terms. We tell them we want them to: • Feel good about themselves (unlike all of the training options available to them).

• Feel good about relationships (with co-workers and with customers).

• Feel good about the company (understand the basic business model and feel proud of working for Marriott).

Employees are anxious to improve the performance of the company and to expand the culture of Marriott. Several years ago, we began giving employees a variety of volunteer culture opportunities with the company. We now have a vast network of employee volunteers who help define and take the “Marriott Way,” both the business and the culture of the company. This provides a wonderful development opportunity to the employee volunteers and is also a huge value-add for the company. Employees are sharing information and excitement with each other—this approach creates buzz in a way that traditional internal communication initiatives never would.

P+S: How does Marriott hold leaders accountable for modeling this behavior? Are leaders expected/encouraged to manage their own growth and development as well as grow their people?

David: Let me say that not every leader at Marriott has mastered the challenging characteristics and values that I have outlined. But I will say, you don’t get ahead if you are not seriously on this journey. You can’t take your way through an example of how seriously our leaders take the need to live out our values is a recent LinkedIn blog by our EVP and General Counsel Rena Reiss.

P+S: Yes, that blog was impressive! We don’t often see a challenge to be kind coming out of a General Counsel’s office. Reiss herself observes, “Some skeptics among us questioned the sentiment in the context of the Law Department. After all, aren’t we supposed to be tough? Hard-nosed? Well, yes, at the appropriate time. But that doesn’t mean we have to lose our humanity in the process.”

David: That is a real reflection of how Marriott leaders think about the role of leadership. And, because we are so transparent in the values and management style we aspire to—there is feedback for leaders from below and sideways, as well as above. Being authentic, as well as curious and committed to your own learning and growth, is seen as table stakes. Leadership decisions are driven as much by culture as by all of the other variables that come into play.

P+S: How did you go about scaling these initiatives across vast geographies and cultures? What insights might you share with smaller and/or newer enterprises?

David: First, let me point out that Marriott started small and over the years became the first multinational, diversified company that we are today.

Luckily, early on we defined core values. The five values I mentioned earlier are referred to as Lasting Values. The same values that allowed us to be a successful small business also guided us and sustained us as we grew.

Sound advice for all companies, regardless of size or stage, is to get crystal clear on what is truly a core value and then allow for variation across generations, geographies, and cultures.

Obviously, flexibility is important. Values and cultural initiatives show up somewhat differently in different parts of Marriott’s enormous global network. We have worked hard at empowering associates to help us identify how values and culture shows up at the local level. What engages employees and makes them feel included and cared for is constantly changing.

We have worked hard at empowering associates to help us identify how values and culture shows up at the local level. What engages employees and makes them feel included and cared for is constantly changing.

What engages employees and makes them feel included and cared for in Baghdad might look very different than in Brooklyn.

Like most other businesses, we have to manage differences across the various generations currently in the workforce. We had to do some real soul-searching when top-performing millennial candidates and associates began showing up with tattoos and beards.

For many years, these were forbidden at Marriott (and in the hospitality industry for that matter). It made us take a step back and reflect on our core values. Were we willing to live our mantra of “opening doors to everyone”? We now allow tasteful tattoos and beards (to be clear, not all tattoos and beards are equal, so still some judgement in play).

I have learned over the years that the fundamental spirit of leaders has an enormous and lasting impact on the culture and performance of an organization. The Marriott family and Arne Sorenson (the first non-Marriott family CEO)—while brilliant and very business savvy—have all embodied leadership styles of respect, humility, and gratitude. They led by being first among equals.

Throughout Marriott’s history, we have thought about growing our business and deepening our culture in terms of planting seeds and then letting them grow. We have faith in our people—they will help us nurture the seeds of unity, civility, inclusion, and diversity.
Leadership and Deep Change: The Business Case for Organizational Virtuousness

By Brad Winn

"W"e live in a time when it is easy to feel over-whelmed by the re-lentless pace of change, the revolution in business models, and the complexity of global, national, and social dynamics that challenge the very nature of long-term planning. Some leaders respond only by working harder and asking their colleagues to do the same. Many however are discovering that for them and their colleagues to do the same. Many only by working harder and asking that challenge the very nature of long-term change, the revolution in business models, and the complexity of the relentless pace of change.

One cannot ignore change. The only way to effectively respond to internal change is with internal change. "When internal [what the organization is like] and external [what the world is like] alignment is lost, the organization faces a choice: either adapt or take the road to slow death."

