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Could it be possible that gaming is a form of leadership training?
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THE DESIRE TO BE INCLUDED

LOOK at the world we live in today. Phileas Fogg would take far less than 80 days to travel around the world in 2014. And if he didn’t understand cultural aspects or visa requirements of a country, he wouldn’t book up encyclopaedias or approach people as his first point of call. No, he’d seek the wisdom of search engines, which though are rich in content, are unfortunately uncritical.

In our workplaces, technology and easy access to information have transformed team dynamics. People are bombarded each day with ideas. We are highly-connected, easily forming groups of hundreds and thousands in a matter of minutes on virtual platforms.

Quite naturally, our expectations of each other and of our organisations shift accordingly. We expect speed, access to information and any help we may require. The rest of this week’s pages dive deeper into this topic of inclusiveness.

Have a great week ahead.

Regards,

Lily Cheah
Editor, myStarjob.com

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**TIPS FOR YOUNG LEADERS**

Are you a talented writer passionate about leadership development? Leaderonomics is looking to expand its editorial team! Interested individuals can write to:

mystarjob@leaderonomics.com

Do you have an opinion you’d like to share with us? Write to us at mystarjob@leaderonomics.com. Please provide your full name, occupation (designation and employer) and telephone number.

Want more content sent directly to your email? Subscribe to our Leader’s Digest by emailing leaderdigest@leaderonomics.com

Have a great week ahead.

Regards,

Lily Cheah
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**SEE THE BIG PICTURE**

Being able to take a step back and see the bigger picture is very important.

According to Bob Gandossy, founder of the Top Companies for Leaders survey, providing guidance is becoming more difficult as the world has become more uncertain and complicated.

Leaders should be able to get their heads around these complications in order to lead their teams with clarity and credibility.

Get hungry for understanding and start seeing things from a bird’s eye view in order to fully comprehend issues.

**VALUES MATTER MORE THAN HIERARCHY**

Today, credibility comes with hierarchy to a lesser extent. People assess the value systems of leaders and seek people who can inspire them and who they genuinely want to follow.

This happens not only for leaders, but organisations as well. According to an article on CNN by Susanne Cargiulo, “Research does indeed show that an increasing number of people, particularly among the younger generations, want to work for organisations that do good and have clear values.”

Assess your own value system. What drives you? Are you able to inspire others to follow these same values?

**GET CREATIVE WITH “STUPID” IDEAS**

According to Ronald Heifetz, director of the Centre for Public Leadership at Harvard Kennedy School, you must be willing to explore theories and different ideas as this is what keeps you ahead. Helps you resolve issues and gets your creative juices flowing.

Creativity and the ability to think out of the box are highly prized as we move towards a knowledge-based economy. Exercise your creativity by pushing yourself to consider wacky possibilities.

Ask questions, throw out ideas, and let your creativity flow no matter how “stupid” they may sound in your head at first. There may be valuable gems there that could be groundbreaking ideas.
Are you a doubting Thomas or a daring leader?

By ROSHAN THIRAN
roshan.thiran@leaderonomics.com

I was recently browsing a dictionary when I happened to chance across the word “daring” and saw the above.

I have always believed “being daring” and taking risks was a huge part of being a leader and so I was surprised to see that daring not only means willing to take risks but also “seeking” out risks.

I started recollecting key “success” moments in my own life and I soon realised that much of it involved being recklessly brave and seeking out “danger”. In the process, success was achieved. Almost 15 years ago, I returned to Malaysia to run an aviation business. I knew nothing about the aviation industry but I knew that the business needed daring leadership to take it forward.

In spite of it being a highly regulated industry, we managed to transform the business by proactively pushing the boundaries.

Colin Powell once expressed his bold leadership as “You don’t know what you can get away with until you try.” Yet, in spite of a more level-playing field to be bold, daring and take risks, most young people do not take risks or even fight for what they believe in anymore. They prefer to remain in their comfort zone and preserve status quo, as long as their personal needs are met – regardless if they think differently. This passivity amongst leaders means there is less innovation and much more stress as people suffer in silence.

Leaders like Gandhi, Helen Keller, Jeff Bezos, Jack Welch and Nelson Mandela, stood out as they defied industry norms, social traditions and human beliefs and boldly fought for their ideas and causes.

They stood up and the world became a better place for their brave, bold, risk-taking initiatives. Our country does not need status quo leaders. We need brave leaders willing to do things better and differently to make this world a better place.

THE STATUS QUO LEADER

At the turn of the 20th century, with motorcars booming, the gasoline-powered internal combustion engine in cars began to have issues with the fuel that it ran on. The engine “juddering” condition became known as “knock” or “ping” and no solution could be found until Thomas Midgley developed tetra-ethyl lead (TEL) which contained lead but solved the car problem. Even at that time, lead was known to cause harmful effects in human blood, bones, and brains leading to lead poisoning. Yet, TEL became part of common life and cars.

For years, Midgley received numerous letters from distinguished scientists around the world, urging him to stop the “creep- ing and malicious poison” of tetra-ethyl lead. Even in his own plant, people died and reporters started questioning General Motors (GM), the company Midgley worked for instead of creating a brave new world with TEL, Midgley instead held a press conference and sniffed the fluid and soaked his hands in it, proving that it was not dangerous. He loved the status quo and intended to keep it. During that time, Midgley took a prolonged vacation to cure himself of lead poisoning, writing in his journal that, “after about a year’s work in organic lead, I find that my lungs have been affected and that it is necessary to drop all work and get a large supply of fresh air.”

