LEADERSHIP VS MANAGEMENT: STRIKING A BALANCE

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SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

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IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LEADERS AND MANAGERS?

What’s the driving force behind an efficient, high-performing team? We could pin the credit down to team dynamics, synergy and of course, leadership. But what kinds of leadership do teams with varying levels of drive need in order to achieve greater accomplishments? Do they need effective managers with solid operational skills, or do they need leaders who inspire, guide, enable and empower?

More specifically, do teams even need to be managed? And, is management a skill that’s meant for tasks, and not people? Now, this may be a discussion with no right or wrong answer, simply because the idea of leaders versus managers may just be a question of different perspective and nuances, rather than actual differences in duties.

Transformational leaders have been seen as the people who raise – and fuel – the big picture aspirations of those who follow them, allowing a sense of confidence and trust to permeate across relationships and job functions.

While leaders allow collaboration, which brings both results and exposure to a high performing team. This ultimately broadens their perspective of the businesses they’re in.

Managers, on the other hand, have often been described as executives who set thorough action plans in order to achieve the big dreams.

While frequently compartmentalised as task-oriented, managers can actually play a key role in enabling leadership to emerge, by setting in place collaborative functions that would go on to develop the skills of team members.

While we continue to examine what’s unique about leaders and managers, we decided to dedicate this issue to sharing leadership lessons that lie within both these functions.

Steve Choi kicks off this week’s issue by putting in perspective the realities faced by three types of people in an organisation: the leader, the manager and the doer.

He emphasises that managing is not about doing the work you used to do, but getting people you manage to do work like you used to do. Read his take on gaps in leadership on Page 3.

Joanne Love writes about the ‘Engineer of Success’, the middle ground between leaders and managers within which the true magic happens: success. She draws upon strategies in sports and how the Architect (one who promotes and supports a vision) and the Builder (the one who creates and builds the process) can collaborate to engineer success. Find out more about this on Page 4.

On Page 6, Bishan Thian and Evangelia Christodoulou look to sporting heroes – Mokhtar Dahari, K. Arumugam, Ken Carter, John Wooden and Vince Lombardi among others – and their methods of raising team calibre, drive and results. What they found was that these coaches were not just good at establishing environments that were structured, and family-like; they were also great at fostering strong and lasting professional relationships with the athletes.

Here, we see how effective coaching and mentoring – trusted leadership traits in the sporting world – could easily be applied within the corporate environment to turn things around and bring desired results.

Also in this issue, Daniel Lee writes about his childhood experiences dealing with a debilitating disease, and how his condition pushed him to work towards qualifying for the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics.

“Dreams will remain dreams if you don’t wake up and work for it!” he says.

These and more inspiring stories are in store for you in this week’s issue of Leaderonomics. Write in to us at editor@leaderonomics.com or with your thoughts on leadership versus management.

Lydia Gomez
Editor
COMMON CHALLENGES OF LEADERS, MANAGERS AND DOERS

By STEVEN CHOI
editor@leaderonomics.com

I bet money that no matter how great your job is, you have at least one gripe about your role that “others in the organisation will just never understand.”

Well, I’m here to help everyone understand. Here’s the most comprehensive list of common challenges that one will encounter within these three layers in an organisation.

LEADERS

1. They have to anticipate the future based on the macro-economic trends. Think about all the factors they have to consider:
   - Rapidly changing technology
   - Economic volatility
   - Increased competition
   - Changing workforce demographics
   - Supply chain disruption
   - Changing customer demands

2. They don’t have the right behaviours to align the organisation. (Hint: the result is not good).

3. They don’t have the right people to carry out the strategy. (Hint: they ended up working with us.)

4. Even when they do have the right people, it’s one thing to have a strategy and quite a different thing to make that strategy happen while managing the day-to-day tasks.

MANAGERS

1. Are told a strategy without having as much time as the leaders to process it. Leaders have most likely had meetings upon meetings to come to a strategic decision as to the direction of the company. Managers are stuck figuring out how to make it happen while managing the day-to-day tasks. This can be hard when managers are expected to continue to drive results based on the old strategy, when numbers might drop if they make changes to work processes that align with a new strategy.

2. Got promoted because of good individual contributions, but lack proper skills to manage. At Root, we like to call these types of managers the “five-minute-manager.” These managers were so good at doing their job as a “doer” that they were noticed by upper management and got promoted to a manager level. However, managing is not about doing the work you used to do. It is about getting people you manage to do work like you used to do. It’s a whole different ball-game that requires a different skill set, and more often than not, it isn’t one that high-performers know how to play.

3. Their incentive package does not align with the strategy. Quite straight forward here, but when you’re paid to increase the numbers of your department, taking on a strategy and communicating it to your workforce may not be on your top of your list. Ideally, in the long run it would make sense to follow the strategy, but it’s hard when your pay cheque is dependent on short-term performance.

4. Isn’t told what the strategy means for their team. In theory, strategies make sense. When you see a linear graph going down, doing what we are currently doing, it makes sense to change. But what does this mean for a manager’s team? What literal actions will have to change? This is a lot to put on a manager to figure out, and the better organisations provide managers with the resources to effectively translate strategy into actions their teammates can digest, and act upon.