To illustrate, Quinn tells of a time when he was consulting with a top management team of a large company filled with bright, sincere, and hardworking leaders. The executives were excited to roll out a new strategy that would require change throughout the organization. They anticipated this would improve quality, morale, productivity, and profit. In the midst of their enthusiasm, Quinn told them of a different company in a similar situation whose strategic planning effort, three years later, was deemed a miserable failure. The executives were puzzled by Quinn’s explanation but instead he asked them why they thought the plan failed.

Quinn then tells what happened next. “A long, heavy silence fell in the room. Finally, one of the most influential members of the group said, ‘The leaders of the organization didn’t change their behavior.’ I nodded and pointed out that they themselves had made a lot of assumptions about the behavior that was going to change in others. Now I challenged them: Identify one time when you said that you were going to change your behavior. Again, there was a long pause. Something important and unusual was happening. The members of this group were suddenly seeing that few people ever clearly see—the incon-gruity of asking for change in others while failing to exhibit the same level of commitment in themselves." 1

One of the most effective ways to lead others to new heights and transform our organizations is to model the necessary changes in ourselves. As M.K. Gandhi wisely stated, ‘You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”

Yet as leaders and as human beings we are sometimes naturally defensive when confronted with a need to change ourselves, especially when challenged with a need for a change that goes to the heart of who we are—our character. "To thwart our defense mecha-nisms and bypass slow death, we must confront first our own hypocrisy and cowardice. We must recognize the lies we have been telling ourselves. We must acknowledge our own weakness, greed, insensitivity, and lack of vision and courage. If we do so, we begin to understand the clear need for a course correction, and we slowly begin to rein-vent our self.”

In the end, one of the most powerful ways to change others is to begin with the difficult work of changing ourselves at a deeper level and model the way. "When we experience failure, it is natural to externalize the problem—to blame some factor that was outside our control. Once in a while this actually does happen. But I have seldom heard anyone say, ‘The change didn’t happen because I failed to model the change process for everyone. I failed to reinvent myself. It was a failure of courage on my part.’ One key to successful lead-ership is continuous personal change. Personal change is a reflection of our inner growth and empowerment. Empowered leaders are the only ones who can induce real change.”

Living Better to Lead Better

Living better can take on many aspects of both personal and professional focus. I recently interviewed Eric Severson, former co-CHRO of The Gap and cur-rent Chief People Officer at DaVita Kidney Care. He shared part of his journey toward development and balance. I’ve decided that no matter what hits me at work or in life, in order for me to be my best I have to energetically carve out time each day for four well-being priorities. Of course, these are not novel ideas, but my prioritization and commitment to these fundamen-tals are new. First, I now believe that almost everyone including myself needs at least seven hours of sleep. It just has to happen for long-term effectiveness. Second, what we all know from science is that ‘we are what we eat’ so, of course, nutrition is a no-brainer. Third is what I call ‘movement.’ As humans we’re not made to just sit. Fourth is medita-tion and mindfulness. With regard to prioritization, I have force-ranked them as follows: sleep, eat, move, meditate. If there is insufficient time in any given day, meditation falls off first, followed by movement, eating, and sleeping.”

Leading better does indeed start with living better and as Severson points out, there are many ways to live a more balanced life, including having the courage to be more conscious of our life choices and developing ourselves, our priorities, and our life choices. This includes taking regular time to be mindful of opportunities to improve not only our professional process, but also the goodness of our lives in general.

Character Strengths and Virtues

Positive change begins with mindful-ness, introspection, and awareness of
Making a positive transformation in our own character provides a moral authority foundation upon which leaders can powerfully stand to begin others, teams, and organizations to begin the journey toward meaningful and lasting change.

Linking Theory + Practice

Leadership and Deep Change: The Business Case for Organizational Virtuousness

One of the earliest thinkers to articulate a theory of virtue was Socrates, which was later translated into Latin as virtus. Aristotle found the concept development of character and one’s inner state as a prerequisite for reaching one’s full potential. Aristotle’s virtue is related to the Greek notion of arete or “human flourishing or achieving one’s full potential.” In Greek society, it was assumed that virtue was essential for experiencing a state of arete. As the notion of virtue evolved, it came to more specifically connote particular forms of excellence, namely moral and intellectual excellence, signifying the highest good that a human could attain and was linked to the good society. In essence, virtue is about living as a moral and honorable being, and one who is virtuous strives to cultivate such a state. Nearly all accounts of virtue society, it was assumed that virtue was essential for experiencing a state of arete. As the notion of virtue evolved, it came to more specifically connote particular forms of excellence, namely moral and intellectual excellence, signifying the highest good that a human could attain and was linked to the good society. In essence, virtue is about living as a moral and honorable being, and one who is virtuous strives to cultivate such a state.