He went to Florida for a break, yet upon his return, did not change the status quo. Seventeen years later, he would go on to win awards. Yet, millions of people would indirectly die because Midgley was “just doing his job”, so he and his bosses could retain status quo and turn in a tidy profit.

Are you a leader like Midgley? Ignoring the need to change and defending the status quo to ensure maximisation of profit?

Midgley did not rest with lead usage but rather about fulfilling their calling and making mistakes, then you’re not doing anything.”All through my life, I have made mistakes, then you’re not doing anything.”

Don’t be afraid to fail

John Wooden exclaimed, “If you’re not making mistakes, you’re not doing anything.” All through my life, I have made mistakes but these mistakes enabled me to come up with new ideas and break-throughs. I read somewhere that “mistakes are not failures, they are simply the process of eliminating ways that won’t work in order to come closer to the ways that will.”

We all fail. By convincing yourself that even if you fail, you will grow, your capacity to take risks and be daring will grow exponentially.

BE DARING

Do you stand up to people like Midgley or allow them to continue to destroy lives and the earth?

Great leaders are bold and daring. They decide to stand up and be different. They never let status quo stand in the way of achieving their higher calling.

People tend to follow charismatic leaders. But charisma fades and it is usually the brave and daring leaders who inspire their followers to fight for the cause.

These daring leaders have the courage to accept that leadership is not about them, but rather about fulfilling their calling and creating a shared purpose for all.

They do not worry about their personal gains but work collectively for the achievement of this shared purpose.

So, how does one become a daring leader?

DEVELOPING BOLDNESS

Learning to be daring takes time. Here are some steps you can take to learn to be daring:

1. Have a clear purpose

Be clear about your higher calling. What is the cause you are championing? Be clear about why you are leading and what you are leading. You cannot be daring if you are not clear what you are combating for. Keep this purpose seated deep within you and you will see how it makes you a much more daring person.

I was usually a relatively timid person but when there is a higher calling, I have done things that would even surprise me.

2. Overcome your fear

Meg Cabot once claimed that “courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear”. Most of us live lives of fear, trying to please everyone around us. Ask yourself if the fear you have is valid. Then ask yourself what is the worst that would happen if we were brave and did what we wish to do. You will be surprised that many times, our biggest fear is the worry of what others may think of us or tangible “fearsome” issues.

3. Don’t be afraid to fall

Don’t be afraid to fall. Thomas Edison exclaimed, “If you’re not making mistakes, then you’re not doing anything.”

4. Be a critical thinker

Be curious. When I was younger, I hardly questioned what I said. Part of being brave is to know when to take action and when to remain silent. If you cannot ask the right questions and critically analyse situations, you are unlikely to be able to have an opinion and be daring enough to defend that opinion, or have the boldness to disagree with others.

5. Be a heretic. You don’t always need permission

Don’t always ask for permission. Sometimes it is better to do and then apologise if it does not materialise as planned. Saying sorry is another critical part of being a daring leader. You need to do it often. Always admit to mistakes, apologise, be clear why you failed, fix issues that may have been created by the mistakes and go ahead and try again. Being a heretic means that you remain unreasonable in wanting to change the world.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Most babies do not walk on their first try. They all fall trying. My son was the same. Yet, he did not fear trying again and again until he succeeded. In fact, most of us learnt to walk as toddlers and there was no fear in us. We dared to walk. And we later dared to be brave enough to ride a bicycle. But why are we scared now?

Why are we afraid to be the daring leader we were meant to be and “change the world” in the process? There is so much potential in each of us to make a significant difference in this world. All it takes is an ounce of bravery. Go on, be brave!

Roshan Thiran is CEO of Leaderonomics, a social enterprise passionate about transforming the nation through leadership and youth development. He will be cheering you on your journey to being a daring leader. He urges you to start small. And if you are brave enough, go on and read more great leadership articles at: www.leaderonomics.com or www.facebook.com/roshanthiran.

The STaTuS Quo Leader

Is there a social enterprise passionate about transforming the nation through leadership and youth development? He will be cheering you on your journey to being a daring leader. He urges you to start small. And if you are brave enough, go on and read more great leadership articles at: www.leaderonomics.com or www.facebook.com/roshanthiran.

Be a LeADER

Are you a doubting Thomas or a daring leader?

By ROSHAN THIRAN
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WHAT GEN-Y ARE LOOKING FOR

By VICTOR S.L. TAN

In our consulting work with various companies in Asia, we have found some common factors that make the workplace attractive. We observed that one of the top three motivating factors that influences employees to stay on with an organisation is the practice of professionalism by its leaders.

There is a common saying, “People don’t leave companies, they leave bosses.” If leaders know how to manage people professionally – especially Gen-Y – by engaging them fully to make a difference, they will be more fulfilled and hence more likely to stay on.

Drawing lessons from companies that are successful in retaining talent, the following are the 10 most desired characteristics of professionalism that Gen-Y look for in their leaders.

1. LEADERS WHO HAVE AN OPEN MIND AND ARE GOOD LISTENERS

Only with an open mind can a leader listen to real issues. People will only speak up if leaders allow them to.

Leaders who are dogmatic about their own views will have flawed communication. People will only tell such leaders what they want to hear and not the truth.