5. Balance what leaders want with realities of front line. Sometimes, leaders forget what it is like to be on the front line and when coming up with a strategy, they forget to consider the obstacles doers may face when executing a strategy. For example, in the 1990s when Pepsico decided to expand from soft-drinks to bottled water and tea, they didn’t realise that going from a few SKUs (stock keeping units) to hundreds of SKUs and going from just aluminium cans to glass bottles would cause heartburn for truck drivers.

DOERS

1. Don’t know how their role is connect to the company. Let’s face it, when you’re out there driving a truck, the last thing on your mind is “what are the macro-economic effects of changing consumer tastes?” Usually, it’s something along the lines of:
   - “How can I get from point A to point B faster?”
   - “My turn-times aren’t as fast as I want them to be. What can I do to be more efficient?”
   - “What’s for dinner?”

2. Too focused on putting out daily fires. It’s one thing to be focused on the new things you must do to help execute a strategy in an organisation. It’s another thing to do it while customers are yelling in your ear and there is a mess in the store’s restroom.

This is particularly the case when the leaders are dysfunctional and give different marching orders every quarter. And, when they do give new marching orders, all of the things that doers were responsible for doing in the past, continue to remain on their plates.

New strategies and initiatives should imply that tasks tied to old strategies and initiatives are removed, but not that is always the case.

3. Don’t have the skill set required to carry out changes in responsibilities as a result of the strategy.

Sometimes, new strategies require new skill sets, and the workforce is not trained in those required skill sets. It becomes incumbent on the company to ensure its workforce can carry out the intended strategy.

4. Has no incentive to change their behaviour. People don’t like change. You better give a good reason to someone if you want to see a change in behaviour.

5. Too focused on putting out daily fires. It’s one thing to be focused on the new things you must do to help execute a strategy in an organisation. It’s another thing to do it while customers are yelling in your ear and there is a mess in the store’s restroom.

I want to have breakfast with Prof Ali who will be in Malaysia on Apr 26, e-mail us at people@leaderonomics.com; for your chance to have breakfast with Prof Ali, who will be in BE among the first six people to share this article on your social media page using the hashtag #5MLEOCO for your chance to meet and exchange valuable ideas and insights with Prof Ali Jafari at the SME CEO Conference 2017 on April 26. Our media team will be in touch if you are among the six. To learn more about the conference, turn to Page 12 of this pullout.
LEADING a sporting team or managing any athlete is not an easy task. Not only can it be frustrating and exhausting, but it is, at times, fraught with disaster.

An undetected or ignored psychological problem can lead to devastating or tragic results if a coach is unprepared to handle the situation. Sports coaches are no different from the leaders and the managers in the corporate world, and they need all the skills which go along with their job roles.

In fact, sporting coaches play a pivotal role in the upbringing and future success of their athletes and, over time, are required to assume a myriad of job roles during the journey.

Coaches influence their athletes’ achievements as well as their social, emotional, cognitive and personal developments. So, the type of coaching style portrayed to athletes can have a huge impact on their success.

While there are many styles of coaching, the two most important are that of a manager and a leader. But it is the interaction of the two that creates the success.

As Peter Drucker, leading management expert, explains “Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.” But, when we can combine the two, the real magic happens for those involved on the playing field, and that coaching style is known as the ‘Engineer of Success’.

Women’s Rugby Seven’s Coach, Tim Walsh is an example of an ‘Engineer of Success’. He took a group of unknowns — you could even say misfits — and developed them into extraordinary players, in fact, the best on world stage.

He achieved this through the manipulation of the roles he played as coach. At last year’s Rio Olympic Games, the Australian Women’s Rugby Seven team created history by becoming the first team to win gold in this event.

**BEING AN ENGINEER OF SUCCESS**

Being an Engineer of Success means utilisation of simple mechanics to drive successful outcomes within the complex team system, or the mind of an individual athlete.

Engineers have a clarity of purpose and work towards an overall team alignment. In addition, Engineers are detail-oriented and analytical.

While usually meticulous in planning and detailing, they are still prepared to take calculated risks, often quickly identifying the root causes of a problem and providing an efficient solution.

Walsh appreciated the opportunity he was given, and worked to control what was controllable, pre-empt the undesirable, and produce an outcome that no one could have anticipated.

Walsh was prepared to take risks with his team. At first, he would teach the women all aspects of the game, from technical skills to play-strategies.

**CREATING THE ENGINEER OF SUCCESS**

Walsh was prepared to take risks with his team. At first, he would teach the women all aspects of the game, from technical skills to play-strategies.

**Just like a house, an architect can design the dream and a builder can construct it. But it won’t stand the test of time if it isn’t engineered to be structurally sound from the very beginning.**

Over time he found that it was he who was getting a lesson on strategy. These women with skills from differing sports were soon asking “Why don’t we do this or why don’t we do that?”

In fact, even the men’s team have implemented the women’s trademark ‘Chicken Wing’ move, into their games.

Walsh, like any other manager and coach, who also represented Australia in the 2008 Beijing Paralympics as swim coach. She has coached several Olympic medallists and world record holders.

Joanne Walsh has coached several Olympic medallists and world record holders.

While the girls played magnificently to achieve this result, credit should go to Walsh, the man behind the scenes who drove them to victory.

In sports, coaches that assume the manager role should be termed Builders. The Builder is all about helping athletes create and build the processes needed for successful change and improvement.