CHARACTER STRENGTHS & VIRTUES

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Organizational Virtuousness and Performance

According to their research article entitled “Virtuousness in Organization,” in the Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship, Cameron and Winn state that “an extensive amount of evidence has been produced showing that virtues in individuals are associated with desirable outcomes. For example, honesty, transcendent meaning, caring and giving behavior, gratitude, hope, empathy, love, and forgiveness, among other virtues, have been found to predict desired outcomes, such as an individual’s commitment, satisfaction, motivation, positive emotions, effort, physical health, and psychological health…. That said, few leaders invest in practices or processes that do not produce higher returns to shareholders, profitability, productivity, and customer satisfaction. Without visible payoff, in other words, those with stewardship for organizational resources ignore virtuousness and consider it of little relevance to important stakeholders. Hence, if associations between virtuousness and desired outcomes were observed in organizations, evidence of pragmatic utility would be of value. This has been the motive for investigating the relationships between virtuousness and performance in organizations. A few studies have explored these relationships, and the key results of those investigations are summarized in this section.”

One study investigated eight independent business units randomly selected within a large corporation in the transportation industry. Organizational virtuousness scores for each business unit were measured by survey items measuring compassion, integrity, forgiveness, trust, and optimism. Organizational performance outcomes consisted of objective measures of productivity (unit levels), quality (customer claims), and employee commitment (voluntary turnover) from company records, as well as employee ratings of productivity, quality, profitability, customer retention, and compensation. Organizations with higher virtuousness scores had significantly higher productivity, quality outputs, profitability, productivity, customer retention, and lower employee turnover. Another investigation of a larger sample of organizations was conducted across 16 industries (e.g., retail, automotive, consulting, health care, manufacturing, financial services, nonprofit). The same measures of organizational performance were obtained. Profitability (net income relative to total sales), quality, innovativeness, employee turnover, and customer retention were all more favorable as outcomes. Organizations scoring higher in virtuousness were significantly more profitable, employing more resources to competitors, industry averages, stated goals, and past performance, they also achieved significantly higher performance on other outcome measures.

Another study exploring potential causal associations between virtuousness and performance was carried out in 29 nursing units in a large, comprehensive health care system. A multirater study was conducted to investigate the effects of organizational virtuousness on indicators of performance. Multiday sessions were held with the nursing leaders and directors in this health system who explicitly virtuous to their virtuous practices. On each performance indicator, units that in overall virtuousness outperform units that were lower on virtuousness. Virtuousness as viewed as a combination of individual virtues accounted for higher performance.

Insights for Executives and HR Leaders

Executives are discovering that for them to lead better, they need to focus on living better. In this era of fast-paced change, rather than working harder, executives might consider slowing down and looking inward for opportunities to reinvent themselves. Employees throughout our organizations are hungry for leaders who are willing to change before they ask others to change. Modeling positive leadership changes will more likely inspire others to do likewise.

Leaders and employees who are mindful of the principles of positive change are then in a better position to help create a culture of virtuousness in organizations where integrity, compassion, creativity, honesty, and gratitude are accepted as “the way we do things around here.” If an organization has a culture that values honesty, fairness, and forgiveness, then the research shows that supervisors and subordinates are more likely to positively work through conflicts, not only positively associated with employee wellbeing, but also with organizational performance including higher productivity, quality outputs, profitability, customer retention, and lower employee turnover. Caring leadership styles in their own lives, leaders are in a better position to engage in embedding virtuous practices into their company cultures which in turn becomes a strategic advantage for their organizations.

Brad Winn, Ph.D., is a senior editor for the People + Strategy journal and a leadership professor at Utah State University. He is an award-winning instructor who presents regularly at national events. He can be reached at brad. w inn@usu.edu or see www. brunchman.us/bradwinn.

References

Insight into Action


By Marc Sokol

This issue of People + Strategy is filled with research and experience-based contributions of how we can live better so we can lead better. After reading these, here are some of my insights to guide action.