The ability to listen and accept feedback is one important characteristic of professionalism as it allows leaders to solve relevant issues effectively.

Effective leaders maintain an open mind and encourage people to speak out without fear get an accurate pulse of the organisation. This helps them uncover their blind spots and enables them to make the right decisions.

2. LEADERS WHO ARE OBJECTIVE AND IMPARTIAL

Knowledge and skills will be of little relevance if leaders are not objective. If a staff has the expertise but a leader favours someone else of lesser competence, the organisation will become less efficient in achieving its goals.

Whether it is choosing a lesser idea, pandering to office politics, leaders who lack objectiveness and impartiality lose credibility and respect from their subordinates.

This lack of professionalism will demoralise people and sap their energy and enthusiasm. On the other hand, leaders who are objective and impartial win respect from their people and they achieve full cooperation from them, hence are more effective in achieving organisational goals.

3. LEADERS WHO ARE COMPETENT AND COMMITTED

There is no substitute for this aspect of professionalism. To earn the genuine respect of people, a leader must have the competency and commitment in what he/she does.

For example, an accountant is credible only if he/she is competent and committed to put to practice his/her accounting knowledge in their organisation.

The financial disasters of companies like Enron and WorldCom are good illustrations that companies fail not due to lack of competency in accounting, but due to lack of commitment of the professionals in practising sound and ethical accounting.

4. LEADERS WHO PRACTISE GREAT INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Another good sign to indicate whether leaders are managing people professionally is the level of interpersonal skills they practise. Knowing is not enough. One has to do what one knows.

Most leaders know that they should smile more, yet we encounter more glum managers than cheerful ones. They know that they should be patient, but they interrupt in the middle of sentences of their subordinates.

They know that they should listen to explanations, but they shout first before asking. They know they should praise people in public and reprimand them in private, but they do the opposite. Good interpersonal skills smoothen the path to solving problems.

5. LEADERS WHO INSPIRE AND ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO ACT

Effective leaders know that they have to motivate people to take action. Thus, great leaders create a vision of an exciting future that addresses the aspirations of their people.

These leaders communicate the benefits of the vision right down to the individual level. They listen and understand the needs of people and come up with projects or initiatives that meet the organisational as well as individual needs.

They give work a powerful purpose which becomes a first reward intrinsically while money becomes a second reward extrinsically. And that makes perfect sense, because the company has to achieve its goals and targets first before it has money to reward people.

6. LEADERS WHO ARE CALM AND COLLECTED DURING CRISIS

The test of discipline is its practice on a consistent manner. There are many leaders who can maintain their calm when all things are going well, but when a crisis comes along, they act in an uncontrolled and unprofessional manner.

Managing people professionally requires leaders to practice controlling their temper. Leaders who are calm and collected especially during crises win respect and support from their staff.

And it is with such support that leaders can leverage on their people to help overcome the challenges during difficult times.

7. LEADERS WHO PROVIDE STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Managing people in a haphazard manner without strategic direction not only reflects the lack of professionalism, but also creates a sense of frustration in people. Managing people professionally calls for leaders to avoid the managing-by-crisis approach.

Too often, leaders are preoccupied with “firefighting” to have time to think about how to “prevent fires.” Just like any fire department, the efficient firemen focus on how fast they can put out fires while the effective firemen focus on understanding the root causes of how fires are started and find the right strategies to educate people to prevent fires.

The former is a short-term strategy while the latter is a long-term strategy. The short-term strategy will eventually lead to a fatal result. Albert Einstein said it best, “Intelligence solves problems, geniuses prevent them.”

Managing people professionally calls for leaders to get the long-term strategic right through with a clear strategic direction to enable people to be effective – that is doing the right things.

This should help guide the success of the short-term strategy which is to provide the resources to ensure that people are efficient – that is doing things right.

8. LEADERS WHO DEVELOP AND REWARD PEOPLE

One of the challenges faced by human resource practitioners today is retaining talent. To retain them, leaders need to institute career and succession planning in their organisations.

Too much emphasis and blame have been attributed to salary and compensation as the key reason for people leaving an organisation. The truth is that money is only a “push factor” that attracts an employee to leave for another better paying job.

The more important reason for people leaving is due to the “push factors” inside the organisation, which may include factors such as unprofessional practices of leaders as well as the reward system.

Professionalism calls for leaders to develop people and reward them based on merit instead of on seniority.

9. LEADERS WHO ARE COMMITTED TO POSITIVE AND PRODUCTIVE CHANGE

No leaders can claim to exhibit professionalism if they are not committed to positive and productive changes. People are not amused by leaders who preach about change but embrace status quo.

They do not find it logical for leaders to talk about innovation but do not allow risk taking. They find it odd that leaders would position their organisations with positive goals but are negative in their attitudes and disposition towards positive change.

Managing people professionally requires leaders to be wholeheartedly committed to change outdated, irrelevant and counterproductive practices and policies. The key is to start some initiatives for improvements and show positive results.

There is no need to go for the big bang approach; it is better to focus on achieving many “small wins” early rather than wait too late for one “big win.”

10. LEADERS WHO ARE COURAGEOUS TO TAKE UNPOPULAR ACTION

It has been said that all the lowly sentiments in the world would weigh less than a single concrete action. Achieving results requires more than just knowledge and expertise, it requires action.