Coaches who utilise this style rely on the routine of performance and commitment will be an automatic response to the process they have developed. Unfortunately, this style only works to a point.

Builders generally want to oversee every detail of their athletes’ lives. This can work well when the athlete is emotionally stable and knows that they are in desperate need of support and guidance.

The Builder is great for less experienced athletes or for experienced athletes who are new to the sport and need help to rebuild and learn something new, or when they are in the middle of a slump.

Depending on the situation, the experienced athlete will usually seek out a coach that allows a fresher rein in the processes. This utilises the ‘Leader’ management style in coaching.

Sports isn’t just about building skilled athletes. It’s about building a team culture that allows the development of better people for the long term.

Coaches applying a ‘Leader’ style could be considered Architects. Architects are the promoters of the athlete’s dreams. Architects are all about helping the athlete – or team – find the drive from within. They also aim to promote and support a vision they are fighting for. Architects focus on the long-term results, quietly reshaping and transforming the athlete via subtle manipulation and self-discovery. Architects work well with confident, experienced athletes, but poorly with those who aren’t.

Successful coaches in the sporting arena, are those who can combine these two roles. When this overlap occurs, we have Engineers of Success.

**CLARITY AND SYSTEM ALIGNMENT**

Walsh, along with the support of the Australian Rugby Union (ARU), organised a nationwide talent search to source for the countries’ best female athletes, to field a strong competitive team, to score that elusive gold.

The winning Australian team made up of women from a smorgasbord of sports, ranging from Ella Green — athletics, to Chloe Dalton an ex-Sydney Flames Basketball player.

The ARU created selection criteria to ensure player selection would be optimised for future performance. It was constructed by choosing players that work well together as well as many other aspects, not just how well they could play the game on the day.

While the final Rio team was announced, it was only understandable that there would be disappointed players. However, through Walsh’s direction, a clear purpose and team alignment, all members became totally supportive of each other. All members, including the ones that weren’t named, remained and trained together until the end.

**DETAILED ORIENTED AND ANALYTICAL**

To quote Walsh: “My role as coach is to keep an eye out for players who may be fatiguing, and to watch for changes in the opposition set-up, and from that, seek opportunities at the set piece.”

Walsh knew the Olympic games were going to be a challenge for his team, and he became very skilled in developing solutions before the problems even occurred.

One such example occurred in an international friendly game against Japan, prior to the Olympics. Walsh schemed with one of the team’s best players, Charlotte Caslick, to fake an injury.

Caslick’s almost Oscar-winning performance left her team mates almost traumatised, as she was carried off the field. Walsh was instrumental in getting their focus back on the game, which they eventually won.

After the final whistle, Caslick run back onto the field, surprising her team mates, but giving them the knowledge that they could still perform regardless of future injuries.

**CALCULATED RISK TAKER**

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By JOANNE LOVE

editor@leaderonomics.com

A high-performance culture is always intended results, whether on the sporting field or in business. Understand what a high-performance culture is all about and why organisations — and individuals — need to elevate themselves from good to great.

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IIf there’s one more thing to add to the list of things that will never go away (right next to death and taxes), it’s leadership challenges.

For me, the one critical component of overcoming a challenge – be it leadership challenges, team challenges, family or personal challenges – is becoming aware of the moment.

Here are four leadership challenges to overcome once and for all:

1 **SUCCUMBING TO ‘EASY’**
   Ever notice how it’s always the easy choices in life you need to worry about? When you avoid a difficult conversation with a colleague because it would be uncomfortable, the problem persists and life gets harder.

   When you choose not to collaborate with the team or raise junior members to the point where they can solve the problem simply because it’s faster for you to do it yourself, you find yourself frustrated and overwhelmed with tasks, and life gets harder.

   When you decide to quit your exercise routine – or worse, never even start one – because there’s just not enough time, you lose that time to recharge and subsequently show up to work less than what you’re capable of, and life gets harder.

   Easy choices are just that – easy. But you can also yield difficulty. Leaders who choose easy do so because they’re either uncomfortable with themselves or they simply haven’t adopted the hallmark of a great leader: making difficult decisions.

2 **SHIFTING FROM ME TO WE**
   The individual has always been the main focus in western culture. There’s the ideal (and illusory) image of leaders – of individuals – who are ‘so great’ that they inspire, transform and motivate others to achieve great things.

   However, while it’s true that somebody must get the wheels turning, sustaining momentum doesn’t happen without the collective efforts of many. In an internet of everything (IoE) world, you can’t be part of a larger system.

   Organisations that divide their functions into silos face repeat challenges of communication and decision making that will not disappear until those individual silos – the ‘me’s – learn how to cross-pollinate, share information and align themselves toward a shared purpose where they realise that we’re stronger than one ‘me’. Performance drives business performance, so forget about me. Focus on we.

3 **FEEDING THE ‘ACTION ADDICTION’**
   I once heard a senior executive (a president, in fact) talk at the concept of having a daily meeting for an hour. He didn’t think that his reviewing current initiatives amongst the team, disseminating information and highlighting the company’s most important priorities was worth the time.

   Instead, he thought he’d provide better value in producing reports and executing project tasks. (This was also the part where my eyes widened and the expression on my face read, “Wow, where do we begin with this one?”)

   The leadership challenge here wasn’t only in making the mental shift from me to we but also moving away from what I call the action addiction. The cult of the action addiction is dopamine, a neurotransmitter in the brain that activates for reward-based behaviour.