Sustainable leadership requires self-care. Despite all you may have read on Level 5 leadership and servant leadership, that doesn’t mean you should exhaust yourself to get the job done. A career in leadership is a marathon, not a race. As Alison Eyring writes in her book, Pacing for Growth, you have to pace yourself if you are to compete at an elite level. Susan Mecca similarly reminds us, if you want to be your best self in the worst of times, you have to care for yourself, even as you take care of others.

Self-care, having an integrated life, and being more grounded and conscious does not have to be at odds with organizational performance. Indeed, research cited by Stewart Friedman, Bob Rosen and Emma Kate Swann, William Schiemann, and Lowinn Kibbey all demonstrate that these actions help leaders outperform those who avoid such opportunities. This isn’t magic, but like magic it takes planning, practice, and refinement. Nearly every contributor shares the story of leaders learning to reshape their mindset and behaviors, of designing experiments to test new ways of integrating life inside and outside of the workplace, and pausing long enough to find out for yourself and from those you care about what is working better. The magic bullet is realizing there is no magic bullet.

Intentionality and innovative capacity makes a big difference. How can you not be impressed by Leslie Wireback’s story of the LCSWMA leadership team building wellbeing into their competitive talent strategy? As she reminds us, it’s not likely to be a one-time discussion either; the leadership team revisits their approach annually, just as many companies revisit key decisions so they can modify or recommit. That’s also a way to ensure the larger leadership team remains mindful of their choices and actions. For another example look...
back at our executive roundtable and see how a family-owned business addresses the same opportunity; and yes, they see it as an opportunity, not just a challenge.

Maintain a beginner’s mind. I know, it sounds a bit woo-woo, but it’s a critical action if you are to maintain the course. A beginner’s mind, just as we learn from mindfulness training, is choosing to retain an attitude of discovery, to be willing to start over again and again, and not judge yourself or give up because you didn’t get it absolutely right. As we do this, we discover how to learn from experience, to experiment and develop patience with ourselves. To see examples how this translates to leadership behavior, go to Perspectives to read Andy Lee and the commentaries that follow. If you want one simple action you can begin immediately, start to pay attention to what captures your attention.

Discover what it means for you to be grounded, conscious, or to tap into your own Life GPS. There is a lot of consistency among different contributors about the domains of living better. Any of the frameworks among the feature articles can serve you well. They ask you to assess, prioritize, plan, experiment, and refine action. Bob Rosen’s Grounded model is a good illustration pointing to: physical health (diet, sleep, routine physicals), emotional health (resilience, emotional self-awareness), spiritual health (feeling connected to something greater than yourself), social health (how you interact with others, particularly those who matter most in various domains of your life), vocational health (having a sense of career purpose), and intellectual health (adaptive, open to a both/and vs. either/or mindset). Moving from the dance floor to the balcony, as Scott Eblin encourages, is a way to see yourself from different vantage points, reminding us that we look and sometimes act different to ourselves and others depending upon where we stand.

Understanding what fulfillment means for someone else and being able to foster that is how you really win the war for talent. Professionally I work with many senior executives; almost all are deeply engaged on a day-to-day basis. How many really feel fulfilled? You would be surprised. Or maybe not.

The smartest leaders know that helping someone else feel fulfilled increases loyalty and commitment. Your own fulfillment matters too. Schiemann’s approach may be just what your talent department needs to consider in developing leaders of the future.

Leadership virtues are not just philosophical musings; they represent the mindset that fosters intentional behavior. Go back to the figure in Brad Winn’s Linking Theory + Practice column; these virtues are ancient and new; a philosophy of living and a map to leadership that matters. David Rodriguez’s description of Marriott International shows what this can mean on a large scale. Remember, just one leader can also begin to change the world around them: imagine the General Counsel advocating for the importance of being kind, even when giving disappointing news to their counterparts. This is Marriott, and if you work in an organizational oversight function, this could be you too.

You can be at your best even when crisis hits. Many of us, when tired, hungry, stressed, or ill, don’t make our best decisions and don’t act the way we hope we would under normal circumstances. If you want an alternative, go back to Mecca’s article and notice the actions that help us navigate uncertainty, ambiguity, and strain. Entire business units and organizations can similarly benefit from the research of Julie Dinh and Eduardo Salas as they outline steps leaders can take to prepare for crisis, actions that matter when you are in the eye of the hurricane, and how to help with recovery and rebuilding. In some ways the truest test of leadership values is how we act when times are challenging. Some of us are wired to act in ways that will be helpful, others have learned from experience what and what not to do; regardless of your temperament, you can take steps to be at your best even in the worst of times.