A leader’s commitment is judged by not what he believes, but by his/her actions. Thus, if a leader believes in fairness, then he/she must take the bold action to eliminate favouritism and other unfair practices.

This may require the leader to be unpopular. Yet, these are what authentic leaders must do if they want to manage people professionally – take courageous action on what is right rather than what is safe and convenient.

Dr Victor SL Tan is an international authority on change management and is currently the CEO of KL Strategic Change Consulting Group. He is an author of 10 management books. His latest book is Lessons of Success on Tan Sri Teh Hong Piow of Public Bank Bhd. He is also a panel speaker for Leadership.com. If you are interested to engage him for your organisation, please email people@leaderonomics.com
By JOHN WALTER BAYBAY
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THE VISIONARY LEADERS OF THE 80S AND 90S SEEMED TO HAVE A MUTED IMPORTANCE IN THE MILLENNIAL WORKPLACE. NOT THAT “VISION” HAS DISAPPEARED, BUT THE IMPORTANCE HAS SHIFTED IN FAVOUR OF “EXECUTION.”

There’s a lot of work to do. You need to tell your boss for an hour on how to become a better charismatic and inspirational leader, we simply take away? Leaders wanted! Please!

Aren’t you and your team really ready to find out how to improve the bottom line of your business?

You need to create a better environment for your employees. This is a great time to start building a new culture of teamwork and productivity.

If you find yourself telling someone how to do his or her job without you knowing “how”, you will be in a lot of trouble.

Leadership is the ability to move laterally and vertically to get things done. A leader needs to have the integrity to exercise his/her influence in the organisation, even if it takes someone else to do it. It is not enough to have a big picture; a leader must be able to see both the forest and the trees.

Today’s environment calls for leaders with flexible roles where one can be a strategic leader in one situation and a field marshal on another, taking personal charge of a project with a team. Effective leaders know when to coach and when to mentor and actually know the difference between them. They know when to direct and they know when to facilitate. They know that leadership is less about talking and more about doing. They navigate through a whole slew of issues and eat them for breakfast in a meeting or over an afternoon coffee.

Today’s effective leader knows that “the task” is way beyond self and has no time looking down. The mission is more than the leader himself; it is more than what his lifetime could afford.

Excellent leaders are always scouting around screening for talent and grit. They are always looking around searching for opportunities to work with the next set of leaders that will get the job done, someone to whom they could pass on the baton.

That is the leader of the millennial age of execution. It could be you or the person next to you. For all my mentors of the past, this one is for you: Thank you!

John Walter Baybay is a regional management consultant who has worked more than 17 years in the areas of Corporate Strategic Planning and Economic Planning. He is a competitive athlete who balances his time between business coaching, family and working with communities.
LEADERSHIP FOR THE NEW ERA

By VINESH NAIDU
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THE NOT SO SIMPLE WORLD

We live in a complex world, full of change and uncertainty. How can you become a leader in this complex world? The answer is “VUCA”. VUCA is a term that describes the world we now live in. It stands for Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity and Ambiguity.

Volatility refers to the unpredictable nature of the market. It is the constant state of flux in the economy and the business environment. It makes it difficult for businesses to plan and for leaders to make decisions.

Uncertainty refers to the lack of knowledge about the future. It is the absence of information and the inability to predict outcomes. It is the state of not knowing what will happen next.

Complexity refers to the interrelatedness of factors that affect the business environment. It is the state of having many different factors that interact with each other in unpredictable ways.

Ambiguity refers to the lack of clarity and definition. It is the state of not knowing what is true and what is not.

Many of us build our businesses on assuming. You assume that you know the market, you assume that your customers will continue to buy, you assume that your employees will be productive.

But in the new era, leaders are realizing more than ever that assumptions are dangerous. Assumptions are not good predictors of future outcomes.

Learning agile people “excel at absorbing the unknown, interpreting data, and creating new meaning.”- Werner Friedman

Many of us are used to understanding situations simply isn’t enough to cope with the new challenges and opportunities that come with the new era.

How can you become a leader in this complex world? The answer is learning agility.

Learning agility is the ability to learn, adapt, and apply ourselves in continuously changing conditions.

When new challenges arise, we can base our actions on the available information and make better decisions. We can adapt, and apply ourselves in constantly changing conditions.

Learning agility is a complex set of skills that includes the ability to absorb the unknown, interpret data, and create new meaning. It includes the ability to think critically and creatively, to solve problems, and to make decisions.

The key to learning agility is to become a leader who can lead using varying degrees of uncertainty. The key to learning agility is to be able to make plans for expected situations already in mind, but also be prepared to adapt, and apply yourself in constantly changing conditions.

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TELL ME WHY
Engaging with the community may not seem like a typical approach of leadership development, but it has been embraced by a few organisations as a way to develop leadership skills. While it may not be an effective alternative channel to develop leadership skills amongst corporate and business leaders, the concept of developing leaders through community service involves businesses in a business environment who are identified as potential future leaders and making them lead a project out of their comfort zone, with the main intention of honing their leadership abilities.

Consider the following tips for the development of true leaders:

1. **Opportunity:** Develop their leadership skills in the community environment and have gone on to institutionalise this through formal employee volunteer programmes.

2. **Leadership:** Some have even gone as far as incorporating community service involvement as a requirement for promotion and appraisal. Take for example UPS Women’s Leadership Development Programmes. As part of the leadership development of women in the company, the programme incorporates community projects as part of their formal curriculum.