   So, when you perform a behaviour and feel a sense of pride, power, security, acceptance, approval or any of the other ‘things’ that motivate you, also get a generous hit of dopamine that makes you feel good.

4 **CONFLICTS OF PRIORITY**
   One of the biggest challenges that leaders – and anybody, for that matter – have is finding the time to accomplish everything they need to. The thing is, when you really boil it down, it’s not time. It’s the problem. Time doesn’t change.

   We all have the same amount of time in the day, but some people simply produce more and manage more. We don’t manage time, we manage ourselves. The problem, then, is unclear priorities.

   When ‘everything’ is important, nothing is. If project XYZ is continually placed on the back burner, then there’s probably a reason. It’s simply not a priority.

   So, pay attention to your decisions and look for patterns. What is continually pushed away or avoided? What might be the reason?

   How to optimise your own effectiveness need to focus on what they – and only they – can effect (change) and affect (influence). Focusing on anything less is suboptimal and a waste of time.

I’m staring at my expense check and I notice that it’s short by about US$4 – must have totalled up the wrong amount when I submitted my expense report.

I pull up the report with a month’s worth of mileage, meals, hotel rooms and office supplies. I add up all the rows, and my math seems correct.

This was the first time I had ever submitted a report and gotten a check back. I did my business just a month before and I was now a vice president and partner in the new acquired company. Maybe I forgot the form wrongly, or don’t understand how the expense stuff works.

I show the report off to my chief financial officer (CFO), letting him know that the check he sent me didn’t match my submission; I didn’t care about the US$4 but wanted to make sure I hadn’t made an error somewhere.

The email I got back from the CFO: the man who was one of my fewellow partners and the man who had just cut me my annual bonus by $10,000 and $250,000 dollars to buy my company said: “I deducted US$4.44 because we don’t want employees to buy Post-it notes.”

What? What the hell could be wrong with Post-it notes? I emailed back: “Why?”

And he answered: “Wasteful expense. Cheaper to tear regular paper into little squares.”

I can still remember how I felt even though this occurred over 15 years ago. Let’s just say, I sure didn’t feel like a vice-president or like a co-owner of the company. I mean, I didn’t even have the authority to choose office supplies.

And I wasn’t the only one surprised by the expense reimbursement rules. Another executive, whose company had also recently been acquired, found his expense check short by US$66 because he had ordered a beer alcohol for a conference. He was travelling for business. He learned, after the fact, that the company policy was not to reimburse for alcohol.

What I had stumbled into would quickly become known as the ‘Post-it note debate.’ It wasn’t about little self-sticking pieces of paper, of course. And it wasn’t about beer. It was about rules.

While the partnership would eventually review, and rewrite our internal policies very quickly, the senior leadership was divided into two camps. We, of course, thought they were ‘those out-of-touch micromanagers in HQ’ and they thought of us as ‘those wasteful spendthrifts who don’t care about the bottom line.’

All of us ran off countless ‘dumb rules’ we’ve encountered in the workplace. But nobody creates rules that are dumb on purpose.

Repeat that same behaviour over the course of a day, week or month and you begin to see how the behaviour – the action in question – becomes addictive.

The takeaway here is that it’s easier to focus on the tactical, rather than the strategic. Tactical behaviours such as answering e-mails, working on a presentation or having a meeting provides immediate feedback (i.e. dopamine) because you know just how much work you’ve put into your project and it feels like you’ve accomplished something. Just don’t con- fuse being busy with being productive.

What are your leadership challenges? Drop us a line at editor@leaderonomics.com.

By KEVIN KRUSE
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Jeff is a former Navy SEAL who helps business teams find clarity in chaos. He is a contributor at Forbes and Entrepreneur.com, speaks at the Hony Walker Agency, and recently authored “Navigating Chaos: How To Find Certainty In Uncertain Situations.” This article first appeared on Forbes. To get in touch with Jeff e-mail us at editor@leaderonomics.com

WHY GOOD COMPANIES CREATE BAD RULES

By JEFF BOSS
editor@leaderonomics.com

IIf there’s one more thing to add to the list of things that will never go away (right next to death and taxes), it’s leadership challenges.

For me, the one critical component of overcoming a challenge – be it leadership challenges, team challenges, family or personal challenges – is becoming aware of the moment.
As a leader, you've got to be led by your heart. You've got to lead with your heart. When you are a true leader, you understand the importance of coaching; learn how to coach. You understand that you do not教练 is to bring out the best in them. They were strong and honest and respectful; having a positive attitude; being able to communicate effectively; being honest and patient. They were not just figures of authority but were also role models for their teams. This refers to the type of player each coach had on his team. The coach who had the greatest influence on his team was called the "head coach". He was responsible for setting the direction and leadership style of the team. When a coach took over a new team, he would make sure to get to know his players personally, not just as team members. He would try to understand each player's strengths and weaknesses, and develop a plan to help them improve.

The coach who had the greatest impact on his team was Hock Seng Tan, a Malaysian football legend. Tan was known for his hard work, perseverance, and determination. He was also a role model for other coaches, especially Malaysian goalkeeper R. Pandey, who had the same career trajectory as Tan.