Take care of your team and let them take care of you. The best leaders I know understand that leading is more than individual performance. They focus on clear communication, identifying and removing barriers to others’ performance, making his or herself available to help but also knowing how to get out of the way. And they do all of that, vertically, horizontally, and virtually, while conveying a clear sense they are committed to each person on the team and not just for the tasks they perform. That becomes a mutual sense of deep support; you know it when it exists and you can’t fake it when it doesn’t. If interested, read more on team effectiveness in our Spring 2018 issue devoted to that topic.

Go off the beaten path. Thirty years later I still recall a quote attributed to Alexander Graham Bell, etched into the wall of a Bell Laboratories facility where I worked. “Every now and then go off the beaten path. You will be amazed what your discover.” Give yourself permission to explore adjacent ideas, let your mind wander, and touch something tangential. What you find may become the wellspring of innovation when you get back to your core business. That pause in your daily routine may be the start of living better and leading better.

Don’t take yourself so seriously. The final insight I’d like to offer comes from Ben Zander, co-author of The Art of Possibility. He shares the story of a leader asking agitated employees to “remember Rule Number 6,” which was code for, “don’t take yourself so g-d damn seriously.” When asked about the other rules, the leader responds, “there aren’t any!” Sometimes life is just a little better when you are laughing.

We see a clear trend as companies move from wellness programs to focus on more holistic wellbeing, from asking employees to negotiate their own work-life balance to discovering opportunities for work and life integration, from engagement to fulfillment. In this spirit I challenge each of you to consider what has been working for you and your company, and to invite discussion with others about what the next level could look like. You may be amazed to discover what is possible.

References
Theme of the Issue
Recently we have seen media attention drawn to CEOs who resign from presidential commissions, take a public stand on gun sales, or shift global operations in the face of economic tariffs. These types of values-based actions at the executive level may draw highly visible support and criticism. We have also seen organizations take a public stand on products they will or will not carry or on services for which employees want a say in whether or not to deliver. Increased public attention has been paid to the long-standing challenge of harassment in the workplace, fueled by the power of social media (e.g., #MeToo). Organizations continue to face the risks and pressures around ethical transgressions. There are many lessons that we can draw from what works (or not) across domains. While there is an increasing potential to succumb to polarization and conflict around any or all these issues, this issue illustrates productive ways to give voice to values.

Most of us want to find ways to voice and act on our values in the workplace and to do so effectively. However there are times and situations when we believe we know what is right and want to do it, but we experience external pressures—from colleagues, customers, or other stakeholders—to do otherwise. As a result, we are not sure how to raise our concerns. This issue of People + Strategy is about values-driven leadership and actions that help people to think strategically how to implement, discuss and hold true to their values—whether that involves ethical business practices or finding a voice around larger societal challenges. Prospective contributors can learn more at GivingVoiceToValues.org.

Topics to Consider
• Case illustrations of leaders and organizations learning how to constructively give voice to values
• Speaking to values as cultural transformation
• How to move from an adversarial compliance approach to a more participative ethics approach
• The intersection of authority with autonomy among leaders in the military
• Embedding values-based discussions into employee onboarding
• How teams can give voice to values
• Speaking up in high-risk situations
• How to recognize, manage, and use emotions when giving voice to values
• How HR, risk, and compliance groups partner to foster ethical organizations

We are looking for articles that have the following attributes:

Strategic importance: Should be an article to educate business leaders about a concept, provide the basis for a decision, or influence their thinking.

Impact: Do not just present research findings, but also discuss applications and impact.

Actionable: Focus on solutions, not just descriptions of issues.

Grounded: Based on research, theory (with examples), or proven practice to provide a “proof of concept;” provides frameworks that can be applied in a variety of situations.

Point of view: Make a case for thinking about a topic differently.

Readable: Non-academic prose and minimal jargon.

Audience
The typical reader of People + Strategy is an internal HR executive seeking actionable and practical advice based in sound evidence. Our reader wants to be challenged by new practices, approaches, and models. Our readers are experienced, knowledgeable, and work in and for a variety of organizations across the globe. They turn to People + Strategy for clear, actionable, and thought-provoking articles on current topics.

Submission Process
We encourage submissions of one-page proposals first to the editors prior to submitting the completed article. All proposals will be reviewed by the editors and returned with comments. If accepted, we will then guide you on the development of your article.