3. **Westpac** embarked on the community Organisational Mentoring Programme, where they leverage the skills of their leaders in creating sustainable organisations for the communities.

Leadership skills developed/enhanced

According to Deloitte’s 2008 Volunteer IMPACT survey, 91% of corporate respondents agree that contributing business skills or expertise to an NGO can be an effective way to develop leadership qualities. The table below illustrates the findings of research conducted by Power Skills, one of Asia Pacific’s leading executive search firms, on a group of corporate leaders who were involved in leading community projects. It shows that a high percentage of enhancement in various leadership traits has been recorded from these leaders.

In effect, taking on leadership roles in the community arena might be a tougher ground to develop true leaders. It is a test of leadership not by position, title or authority. It is a test of leadership influence, trust, credibility and service.

In serving any community or NGO, one must:
- Look at the entire organisation from above (not simply one’s particular division).
- Consider the stakeholders and the mission.
- Understand the funding model of the NGO and its vulnerabilities.
- Identify and assess sustainable models for funding.
- Revisit the mission and its relevance.
- Articulate the compelling value of the organisation.
- Assess and understand community needs.
- Identify and evaluate other service providers.
- Determine the core services that have the greatest impact.
- Explore strategic alliances.
- Envision the future.
- Build consensus.
- Lead through persuasion, and
- Develop and mentor new volunteers.

Although profit-making may remain the core mission of profit-driven businesses, as opposed to most non-governmental organisations which are rooted in an idealistic mission and a strong volunteer spirit, the core traits of a community leader illustrated above are the very same competencies which a Christian business leader in the corporate sector ought to build upon.

### ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Besides acquiring the typical competencies commonly associated with NGO leadership, another compelling reason why organisations should adopt this alternative channel is the cost effective opportunity to develop leaders while doing good for the community:

With 70% of HR leaders professing to have flattened training budgets this year than last, it makes sense to look to a corporate volunteer programme for opportunities to develop leaders.

###豐富的其他利益

#### 1. 人力资源管理

该平台提供了一个平台来识别、评估和评估领导者, 通过一系列的非性能和多元化的职位来识别领导者的行为和领导者的角色.

#### 2. 城市建筑

这建立了一种以文化敏感、服务导向和跨文化的领导力来实现的目标, 使能够建立在多元文化和多样的环境, 在追求一个更高的影响文化中.

Leaders who are involved in the community have the desire to make a difference and have a high degree of involvement and ownership in their work. That same desire could be brought into the corporate world to contribute to business growth.
Why Your New Year Resolutions Haven't Worked

By Lily Cheah

Eight percent of us fail to see our New Year resolutions through, writes Caroline L. Arnold in her latest book Small Move, Big Change: Using Microresolutions to Transform Your Life Permanently. The interesting thing is, we make commitments and actually expect to fail.

“I will exercise more this year,” “I will never be late for a meeting again.” “I will quit smoking.” “I will be more assertive at work.” Yet, the strength of our resolutions erodes as the year wears on. “I’ll do it tomorrow,” we often say. “I’ll try again at the next meeting.”

This happens again and again, followed by similar justifications and phrases of self-assurance that “tomorrow is a new day.” But the more times we fail, the more guilt we feel, until finally, we give up on our resolutions altogether.

Why does this happen? How do we explain this disappointing nine in 10 failure rate? According to Arnold, this has a lot to do with the resolutions themselves.

When we make resolutions, whether at the end of every year or when we decide that it’s time for a new season, we tend to make large ideal statements that are hard to translate into achievable and doable tasks.

They are more like “wishes in disguise,” she writes, which often translate into a commitment that demands an overwhelming amount of change.

“T’ll be more assertive,” for instance, is essentially the wish that you “weren’t such a doormat.” This entails a whole list of mind and behavior modifications which has more of a paralyzing rather than a motivating effect.

Microresolutions are the Answer

According to Arnold, we need to make “microresolutions.” These are strategic, targeted commitments that specifically address a behavior.

They are small, achievable tasks or commitments integrated into our daily lives. They “succeed every time” and are sustainable as a result.

So instead of saying “I need to be more organized,” Arnold suggests identifying one specific action you can take that relates to being “organized”. For instance, if you’re disorganized in the morning and find that you lose time searching for your car keys, buy a basket for your keys, and place it by the door. Whenever you return home, the car keys must go into the basket.

Master this one specific action and it should eliminate all further frantic searches for keys. One small specific behavioral change like this will mean you are one step closer to the overall desire to be “organized”.

If you’re constantly losing pieces of paper that you write notes on at the office, Arnold suggests buying one notebook dedicated to writing all your notes in that book. This way, whenever you need to retrieve any notes, you know where to look.

If it sounds too easy, that’s because that is the point. Microresolutions should be so easy to do that it becomes very very difficult to fail.

Importantly, like the examples above, microresolutions focus on doing rather than being. Actors too use this approach when they prepare for a role.

In order to capture the character of the person they are portraying, they focus on the actions of the character. The lesson is this: “If you focus on doing what the character does, being the character will follow.”

If someone wants to be more receptive to feedback, for example, they will focus on actions that such a person will take. One doable thing they can commit to doing is to ask his/her superior for feedback after every presentation they make.

RELYING ON WILLPOWER

One core strength of microresolutions is that they rely as little as possible on a person’s self-control. Arnold explains that in making resolutions, we often make the mistake of overestimating the strength of our willpower.

We say something like “I want to be fit,” and believe that self-control will help us lose weight earlier, get to the gym and eat better. We think we can instantly transform because our willpower will drive us to the intended destination.

The bad news is that we have a limited amount of self-control, and it is a “psychological resource that is easily exhausted.” In the book, Arnold quotes researcher Mark Muraven and Roy Baumeister in a 2000 study on willpower, saying “We found that after an act of self-control, subsequent unrelated self-control operations suffer... After resisting temptation, people perform more poorly on tests of vigilance and are able to resist subsequent temptations.”

In other words, an approach that relies heavily on willpower isn’t sustainable. After one act requiring a significant amount of willpower, our self-control tires and we revert to our norms, which are our zones of comfort.

People operate on unconscious habits, or “autopilot,” a lot more than we think. Just consider our morning routines. We move from one task to the next without thinking about it.

Some of our habits are positive and support our goals. But the more times we fail, the more resistance we feel an intense urge to revert to our usual habits, which is our comfort mode.

Microresolutions work because they cooperate with existing norms and work their way quietly into our system of habits. They need little willpower.

Here are seven points from the book Small Move, Big Change on what microresolutions are and how we can make them:

1. A Microresolution is Easy

Microresolutions should be easy to keep, such as committing to walk up the stairs after Friday lunches instead of taking the lift.

Simplicity is important to avoid what Arnold terms “mental renegotiation.” Make it easy, because “the more decision making your resolution requires, the less resolve you’ll actually have left to follow through.”

2. A Microresolution is an Explicit and Actionable Resolution

A microresolution is an explicit commitment, not a desire or wish. It is a specific behavioral action that doesn’t require a significant amount of thinking.

A resolution like “I will get more sleep” isn’t specific enough to enforce. “I will not use the mobile phone after 11pm,” on the other hand, is something explicit and measurable.

3. A Microresolution Pays Off Upfront

Since they are simple and measurable, microresolutions provide immediate wins. “I will not be forgetful” sets a finish line that is far away.

However, if the commitment is to always place car keys in the designated basket upon arriving home daily, every time that is done, that is a victory.

4. A Microresolution is Personal

Microresolutions must be tailored according to each of our current habits. Two different people may have different reasons for constantly being late for meetings.

For example, Adam’s difficulty with punctuality in the mornings may have to do with rushing to prepare lunches for the family in the morning. So in his case, he could make a microresolution to prepare lunches on the previous evening instead.

5. A Microresolution Resonates

To ensure success, microresolutions should be framed in a way that makes you want to do them. So instead of saying “I will not be defensive when receiving feedback from the boss,” it could be “I will listen, acknowledge and give thoughtful consideration to feedback from the boss.”

6. A Microresolution Fires on Cue

Like we earlier established, humans have an innate preference for norms and the familiar. To ensure easy follow-through, microresolutions should latch onto our existing habits.

By linking them to something we always do everyday, this designates a clear time and place for the action.

For example, if the commitment is to write a to-do list every morning, if Michelle usually checks emails as soon as she arrives at the office, her microresolution can be to write a to-do list before checking emails in the morning.

7. Make Microresolutions Two at a Time

We shouldn’t make more than two microresolutions at a time. It is better to pick one and make sure we constantly do it, than to select five and find it hard to follow through on all. Remember, simplicity and “sure-wins” are very important.

If you’re wanting to see improvements in your life in a certain area, such as organisation or punctuality, try making a micro-resolution. It could be committing to get both first names and last names when you add someone new to your contact list. Or it could be to reduce one-hour meetings to 30-minute meetings.

Since reading Arnold’s book, I’ve made one microresolution to help me get more sleep, and it has been surprisingly effective. Like she says, if you frame it specifically and customise it to your current habits, it is hard to fail.

Small Move, Big Change by Caroline L. Arnold is distributed by Penguin Books and is available at all leading bookstores.
By ANDREW LAU
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I t’s the end of the first quarter of 2014. If we look back, it wasn’t that long ago that we started 2013 or even 2012. In fact we can even remember some events that happened a few years ago just like it was yesterday. Welcome to the millennium. Things are rapidly changing and moving at a dizzying pace. Life has become more complex and businesses are not spared of this reality.

The world is changing but the all-important question is – is leadership changing? Can the leadership models used years ago be used now? Are leadership principles that were relevant a long time ago, still relevant today? As change affects every part of our life, people change. When people change, leadership changes.

So now we have a new challenge to evolve leadership. It needs to be noted however that certain principles and values of leadership will remain, but the application and relevance have shifted. Here’s a quick look at the leadership constants and the leadership changes.

LEADERSHIP CONSTANTS

Values
There is a crisis of leadership values in organisations today. As shareholders continue to put pressure on companies for more returns, the leadership of these companies is under pressure to deliver revenue by compromising on values.

Money is rapidly becoming the primary indicator of the performance of a company. Things like ethics, governance, community, environment are taking a backseat in pursuit of profit. That’s the reality.

I am sure all of us are familiar with the BP Transocean disaster that created argu- ably the worse oil pollution ever known to mankind. While the initial angle of investiga- tion centred on technical failure, it soon became apparent that something did not add up in terms of making key decisions.

The final report by the US Commission on the disaster concluded that leadership decisions made at multiple levels were made to intentionally forgo safety as the project was losing money and behind schedule. This was not an engineering fail- ure but a failure of leadership values.

Learning
The demand on leaders today is stagger- ing. The mantra is to juggle more responsi- bilities, with less resources, smaller budget and much tighter timelines. It’s no wonder that so many leaders find next to impossi- ble to find time for their own learning and self growth.

While learning on the job seems to be a popular choice, it is also one born out of necessity rather than being the best option. One of the best ways is for leaders to learn is to read. The lack of reading while linked with the new generation can be equally associated with leaders. Reading is powerful as it can:

1. Inspire when a leader is out of ideas
2. Provide a different perspective outside of the organisational culture
3. Help leaders to connect with the best minds in the world
4. Set aside time for pondering and deeper thoughts
5. Provide the opportunity to learn from other people’s experiences, failures and successes

Learning can also happen when leaders take time off to reflect. Every leader should take a few days off every year alone to ponder some of these questions:

1. What am I doing with my life mean- ingful and making a difference?
2. What is the legacy I would want to leave behind?
3. Have I grown this year as a person and as a leader?
4. Am I surrounding myself with the right type of people?
5. What type of influence am I making to those around me?

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Directing vs. Influencing
As more Gen-Y enter the workforce, the way of relating with employees change. Leaders can no longer direct people around but need to influence them instead. Here a leader needs to gain respect and the cred- ibility to influence.

The younger workforce does not take being ordered around too well. According to studies, this is one of the main reasons people leave the company. A better model would be for leaders to lead by example or walk the talk. Leaders that practise servant leadership by doing what they preach garner the loy- alty of the young masses.

They want to know that if you ask them to do something, you are equally capable of doing it.

Cause Driven vs Cost Driven
When considering organisations for business engagement, more customers now take into account the cause of a company. While the price of a particular product/service is important, value is derived now from weighing the company’s vision and impact to the com- munity around them. This has given rise to the trend of social enterprises, which are companies that are driven by a social mission and built on a profitable business model to further that social mission.

Potential employees also look beyond the compensation package. Companies that are cause driven and aligned with their personal values tend to get more consideration. It is not uncommon for small companies with a dynamic cause and culture to be filled with top talents that are easily high potential material in large multi-nationals.

Empowerment
The best talent in organisations rate empowerment as one of the key criteria even above pay as the reason why they join and remain in a company.

Top talents look for growth in their own careers and are attracted to challenges that are thrown at them. Their fuel is more responsibilities, projects, decision-making power, speed and visibility. Leaders that are able to offer such platforms will usually attract and retain the best talent.

Collaboration
In the older business models, there are typically three types of organisations in the market. They are customers, vendors or competitors. They function in the following way:

Customers – a place to get revenue in exchange of a product or service
Vendors – a place to get items for the organisation to complete the job for cus- tomers
Competitors – a place where people are reducing your market share and pitting your downfall

This model no longer work as business relationships are no longer single dimen- sional. Collaboration with these three entities is the best way forward. The best leaders should see customers as a place where they can achieve goals together and not a cash cow. Vendors should viewed as strategic partners that can help to deliver differentiation to the organisation and not some one which we can take advan- tage of. A new leader should view competi- tors as potential associates in exploring the market where both organisations need each other to create value. Not every competitor needs to remain an enemy when you can work together to achieve bigger goals.

CONNECTION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Leaders today need to stay connected through technology. Technology is chang- ing businesses interacts with their intra- network and inter-network. We are now in the age of motor-communications where more communication is done through short messages than it is face to face. What started out as free and leisure communica- tion tools such as WhatsApp have become a staple in business communications. WhatsApp groups are now common for project groups to quickly communicate with each other. Leaders can now gain key insights from their customers on the organisations’ Facebook pages rather than commission a customer focus group. Great talent can be found in networks like LinkedIn with a high level of authenticity in terms of user profiles.

Technology has enabled leaders to be more connected be it to hire people to get direct customer feedback, to understand trends or to get teams to work in a more cohesive manner.

The first quarter of 2014 has come to a close. These are exciting times to be a lead- er as there are many changes that will both challenge you and provide an opportunity for growth. While the jury is still out on whether early adopters of change succeed, there is no doubt that lead- ers that do not change in the key areas listed above will find themselves quickly becoming ineffective and irrelevant.

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The words “GG,” “delicious”, “nuclear launch detected”, “Get over here” or “hadouken” mean anything at all to you, then you are most likely a gamer. Believe it or not, research has shown that the average age of gamers is 30 years old. That means that a whole generation of undergraduates, fresh graduates and new employees are mostly gamers.

These people are the human capital that will take this world into the next era. They are our next generation leaders. So how do video games benefit the leadership development of this group? Let press the start button to find out.

There have been several scientific research studies that prove that being a gamer makes you a better leader. Leadership in Games and at Work: Implications for the Massively Multiplayer Online Role – Playing Games by Byron Reeves of Stanford University is one of them. The research claims that games like World of Warcraft showcase leadership characteristics in the players that like World of Warcraft are part of the expansion to Ancients, is part of the expansion to Warcraft 3. The game is about a player controlling a certain character, with the help of four other players, to take down towers and waves of underlings to reach the opponent team's base and take down their ancient building. Whichever team takes down the ancient building first, wins.

The game requires the players to work together in helping each other level up, gain enough resources, equip each other with weapons and fight the other team. Precision in executing different moves is crucial in winning this game.

The game enables players to take up leadership roles interchangeably depending on the different situations. For example, when there is an advantage for one player to take charge and attack, the player will take charge, followed by the teammates joining in the fight.

Another example is deciding whether to attack the tower is a better tactical move than attacking the opponent. Quick decisions are made based on the situations. The ability to make quick decisive decisions are indispensable in any leader. The fact that all the players in DotA develop this ability is evidence that the game enables random people working together to protect their faction's portal or attack an enemy's portal. Strangers can meet and battle weapons, keys, turrets and shield in order to help one another.

There have been numerous conventions, or LAN parties of people from different places and backgrounds coming together to play these games. These are the types of leaders we need in the world. People who are willing to go the distance to collaborate on projects, share knowledge and build things.

Speaking of building things, one value that leaders and gamers share is creativity. It is the essential ingredient for the leaders of tomorrow.

Problem solving needs people to think out of the box. This is what the game Minecraft is all about. Breaking boxes and building them into humongous structures.

It is a game that allows players to build amazing constructions like the KLCC Tower, Taj Mahal, Empire State Building, the US$ Enterprise, Orthanc of Isengard, and even Gotham City. It is a limitless arena where players can build just about anything they can imagine. If you think this takes a long time, then you are right. The perseverance in being creative is a key trait that Minecraft develops in their players.

Companies are now using games as motivational tools. Projects are seen as quests they need to accomplish, missions are given to people instead of job scopes. Games are even used as learning tools for students.

All it takes is a little mindset change. Treat the world as a video game, perceive the big test as a big battle, gain experience points by hitting the books and gain a level up when you hit that A+ mark. Collaborate with other people when you start raiding that tough project assignment.

Leadership skills like organisation of big groups, trusting other people, thinking creatively and persevering through the hardships are what can make gamers the future movers and shamers.

In a world where technology is evolving, we need leaders who can make sense of it all, collaborate on a global level and think creatively to tackle problems.

Treat the real world as a game and achieve that epic GG.

Ps: GG means good game as a sign of the utmost respect to a player that played the game well.

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Recruiters are one of the busiest professionals in a human resources (HR) team. In large firms with headcounts above 1,000, a team of recruiters could be reviewing close to 10,000 resumes per annum.

A well-written resume could therefore put you way ahead of the game. Overall, the best resumes I have received can be categorised as follows:

**TELLS A GOOD STORY**

Good resumes should be well-written, grammatically-correct whilst telling a good story about the applicant and why the applicant will be a suitable candidate for the role.

It should be engaging, drawing in the reader with strong persuasive copy and pitching just the right amount of information which highlights the applicant’s strengths.

**CONCISE AND STRAIGHT TO THE POINT**

In telling the applicant’s story, it has to be done in a concise-way that allows a busy recruiter during peak periods with high performance targets to look quickly at a glance and decide whether the person has what it takes.

Long-winded resumes with too much garbage and that lack substance are a big no-no because recruiters receiving applications from various channels have a short window to go through the numerous applications that pour in.

In essence, good resumes should contain the following: name, address, latest contact details, current role and also name of current and past employers, academic achievements, awards and also past co-curricular involvement should also be mentioned.

I am not particularly fussed about expected salary and references when I see a resume for the first time. However, I do get concerned when applicants conceal the name of their employers. Your current employer’s brand name is important and you should highlight this.

**CREATIVE AND ATTRACTION-GRABBING**

Some applicants go the extra mile by putting more effort in making their resumes more visually attractive or take pains to ensure it is laid out well with good readability.

Some come in bright colours, special paper, are attractive with plenty of images and economical with unnecessary wordiness. Finally, an interested applicant should always write his resume for a specific role and tailor it for the company and industry he is applying to. It would be even better if you could submit your application with a short cover letter addressed to the person in the firm that is entrusted with the duty and care to recruit and interview. Organisations are large entities and wrongly-addressed resumes would simply waste your efforts.

**KEEP IT SHORT AND SIMPLE (KISS)**

First and foremost, the length. As a general guideline, for those with 10 years of experience or less, one page is sufficient. Those beyond 10 years, keep it to two pages maximum. (If you need to go more beyond two pages, prepare a biography) Trust me you can do it.

Based on studies, a recruiter spends around 10 to 20 seconds scanning through resumes, so keep it short and crisp helps. You need to think about what the recruiter is looking for. Select the skills, knowledge, and responsibilities assigned to you. It would be a good start to provide a summary of your professional journeys for the company and industry he is looking for.

**FOCUS ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Bullet points should highlight your accomplishments and not the roles and responsibilities assigned to you. I have seen resumes which describe the leadership displayed, the changes brought into the organisation and all other impact the individual has had. This carries a lot of weight unlike the normal write up of “I am in charge of this” or “I am assigned to do this”. Whenever possible quantify the accomplishments. If you have optimised, how much have you optimised?

Employers are more interested in these than in what you actually did in the job.

My second most important tip is; tell the truth. Yes, integrity is the key essence that portrays your credibility. Another important aspect about resume writing is doing your homework on the job or company you are applying for as this will help you market the skills and competencies that they are looking for. Select the skills, qualities, accomplishments, and experiences that speak directly to these stated and implied needs. This will make your resume stand out from the thousands!