Tan was known for his ability to motivate his players, even when they were facing challenges. He would often come up with creative strategies to help his team win games. For example, in the 1984 AFC Championship, Tan came up with a plan to win against Iraq, which was considered a strong team. Tan's team ended up winning the match thanks to his leadership and strategy.

Tan's dedication to coaching went beyond the football field. He was always looking for ways to improve his skills and stay up-to-date with the latest coaching techniques. He was also known for his ability to inspire his players, and his impact on the game can still be felt today.

The community was initially outraged; the coach who had the greatest influence on his team was called the "head coach". He was responsible for setting the direction and leadership style of the team. When a coach took over a new team, he would make sure to get to know his players personally, not just as team members. He would try to understand each player's strengths and weaknesses, and develop a plan to help them improve.

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LEAD, NOT MANAGE YOUR TEAM

WHY EMPLOYEES WOULD RATHER BE COACHED THAN MANAGED

By ROBERT GLAZER
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One of the best descriptions I’ve heard of leaders is that they focus on vision and strategy – guiding and removing obstacles for their teams, similar to a coach in sports. By contrast, managers typically focus more on execution, working in the business.

Real leadership is about providing a compelling vision and clear direction. Successful leaders clarify priorities and expectations, define employee roles and ensure that the processes and capacity required for them to execute, are in place.

The stance from which you lead makes a big difference in your employees’ job satisfaction. To engage workers today, focus more on leading instead of managing.

I’ve found that most employees look for coaches who can help them develop and make the most of their strengths to add value for the company. This is especially true when it comes to millennials (the future workforce).

To create the conditions for success, employees need to understand where the business is going and how they should behave to lead by example.

Leading a productive team entails letting go of daily operations to focus on setting a clear strategy and vision – the why and what – and getting comfortable leaving your team to manage the how.

This can be challenging if you’re accustomed to triaging problems, putting out fires, and managing from a reactive standpoint. But, I’ve learned the hard way that proactively lighting the way is a teachable skill.

MANAGERS EXECUTE, LEADERS LEAD

As the chief executive officer of a digital marketing agency, I used to review every monthly report for quality before it went out to our clients, which involved far too much of managing time.

Realising it wouldn’t scale, I wrote a playbook on how to create these reports, trained the team, and let them loose. I am still CEO’ed on them, but now I can focus on coaching people on opportunities to improve, and they know they won’t get my feedback before they send the reports. This creates more accountability for others, and less doing on my part.

When I empowered the team to write those reports, everyone saw better outcomes. Here are three more ways you can shift from day-to-day management to leadership:

1. ESTABLISH CORE VALUES – AND FOLLOW THEM

While 80% of Fortune 100 companies talk about their core values publicly, they’re often hollow words that aren’t operationalised in any way. The magic happens when core values are ingrained into employees’ daily work lives to drive more autonomous decision-making.

Our core value, ‘embrace relationships’, empowers our managers to make financial decisions aligned with long-term outcomes, not short-term profits.

Your core values inform your company culture, and including the team in the creation of those values can help workers feel more connected and empowered.

So, rather than ask permission, they can come to me and say, “I made this concession for one of our partners because it was the right thing to do.”

To create the conditions for success, employees need to understand where the business is going and how they should behave to lead by example.

But don’t forget to transfer this focus on development to your team. GitHub, for example, allows each employee to attend one work-related conference a year and will cover the travel costs if a teammate is invited to speak.

3. SPREAD THE LOVE, OR RISK BURNOUT

If you try to do it all yourself, you will inevitably see diminishing returns on the time you invest. Successful leaders spend the majority of their time on tasks that utilise their own unique skills and abilities, and leave the rest to others who are more competent in those areas.

To try this exercise to figure out how to make that happen;

- Determine the maximum number of hours per week you can work and stay balanced.
- Calculate (honestly) how much time it takes to do all your necessary tasks well. If the answer is more than 100% of your max hours, delegate.
- List every single thing you do in a day.
- Create two columns to sort that list: in column one, put every task you love to do and are great at; column two is everything else.
- Stop doing or delegate everything in column two that puts you over capacity.

The great thing is, you’ll often discover that the things you aren’t good at (or don’t enjoy) align with the unique capabilities and favourite tasks of someone else on your team.

Although it might seem impossible to let go of the daily tasks of managing the business, getting out of that mindset and focusing on how to be an inspirational leader is the best investment you can make – in securing both, your quality of life, and the ultimate success of your business.
Steve Genesis Imperfecta or 'brittle bones disease', is a condition that made my bones vulnerable to the slightest falls as a child. It has also become one of the things I've learnt to be most grateful for in my life. While this may sound counter-intuitive – being grateful for a condition like this – I have come to realise that being fragile has helped me discover my strengths and true potential in life.

I've broken my bones so often, that I stopped walking at the age of two. Trying to walk, or even stand up would snap the bones of my legs. Ever since then, my mother would carry me in her arms wherever we went until the age of 16, when we could finally afford a wheelchair. My identity. It is a lesson

One of the most monumental events that changed my life happened in 2008, as I watched the opening ceremony of the Beijing Paralympics. I was waiting for the Malaysian athletes to come out. As they walked in front of an audience of hundreds and thousands – and millions more around the world – an overwhelming feeling came over me and I told myself that I will be there one day seeing it from the perspective of an athlete representing Malaysia. I wanted to be the one to show others to also fulfill their potential in life.