Criteria for evaluation include significance of contribution to the field of human resource management; usefulness of knowledge; timeliness of content; originality; provocative nature of content; quality of the data supporting the points; logical; and well-written.

Writing Guidelines
Articles should range from 2,500 to 3,500 words. When applicable or available, include high-resolution graphics or charts to help present any complex information in a visual format.

Submission Information
All proposals should be sent to editor@hrps.org. Please designate in the subject line that the submission is for the Summer 2019 issue: Giving Voice to Values.

Feb. 9, 2019: Proposals due. Submit a one-page overview of the article concept with the author’s bio.

Feb. 16, 2019: Feedback provided.

Mar. 2, 2019: Articles due. Submit a well-written draft ready to be edited.

Mar. 8, 2019: Feedback provided. We will indicate if the article is accepted, and, if so, what revisions are needed.

Apr. 10, 2019: Final articles due.

Copyright Policy
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After college, Merck & Co., Inc. Executive Vice President of Human Resources at Merck & Co., 69,000 I believe we are at an inflection -...on the business.

Be a continuous learner. I value people who are intellectually curious. Our world is moving at such a rapid pace that we all should have a thirst for learning. For example, as a baby boomer, I have a millennial coach who helps strengthen my technology literacy. This helps me as a CHRO to develop talent and branding strategies that are targeted to the generation coming into the workforce. How are we evolving to attract millennials to the company? Be agile, flexible, and comfortable with ambiguity and change. It’s the new normal.

Build the best, diverse teams. The higher you move up in a company, the more you count on others to help you innovate and deliver results.

LC: How do you think the role of the CHRO is going to change in the next five years?

MGW: I believe we are at an inflection point in HR. There are trends such as demographic changes, technology adoption, and changing capabilities that will result in significant changes in both the workforce and workplace. CHROs will play an essential role in helping companies transform how work gets done, where it gets done, and the type of culture that is required to achieve this. It’s the new normal.

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CHROs can also provide peer feedback on how they are “showing up” as a member of the team, identify areas where senior leaders can collaborate more effectively, or move key talent from one part of the business to another. Establishing credibility and trust with individual team members is essential to leveraging key partnerships with your C-suite peers. There is a balance between keeping confidences and taking action when needed. It takes nuance and judgment to navigate certain issues. But it’s such an important part of the role and CHROs are uniquely positioned to do this.

Having a CEO and senior leadership team that understands talent is also key to success. There is a lot we can do in HR, but do you have the most talented people in your most critical roles?

LC: How does company culture contribute to employee wellness?

MGW: As a healthcare company, we feel a significant responsibility for ensuring we are building a culture of health and well-being at Merck. We have two overarching goals: (1) improve health in targeted areas and (2) optimize a culture of well-being. The enterprise framework for our employee health and wellness initiatives is entitled LIVE IT. The framework was launched globally and focuses on four critical areas: prevention, nutrition, movement, and emotional/financial.

The good news about the framework is that our markets outside the U.S. have the flexibility to establish local initiatives to support our corporate goals. We’ve made great progress and recently received external recognition for our work.

LC: If you could work on solving any problem in the world of work, what would it be?

MGW: I would find a way to ensure people—regardless of socioeconomic status—have equal access to a quality education and healthcare. The current disparity is at the root cause of so many problems in our society, particularly when it comes to ensuring we have diverse talent with the skills and capabilities to fill the myriad of roles in our society.

To support education, Merck establishes relationships with universities to make sure the skills being taught are relevant to the job market. We approach the universities to help them understand where business is going and what needs are evolving, especially AI, machine learning, biologics, and data analytics.

My colleagues in other industries have been involved at the community college level, emphasizing skill up to enter the workforce. Other colleagues are working on apprenticeships and promoting that model in the U.S. We are all focused on teaching skills that are keeping pace with the world of work.

LC: What specific mental, physical, emotional, or spiritual activities do you engage in to keep yourself operating at your optimum level?

MGW: I enjoy working out several times a week. I particularly enjoy the social aspects of attending classes such as Zumba, Fusion, Pilates, and Barre. It’s important to occasionally take a break and refuel, which includes our family vacations and long weekends for my husband and I. Unwinding and reenergizing is the goal.

LC: The future of HR is...

MGW: Essential in transforming the workforce and the workplace necessary for building competitive advantage, accelerating profitable growth, and creating a culture where diverse talent can thrive and grow.

After 12 years of service to Merck, Mirian Graddick-Weir is retiring November 30, 2018.
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