Although it was hard for me to understand at the time, my father told me that what people said of me did not define who I was; I alone had the power to decide who I was and what I wanted to be.

Nothing much really happened after that moment, although I was very inspired by the games. I had big dreams but I didn't work on a plan to achieve it. And so, four years passed and I wasn't anywhere closer to my dream of representing Malaysia in the Paralympics. Until 2012, when I graduated from college – I finally entered my first 10km using my wheelchair. I decided that I wanted to go further and train harder to complete further distances. One of my biggest accomplishments was completing a 100km ultramarathon event called the Xtralime Day with my friends Alex Au-Yong and Kyle Tan, to raise over RM168k for the Dignity for Children Foundation in 2013.

It was in college that I discovered my potential, nurtured my strengths, and learned from my mistakes. In the 100km Xtralime Day event, I saw first-hand how important it was to have a great team supporting you in your journey. I couldn't have possibly completed the distance without the two other runners going the 100km with me, or the police officers, paramedics, nutritionists, and even sponsors who were involved in making sure that we had all the support we needed.

Now that I've just started pursuing a goal I could not go anywhere to play, I always used my imagination to keep myself entertained. I would imagine myself as the hero when someone was in trouble. Or sometimes, I would imagine myself running, feeling the wind against me, as I ran as fast as I could.

The realisation of your own potential and the decision to pursue your dreams will not be easy. But, if you aim to qualify for the 2020 Tokyo Paralympics, I am very grateful for the immense support I've received from the people around me, from emotional encouragement, to introducing me to the people who can help me achieve my goals, and even contributions to my crowdfunding campaign. If you have big dreams, you need to surround yourself with people who are also courageous enough to dream so you can empower and energise each other towards your goals.

You have the power to make a difference. Others may be driven by a culture of innovation and celebration, resulting in a greater level of connection for your customers. Scott Friedman is an internationally renowned motivational humorist whose expertise is in employee innovation, customer experience and using humor and celebration as a strategic tool. As a Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) and Former President of the National Speakers Association (NSA), Scott has worked with some of the world’s most admired organisations and has delivered talks in 82 countries. Scott has been named one of the 50 most influential people in South Africa, Hyatt Asia, Marriott, AT&T, IBM, Cisco Systems and many Fortune 1000 companies.

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This May, engage Scott Friedman to help your organisation become a workplace for employees that is driven by a culture of innovation and celebration, resulting in a greater level of connection for your customers.

Celebrate! Lessons Learned From the World’s Most Admired Organisations

Sell-e-brate! Winning the Hearts of Business of Tomorrow’s Customers

The Best Way To Predict The Future Is To Create It

By DANIEL LEE
editor@leaderonomics.com

PUSH TO INSPIRE: WE’RE ALL BEINGS OF PURPOSE

By DANIEL LEE
editor@leaderonomics.com

Dream, Wake Up And Work!

I consider myself a dreamer. It could be a result of my habit of daydreaming as a child. Since I couldn’t go outdoors to play, I always used my imagination to keep myself entertained. I would imagine myself as the hero when someone was in trouble. Or sometimes, I would imagine myself running, feeling the wind against me, as I ran as fast as I could.

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BY TRAVIS BRADBERRY
editor@leaderonomics.com

If you want to be a leader whom people follow with absolute conviction, you must be a likeable leader. Tyrants and curmudgeons with brilliant vision can command a reluctant following for a time, but it never lasts. They burn people out before they ever get to see what anyone is truly capable of. When I speak to smaller audiences, I often ask them to describe the best and worst leaders they have ever worked for. People inevitably ignore innate characteristics (intelligence, extraversion, attractiveness, and so on) and instead focus on qualities that are completely under the leader’s control, such as approachability, humility, and positivity.

These words, and others like them, describe leaders who are skilled in emotional intelligence. Research data from more than a million people shows that leaders who possess these qualities aren’t just highly likeable; they outperform — by a large margin — those who don’t possess them.

Becoming a more likeable leader is completely under your control, and it’s a matter of emotional intelligence (EQ). Unlike innate, fixed characteristics, such as your intelligence (IQ), EQ is a flexible skill that you can improve on with effort.

These 10 key behaviours are what emotionally intelligent leaders engage in that make them so likeable.

**1. They Form Personal Connections**
Even in a crowded room, likeable leaders make people feel like they’re having a one-on-one conversation, as if they’re the only person in the room that matters. And, for that moment, they are. Likeable leaders communicate on a very personal, emotional level. They never forget that there’s a flesh-and-blood human being standing in front of them.

**2. They’re Approachable**
You know those people who only have time for you if you can do something for them? Likeable leaders truly believe that everyone, regardless of rank or ability, is worth their time and attention. They make everyone feel valuable because they believe that everyone is valuable.

**3. They’re Humble**
Few things kill likeability as quickly as arrogance. Likeable leaders don’t act as though they’re better than you because they don’t think that they’re better than you. Rather than being a source of prestige, they see their leadership position as bringing them additional accountability for serving those who follow them.

**4. They’re Positive**
Likeable leaders always maintain a positive outlook, and this shows in how they describe things. They don’t have to give a presentation to the board of directors; they get to share their vision and ideas with the board. They don’t have to go on a plant tour; they get to meet and visit with the people who make their company’s products. They don’t even have to diet; they get to experience the benefits of eating healthily. Even in undeniably negative situations, likeable leaders emanate an enthusiastic hope for the future, a confidence that they can help make tomorrow better than today.

**5. They’re Even-Keeled**
When it comes to their own accomplishments and failures, likeable leaders take things in stride. They don’t toot their own horns, nor do they get rattled when they blow it. They savour success without letting it get to their heads, and they readily acknowledge failure without getting mired in it. They learn from both and move on.

**6. They’re Generous**
We’re all worked for someone who constantly holds something back, whether it’s knowledge or resources. They act as if they’re afraid you’ll outshine them if you give them access to everything you need to do your job. Likeable leaders are unfailingly generous with whom they know, what they know, and the resources they have access to. They want you to do well more than anything else because they understand that this is their job as a leader and because they’re confident enough to never worry that your success might make them look bad. In fact, they believe that your success is their success.

**7. They Demonstrate Integrity**
Likeable leaders inspire trust and admiration through their actions, not just their words. Many leaders say that integrity is important to them, but likeable leaders walk their talk by demonstrating integrity every day. Even a leader who oozes charm isn’t likable if that charm isn’t backed by a solid foundation of integrity.

**8. They Read People Like a Book**
Likeable leaders know how to read people as unspoken communication is often more important than the words people say. They note facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice in order to get what’s really going on with their people. In other words, they have high social awareness, which is a critical EQ skill.

**9. They Appreciate Potential**
Robert Brault said, “Charisma is not so much getting people to like you as getting people to like themselves when you’re around.” Likeable leaders not only see the best in their people, but they also make sure that everyone else sees it too. They draw out people’s talents so that everyone is bettering themselves, and the work at hand.

**10. They Have Substance**
Daniel Quinn said, “Charisma only wins people’s attention. Once you have their attention, you have to have something to tell them.” Likeable leaders understand that their knowledge and expertise are critical to the success of everyone who follows them. They also regularly connect with people to share their substance (as opposed to superficial small talk). Likeable leaders don’t sell themselves or pretend to be something they’re not, because they don’t have to. They have substance, and they share it with their people.

**Bringing It All Together**
Likeability isn’t a birthright; it results from acquirable skills that are crucial to your professional success. And just like any other professional skills, you can study the people who have them, learn from them, and adapt them to your own style. Try these ten strategies and watch your likeability soar.

**Leadership Dojo**
High performance cultures are moulds that have shaped the values and standards of behaviour in great companies. It has empowered leaders to take charge, and the followers to offer solid support to their supervisors, while being bonded by a common purpose or mission that drives their organisations forward. Those who desire to migrate from good to great should begin by transforming their corporate culture to be a high-performance culture and we, at Leaderonomics, can help equip your managers with the right competencies to lead this transformation process. E-mail us at training@leaderonomics.com for more details.

As a CEO, part of your challenge is to be able to scale and continually grow your business. Many CEOs struggle to reinvent themselves at different phases of their leadership journey and this translates to an inability to grow their own businesses and organisations. CEOs also face significant challenges with little support or people to talk about their struggles and pains.

In 2016, Leaderonomics, together with the Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC), pioneered the Leadership Dojo programme specifically designed for CEOs to learn from CEOs, senior CEO mentors and from global leaders who have succeeded in their respective journeys.

If you are a CEO who is looking for a programme to help you grow in your leadership journey and enable your business to scale to the next level, do register your interest for the 2017 intake at goo.gl/EqnLp9
LEARNING FROM OTHERS

SHARING EXPERIENCES AND KNOWLEDGE AT AN UPCOMING SME CONFERENCE

Got something to share with Roshan? Your story may just be the inspiration for his next column!
To network with Roshan over a private lunch, be among the first to register for the SME CEO Conference 2017.

LEARNING FROM OTHERS

By ROSHAN THIRAN
roshan.thiran@leaderonomics.com

N less than two weeks, more than 500 CEOs of various organisations across Malaysia will gather in Bangsar South alongside top leaders such as Digi Telecommunications CEO, George Tan, Alliance Bank CEO, Datuk Che secondo Leong, Telecommunications Development Group Bhd CEO, Datuk Chang Kim Wah, Digi Telecommunications CEO, Albem Murty, SEEK Asia CEO Suresh Thiru, and Mind Valley founder Vishen Lakhiani and others to learn from each other.

I have also been invited to speak at the conference and look forward to listening to other speakers. But what is really missing more, is the opportunity to interact and dialogue with the 500 other CEOs, who will be present at the conference.

I learnt a lot from the various speakers but I learnt the most from other participating HR directors. Our conversations during the breaks and over lunch were deeply insightful. More importantly, I made many new friendships.

One particular insight I learnt – not from the speakers, but from a participant – was the state of HR in his country. As we shared the respective struggles faced by our nations, it became apparent that we could help each other in various areas of concern.

We formed a partnership to collaborate and it has led to numerous new opportunities.

In this age of hyper-connectivity, one of the biggest gaps that business leaders have to deal with lies in social connections. We are constantly communicating through e-mails and messaging apps like WhatsApp – shooting our documents and presentations to virtual mailing lists – that we have lost the art of great dialogue and deep, face-to-face interactions between people.

This week, George Kohleriser, a former hostage negotiator was in Kuala Lumpur, and I managed to catch up with him. As we had a meaningful dialogue and learnt from each other, I realised there was significant power in conversations.

George had previously taught me that many of us have forgotten how to connect and bond with one another. Leaders must bond with their followers. Likewise, for us to learn from others, we must spend time and truly listen.

This conference that I am about to attend – the upcoming SME CEO conference – represents a huge opportunity for me, and each speaker, to meet, learn and connect with other participating CEOs.

This is also a rare chance for participants to meet new people: CEOs who share similar struggles like them, and how they overcame those hurdles, and possibly even gain an insight or an idea from each other.

I really look forward to this event and I plan to share my research on why companies fail to scale and grow. And I hope that the follow-up discussions after my sessions will allow me to learn from the participating CEOs what their own challenges and struggles are, and how some of my insights could be incorporated into their organisations.

Organising co-chairs of SME CEO conference, Ang Hui Ming and Sarah Lim say they have set-up the conference with games and special events to ensure everyone gets to meet new people while sharing and learning from each other.

This is going to be an enriching experience. I look forward to learning from each of you there.

For more details on how to sign up for this conference, do connect with us by e-mailing smeconference@leaderonomics.com with the code ‘LunchWithRoshan’. You can also scan the following QR code to register.

In fact, for this conference, HRDF will be sponsoring 10 lucky SMEs attending the conference with a full one-year digital learning management system that offers more than 100 learning courses and programmes.

Learning organisations will constantly grow and scale. Organisations that do not learn will never be adaptable to changes in this VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous) world. So, HRDF continues to play a significant role in driving the learning agenda amongst SMEs.

We really look forward to this conference and if you are a CEO, business owner, director or leader of an organisation, we hope to see you there.

The entire conference is HRDF claimable so do sign up and learn from the great leaders who have succeeded and grab this great opportunity to network and meet 500 other leaders like you.

WHY SMES FAIL TO GROW AND SCALE

By ANG HUI MING
editor@leaderonomics.com

A number of years ago, we started noticing a startling fact – the majority of new businesses set up, would fail within three years. Of the few that succeeded, less than 1% continued growing and scaling and ended up becoming large organisations.

As we explored this phenomenon further, we realised that many businesses grow for a while and then hit a plateau; at this juncture, they are not able to scale or grow further.

At the same time, we came across businesses such as EcoWorld, who managed to grow from a small venture four years ago, into an RMbil business today. A huge, phenomenal growth.

We also met CEOs like Digi’s Albem Murty, who has been with Digi for many years watching it grow from a small telco, into one of the biggest and best telecommunications companies in the country.

We observed how Vishen Lakhiani grew Mind Valley into one of the most respected and recognised tech companies in the world. And, as we heard from these leaders, we realised that what the companies and leaders did was not magical.

They just did things differently.

We realised that every leader should learn how these organisations addressed business model issues, leadership issues, process and structural challenges and also built a special culture that defined their organisations. There were no magical formulas; merely simple business fundamentals executed well.

So, as we interacted with many SME CEOs and shared with them these insights, we knew we had to have a gathering of great minds to share this with every CEO aspiring to grow and scale their organisations.

Hence, the kick-off of this special SME CEO Conference 2017.

In part...
GROW AND SCALE YOUR SME TO GREATNESS
SME CEO CONFERENCE 2017

A special conference for Chief Executive Officers, Managing Directors and Company Directors of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs).

This exclusive conference aims to help CEOs navigate beyond their pain points including slow growth, lack of scalability and declining margins and aims to equip them in finding solutions for their growth and scalability issues. The conference will include insights from prominent global leaders who have succeeded in growing their organisations, and thought leaders like Leaderonomics’ Roshan Thiran who will demonstrate the application of his Four Constraints model for SMEs. Expect a great sharing of insights on how to leverage technology, how to stay competitive in business today, and learn new ways to overcome the factors constraining your company’s ability to move from good to great.

ABOUT LEADERONOMICS
Leaderonomics is a social enterprise dedicated to transforming developing nations through leadership development. We believe that leadership is what makes nations, organisations and communities great. Similarly, lack of leadership destroys and diminishes societies.

Our goal is to enable every single person to fulfil their potential as the leader they were meant to be. We dream of bringing leadership development to the remotest parts of developing nations, ensuring that everyone who aspires to be a leader, is provided the tools and processes to enable them to “build communities of love”.

SPEAKERS
An esteemed panel of prominent global leaders who have succeeded in growing their organisations will share their insights on how to leverage technology, keys to staying competitive in business, and explore ways to overcome the factors constraining businesses today.

Submit your application under Skim Bantuan Latihan (SBL) prior to the commencement of the event using an online form at Electronic Transformed Information System (eTRIS) via www.hrdf.com.my

26 APRIL 2017
8.45AM – 6.00PM
VENUE: The Summit 1 Ballroom, Level M1, Connexion Conference & Event Centre, The Vertical, Bangsar South.

TICKET PRICE: RM500 per person

HRDF claimable. Subject to terms and conditions.
Submit your application under Skim Bantuan Latihan (SBL) prior to the commencement of the event using an online form at Electronic Transformed Information System (eTRIS) via www.hrdf.com.my

www.leaderonomics.org

Get preview information on the programme when you register your interest at bit.ly/SMECEOregister
Call 019-3486413 or email smeconference@leaderonomics.com for details.

Our partners: