ARE YOU A GOOD COMMUNICATOR?

3 KEEPING MESSAGES CLEAR AND SIMPLE
6 KNOW THE ‘COLOUR’ OF YOUR BRAIN
11 15 WAYS TO TALK SO PEOPLE LISTEN

There are more than 12 great leadership articles in this week’s pullout. However, we have some 50 new articles each month, plus a library of 4,000 great videos, podcasts and articles at www.leaderonomics.com.

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CUT THROUGH THE CLUTTER – TELL STORIES

GETTING a message across may not be as simple as we like to think. And, communication as a whole is quite a complicated process.

The need to relay a message can sometimes become so urgent that we run the risk of doing one of two things: oversimplifying, or over-communicating. Or both.

And so, what do we need to do to bring balance to communication? Also, how do we relay just enough information to have everyone on the same page and, just a little bit more to get our audience thinking?

For this, storytelling is a powerful tool. We have known this to be true from all the stories we have grown up with – from bedtime stories to grand tales of real-life legends. And for some of us, stories have gone on to influence our world view, affecting us in ways that would ultimately shape the way we construct our lives, both personal and professional.

If you’ve found yourself repeatedly thinking about a specific moment or experience in your life, there is a good chance that therein lies a profound lesson – for you and for the people around you.

And this could very well be the opportunity to present your learnings in the form of a story. Articulating your deepest, most profound thoughts in such a manner sounds easier than it really is, but the effects of keeping your message clear, concise and comprehensible can go a long way.

As Roshan Thiran writes on Page 3, our messages need to be kept simple and direct to be able to make a real difference for our audience. He also outlines how all leaders should infuse context and clarity into their communication skills if they wish to truly inspire, empower and engage their followers.

And what about visual communication? In the digital age, a well-crafted video can offer amazing value in terms of boosting brand engagement and strengthening customer relations, Sandy Clarke writes. Basing his observation on a 2016 prediction about the age of video, he explains how video is another platform for effective communication, because “it is all about storytelling – all we consumers have to do is sit back and watch whatever unfolds before our eyes.”

Quite often, good communication is sacrificed on the altar of heightened emotions – body language and tone can heavily influence the way your message is perceived, regardless of what you say. Find out how you can keep your emotions in check at the workplace, and examine the 15 things you can do to ensure people listen to your message. All this on Page 11.

Have you ever wondered about the ‘colour of your brain’? On Page 6, read Lily Lau’s intriguing explanation on the types of coloured brain processors, and how it influences our thoughts and actions.

Stories draw attention, and inadvertently, an audience. Told well, a story can cut through chaotic situations and bring about a moment of order.

We tell stories quite often – sometimes to entertain and other times, to drive a point across. In business, these stories are told with the intention of leaving someone with a thought or idea that has the potential to inspire. We hope you enjoy this week’s issue, and if you have a story to share about the most effective communication methods, drop us an e-mail at editor@leaderonomics.com

Lydia Gomez
Editor

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KEEP IT SHORT AND SIMPLE

By ROSHAN THIRAN
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EVERYTHING stems from communication, the foundation upon which all aspects of leadership are built. The ability to communicate well can help to inspire, motivate, enrich, empower and energise.

Often, effective communication can be conflated with complex communication – the more convoluted the message, the more sophisticated the messenger. In actual fact, the most effective communication is often the simplest communication.

To illustrate, let’s take a look at two examples of historic speeches that show the power of clear communication:

“And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country. My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.”

– John F. Kennedy (Inauguration Address, 1961)

“. . . whatever the case may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.”

– Winston Churchill (1940)

These extracts show two of history’s most gifted orators getting their message across simply and directly and, in both cases, had the desired effect of inspiring a nation and instilling belief within their respective communities.

They also imply the responsibility and duty we all have towards our communities and countries. It’s impressive how much meaning – so layered and rich – can exist within few simple words.

CONTEXT IS KEY

As is usually the case, context is important when it comes to judging the importance and effectiveness of possessing a particular quality. Remember the time when Malaysian football star Mohd Faiz Subri landed FIFA’s prestigious Puskas Award, having scored the wonder goal of all wonder goals?

Following his award speech, the footballer, sadly, received criticism for his poor command of English. Despite the fact that he came out top to win a coveted award, the attention completely shifted from his spectacular achievement to – sadly – his speaking skills.

The standard of English among footballers, especially the more high-profile, is often scrutinised just how important it is to be able to communicate clearly. In an example describing warnings that once came with portable CO detectors,

Pinker highlighted one such warning that read:

“Michael exposure to CO can result in accumulated damage over time. Extreme exposure to CO may rapidly be fatal without producing significant warning symptoms.”

Every year, many Americans were effectively turning their homes “into gas chambers”, unaware of the significance of the warning. Thankfully, the number of casualties from this problem plummeted after the warning was changed to read:

“Using a generator indoors CAN KILL YOU IN MINUTES.”

Keeping your message short and simple

Luquacious communicators with a proclivity towards ostentatious expression, driven by a desire to display their cerebral psychotactics, might sound clever. However, their message is invariably buried in their attempts to sound impressive.

As leaders, we should be focusing on delivering an impressive message, rather than aiming to how off in the hope of being impressive ourselves.

People are always drawn to messages that they can relate to and easily digest. Whatever you think of his politics, former US president Barack Obama demonstrated this to great effect with his “Yes, We Can!” message during his first presidential campaign.

His successor, Donald Trump, arguably owes some of his success to a similar strategy of clear communication. His “Make America Great Again” slogan is as simple as it is powerful.

Regardless of each leader’s political agendas, we can see the effectiveness of the simple, clear communication in action, and it is this approach all leaders should look to embrace if they wish to truly inspire, empower and engage their followers.

Generally speaking, effective communication implies openness and transparency. It also provides us with a sense that those who are communicating the message are in control of what they’re doing, understand what they want to achieve, and are able to lead us in a direction that will help us to achieve our shared goals and ambitions.

WE’VE all seen them. Emotionally flat presentations. Emotionally devoid corporate missions, visions and value statements that are simply wall art. They’re not memorable. Even when you remember the words and recite them, ask what they mean and you’ll get blank stares.

Why? There’s no emotion. There’s no story.

What’s your favourite movie? I’ll bet you can enthusiastically tell me all about it, even if you haven’t seen it in years. Stories are like nutrition for our brains.

We remember them and love them. They have deeper meaning for us.

Why? Stories enable us to connect to the story and personalise it. We connect to the storyteller via mirror neurons, we get deeply engaged and feel, hear, see and even smell or taste what’s happening in the story. And dopamine, a feel good neurotransmitter gets released when a story is emotionally engaging. And that’s just a start!

Here’s the storytelling recipe my client’s love when they are crafting company stories.

STEP 1: Make It Authentic

Fabricated stories don’t usually have the same emotional impact as the real ones. You just can’t make some of those quirky details up, as Mark Twain said “Truth is stranger than fiction”. People like stories that have enough specific details to create a picture in their mind. Have a contest and ask your team to submit the stories of times when your organisation’s values were demonstrated. Develop the stories that have the most emotional impact.

To make it really memorable, it also helps if the story is told by a trusted member of the community. For example, stories told by customers about their own experiences are going to feel more genuine and impactful than ones that you publish yourself.

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Roshan Thiran is the CEO of Leaderonomics – a social enterprise working to transform lives through leadership development and nurturing potential. Connect with Roshan on Facebook for more insights into business, personal development, and leadership.

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DON’T BURY YOUR CRUCIBLES

By BILL GEORGE

editor@leaderonomics.com

Burying your crucible doesn’t work, as it will constantly resurface, often in the least appropriate ways. Reframing the event to turn its pain into a growth experience can show you the way to your life’s purpose and enable you to use your hardships to help others.

PRINCE HARRY’S STORY TEACHES US A STRONG LESSON ON DEALING WITH TRAUMAS AND TRIBULATIONS

Prince Harry’s story teaches us a strong lesson on dealing with traumas and tribulations.

When you’re hired and fired by your peers

When you’re hired and fired by your peers.
POWER OF VIDEO MARKETING

IT IS A GREAT WAY FOR ORGANISATIONS TO PROMOTE WHAT THEY DO

By SANDY CLARKE
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I think that in a few years from now, we’re going to be in a world where the vast majority of content that people consume online will be in video formats. Those aren’t my words – this was the prediction offered in April 2016 at F8 (Facebook’s annual developer’s conference) by the company CEO, Mark Zuckerberg. It is already happening now with various communication and social media channels – YouTube aside – like WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram promoting video features for users. At a time when digital communications have to be at once entertaining, informative, snappy and shareable, online video production and consumption is growing at an impressive rate. Zuckerberg also told the F8 conference that Facebook would be “mostly video” within the next five years. It is well into realising its “prediction” with the roll out of Facebook Stories, videos and other interactive features that have picked up pace this year.

For a man whose social network has over 1.2 billion monthly active users, business leaders would do well to pay attention to the words of the Palo Alto pioneer. Video is a great way for organisations to promote what they do, partly because it combines a number of methods, such as text, sound, visuals and other interactive elements, to drive the message home. A well-crafted video can offer amazing value in terms of boosting brand engagement and strengthening customer relations. People love to be told a story, and video works so well because we’re firmly tuned to the idea that video is all about storytelling – all we consumers have to do is sit back and watch whatever unfolds before our eyes. Savvy business leaders are fast catching on the power of video marketing. Done well, businesses can receive substantial returns on investment from their video content.

Along with a strong social media presence, there’s a considerable untapped audience waiting in the wings for the organisations that are willing to get creative in attracting and retaining a broad client base. One of the great benefits of video production is that it’s now easier and cheaper, and there are many platforms on which businesses can reach new and relevant audiences. Of course, finding the time to produce high-quality video content can be a challenge, which is why a number of producers such as Leaderonomics TV are on hand to offer creative solutions using state-of-the-art resources at much more affordable prices than in years gone by. Business leaders may be concerned about the number of organisations choosing to utilise video content marketing; however, judging by the growth in online video production, organisations should be more concerned if they aren’t part of this flourishing trend. As ever, the best marketing and public relations campaigns are those that stand out by their relevance, creativity, quality and substance.

The question, therefore, is not “Can we afford to invest in quality video content?”, rather, “How far will we be left behind if we neglect online video marketing?” As attention spans decline, the onus is on organisations to captivate their audience quickly and deliver a message of value and meaning. There is certainly a growing online audience lying in wait: what will you do to ensure that your company is the one that grabs their attention this year?

LEADERSHIP IS INFLUENCE
NOTHING MORE, NOTHING LESS

~ John C. Maxwell

Managers today are faced with managing increasingly complex teams. Influence is the key to effective leadership that drives results. Hone your managers’ influencing skills through our digital simulations and cognitive methodologies.

This Influencing Skills programme is brought to you by Leaderonomics, powered by KNOLSKAPE.
WHAT IS YOUR BRAIN COLOUR?

By BY JULI LAU

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Key Characteristics in Summary

WHAT THE BRAINS ARE WIRE: LEADERS INFLUENCE OUR COMMUNICATION STYLE

15 Tools for Effective Selling

LEADERS COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

This article is for employees and supervisors of any industry, especially if you are involved in customer sales or service. It is important to understand the different brain categories and how they influence communication style.

Red Brain - Persuasion

Red Brain leader: Is emotional and humanistic. They speak in metaphors, analogies and stories. They ask, "What is the bigger picture?" and they love to say "yes" to things. They enjoy acting, singing and dancing. They are colourblind to problems and are natural optimists. They love to socialize and are usually good at handling difficult situations.

Green Brain - Rational Processing

Green Brain leader: Is analytical and logical. They value facts and evidence. They are highly organized and detail oriented. They are patient and can handle stress. They are good at planning and organizing. They are good at problem solving and making decisions. They are good at analyzing data and making objective decisions.

Blue Brain - Relationship

Blue Brain leader: Is empathetic and compassionate. They can read people's emotions and intentions. They are good at listening and understanding others. They are good at building relationships and working in teams. They are good at managing conflicts and handling difficult situations.

Purple Brain - Emotional

Purple Brain leader: Is creative and innovative. They think outside the box and are good at generating new ideas. They are good at finding solutions to problems. They are good at inspiring others and leading change. They are good at motivating and motivating others.

The Child

This posture is humorous and playful. It is not appropriate in all situations. It is best suited for certain occasions, especially for children and young adults. It is important to remember that this posture is not appropriate in all situations.

The Emotion

This posture is serious and intense. It is best suited for certain occasions, especially for adults and professionals. It is important to remember that this posture is not appropriate in all situations.

By learning to help the prospect reflect on what you're saying, asking insightful questions that help the prospect realize why they need that product or service, you can create a lasting and meaningful relationship.

In conclusion, the application of different communication styles can help you to better understand and connect with others. It is important to remember that this is not a hard and fast rule, but rather a guide to help you in your everyday interactions.
IS YOUR BUSINESS ENDANGERED?

WHAT BUSINESSES CAN LEARN FROM CONSERVATION EFFORTS

By ANTON VAN DER WALT
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DOOMED” — that was the front-page headline of the UK newspaper, The Daily Mirror, in 1961, accompanied by a full-page photo of two African black rhinos. The article said that “rhinos were doomed to disappear from the face of the earth due to man’s folly” and urged readers to take action for conservation.

cores of strategic bosses

These bosses think that their role is to inspire, not enforce rules. Exceptional bosses see employees as peers who are perfectly capable of making decisions for themselves. Rather than constantly stepping in, exceptional bosses make it clear that they value and trust their employees’ work and only intervene when it’s absolutely necessary.

Great leaders inspire and communicate their vision and why everyone should be on board.

Exceptional bosses are individuals, not clones. Average bosses lump people together, trying to manage, reward, and teach everyone in the same way. Exceptional bosses treat people as individuals, respecting the fact that everyone has their own motivation and learning style. Sometimes it makes each employee tick, and the best bosses will stop at nothing to figure out what that is.

1. Growth should be encouraged, not feared. Average bosses fear their smartest, hardest-working employees, believing that these individuals will surpass them or make them look bad. They hesitate to share information or empower them. Exceptional bosses are the opposite — they always grooming their replacements and doing whatever they can to change their leaders.

2. Employees are individuals, not clones. Average bosses lump people together, trying to manage, reward, and teach everyone in the same way. Exceptional bosses are individuals, not clones. Average bosses lump people together, trying to manage, reward, and teach everyone in the same way. Exceptional bosses treat people as individuals, respecting the fact that everyone has their own motivation and learning style. Sometimes it makes each employee tick, and the best bosses will stop at nothing to figure out what that is.

3. Employees are equals, not subordinates. Ordinary bosses treat their employees like children; they believe that they need constant oversight. These bosses think that their role is to enforce rules, make sure things run their way, and watch over people’s shoulders for mistakes.

4. Work can and should be fun. Ordinary bosses see work as something that everyone has to do, whether they want to or not. They believe that their role is to make sure that their employees don’t slack off or get bored. Exceptional bosses see work as something that is enjoyable. If it wasn’t for me, nothing would ever get done around here. However, exceptional bosses love their jobs and believe that everyone else can too.

5. Diversity, not like-mindedness, bears fruit. Average bosses want their employees’ ideas to align with their own, and because of this, they try to hire like-minded individuals. They encourage their employees to think similarly and reward those who “just put their heads down and work.” Exceptional bosses actively seek out a diverse range of individuals and ideas. They expose themselves and their companies to new ways of thinking.

6. Motivation comes from inspiration, not agony. Ordinary bosses think that strict rules and rule enforcement drive employees to work effectively. They believe that people need to fear layoffs, dressing down, and punishment in order to operate at 100%.

7. Change is an opportunity, not a curse. Ordinary bosses operate by the motto, “This is the way we’ve always done it.” They believe that change is unnecessary and that it causes more harm than good. Exceptional bosses see change as an opportunity for improvement. They constantly adapt their approach and embrace change to stay ahead of the curve.

Is your company a leader in its industry? Exceptional bosses love to see their companies at the forefront. Exceptional bosses think that their role is to inspire, not enforce rules. Exceptional bosses are individuals, not clones. Average bosses lump people together, trying to manage, reward, and teach everyone in the same way. Exceptional bosses treat people as individuals, respecting the fact that everyone has their own motivation and learning style. Sometimes it makes each employee tick, and the best bosses will stop at nothing to figure out what that is.
7 TO-DOs AS A FIRST-TIME MANAGER

HOW NEW MANAGERS COMMUNICATE WITH THEIR TEAM HAS AN EFFECT ON THEIR TRANSITION

By ADRIAN GRANZELLA LARSEN
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1. GET SMART
First off, make it your personal mission to learn everything you can—believe me, this is the big key to success as a new manager. Seek out the manage- ment tools, resources, and classes that your company offers. Some organisations have formal supervisor training, and nearly all have manuals and HR policies. Read them, digest them, and keep them on your bookshelf.

You should also do some digging and learn more about each of the people you’ll be managing. Review their person- nel files, their resumes, and their past performance reviews and goals.

2. FIND A MENTOR
Of course, many of the situations you’ll face as a manager aren’t outlined in any manual. How do you deal with a team member who’s underperforming? Or an overachiever who you’d love to promote but can’t because of budget cuts?

The good news is, someone else has probably dealt with the situations you’ll face. So one of the most important things you can do is find a mentor, someone with whom you can confidentially discuss issues as they arise. If this is your boss, great. If not, find someone else in your company who can serve in this capacity.

3. CHANGE YOUR FOCUS
You’ve likely been promoted because you’re awesome at your job. But the crazy thing about your new position? It’s also the beginning of a pretty huge challenge. Not quite sure where to start?

This shift is often difficult for first-time managers, but it’s crucial—your performance will be tied to the performance of your team. This means, if your team fails, you fail. And if they succeed? You can take credit, but you have to share it with the rest of the group, or they won’t be willing to do a great job for you in the future.

4. LISTEN AND LEARN
Many new managers want to make bold changes quickly to show that they’re in charge—and it’s a bad idea. Resist this temptation, and instead, take plenty of time to fully understand your organisation and team.

Set up individual meetings with each of your new staff members to understand their roles. Ask questions about what they like about their job, the biggest challenges they face, and ideas they have for improving the organisation.

Obviously, you can’t please everyone, but saying “I would love to get your input as I make plans for the future” goes a long way in building positive relationships and open communication.

And understanding what people’s goals, hang-ups, and challenges are can help them perform at a higher level, which will only serve to help you.

Also let them know that you’re open to listening on an ongoing basis. Whether it’s having an open-door policy or scheduling “office hours” each day, make sure your employees know when and how they can reach out to you.

5. ADDRESS RELATIONSHIP SHIFTS
The biggest mistake that new managers make? When asked this question, “90% of the women whom we inter-viewed replied that they tried to be liked,” says authors Caitlin Friedman and Kimberly Yorio in The Girl’s Guide to Being a Boss (Without Being a B**ch).

This can be especially true if you’ve been promoted from within and find yourself now supervising someone who used to be at the same level as you. If you do find yourself managing a former peer, you must address the shift—immediately. You can’t keep up your twice-weekly happy hours and closed-door lunch dates with your work BFF without feelings of distrust and resentment from the rest of your team.

Also keep in mind that, while your former colleague may be happy for you, they may also feel awkward or resentful. Try starting the conversation with “You know that I value our friendship, but as a manager, I need to make sure that every- one on the team views me as being fair and consistent, so our work relationship is going to change.” Easy? No Important? More than you know.

6. BE ON MODEL BEHAVIOUR
Complaining about the boss over cocktails? Showing up 15 minutes late to meetings? Sorry—those days are long gone. As a manager, you’ll be looked up to as a role model by not only your employees, but also by others in the organisation.

You can’t expect people to give their best at work if they don’t see you doing it. So be sure you’re always in top form. This means meaning deadlines, sticking to your word, keeping your per- sonal opinions under wraps, and doing your best to represent your department and organisation.

7. MANAGE UP
Being the boss doesn’t mean you can ignore your own supervisors. In fact, it’s more important than ever to keep her in the loop, since you’ll be reporting the progress of an entire group of people.

It’s also important to make sure that the goals you outline for your team are intimately tied to your boss’ priorities. Ask to set up regular meetings to discuss your goals, your progress, and any issues, and how they relate to the organisation as a whole. You can only impress your boss with your team’s progress if you’re mov- ing in the right direction.

Being a manager is an ongoing learn- ing experience, and it’s probably never going to be “easy”. But, do your research, set expectations, and shift your focus from the get-go, and you’ll be off to a great start.

Being a CEO has its challenges. There’s a need to constantly reinvent yourself while scaling your business. This journey often has little support and we understand that.

Together with the Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC), we pioneered the Leadership Dojo programme specifically designed for CEOs to share best practices and learn from global leaders who have succeeded in their respective journeys.

The first 10 CEOs to register interest for this year’s programme at bit.ly/DojoRSVP will be invited to an exclusive networking dinner with Leaderonomics CEO Roshan Thiran on 6 July 2017.
As the number of millennials entering the workplace continues to increase, employees desire a professional platform that recognises them as unique contributors to the workplace and want to be empowered to do their best work. It simply means that there is much to be gained from understanding the types of roles and the characteristics of the individuals who relate close to their own behaviour and actions.

### POP QUIZ

1. Are jobs in your organisation structured to fully take advantage of the wide range of talents available?
2. If you were asked to take a 15% pay cut, would you still want to keep your current job?
3. Are managers in your organisation aware of the variety of talents within their team, and are able to delegate assignments accordingly?
4. On a normal day, do you find at least 60% of the work you do interesting?
5. Is your organisation’s culture flexible enough to support and enhance individual differences in capabilities?

If you have answered a resounding “No” for three out of the five questions above, then this article is definitely for you.

Jack Welch once said that “talent management deserves as much focus as financial capital management in corporations.” How true this has turned out to be in today’s economic conundrum.

Imagine this scenario.

There are two individuals within your team, both of whom are marketing executives with the same job function as one another. While person A outdoes in producing quality research and insightful presentations, they visibly struggle when you put them on the spot during meetings and are unable to take over for any presentation engagements you may need them for.

Person B on the other hand, excels in people engagement, loves the limelight and can pull off public speaking with nothing short of ease and success. Person B however, is unable to deliver on the research and content that you actually need them for.

This scenario reflects the frequent dilemma that present-day businesses face in managing the unique talents within their teams.

The most disengaging aspect that you can undertake as a manager would be to reprimand persons A and B for not being able to fully meet your expectations.

Alternatively, many managers may naturally empathise and unknowingly favour the characteristics of the individuals that relate close to their own behaviour and actions.

A third alternative would be for managers to provide training for both team members to develop the skills that they are lacking. While this outpouring of continuous improvement trainings and workshops may very well work for the short run, they will not necessarily produce the energy and quality of output that the manager hopes for. The job may be complete but at the expense of cashing out from the emotional reserves of the employee.

Imagine the scenario.

Any manager in lies managers failing to treat their team members as individuals first, and employees second. As the number of millennials entering the workplace continues to increase, employees desire a professional platform that recognises them as unique contributors to the workplace and want to be empowered to deliver their best work.

A great manager is able to understand how best to integrate them into a coordinated plan of attack. The challenge lies in managers failing to treat their team members as individuals first, and employees second as the number of millennials entering the workplace continues to increase, employees desire a professional platform that recognises them as unique contributors to the workplace.

Improve the role and not the skills

Marcus Buckingham clarified this concept perfectly. He said, “Average managers play checkers, while great managers play chess. The difference? In checkers, all the pieces are uniform and move in the same way; they are interchangeable. You don’t know how each piece moves. Great managers know and value the unique abilities and even the eccentricities of their employees, and they learn how best to integrate them into a coordinated plan of attack.”

In chess, each type of piece moves in a different way, and you can’t play if you don’t know how each piece moves. Great managers know and value the unique abilities and even the eccentricities of their employees, and they learn how best to integrate them into a coordinated plan of attack.

General managers are able to understand that even back-end roles of finance executives, for example, do require the talent of treating work as more than merely crunching numbers. While they may be an average in managing figures and statistics, this individual could be exceptionally natural in establishing relationships with others, an ability that may more than make up for their “lack” in financial intelligence.

So, what can great managers do to create talent-driven opportunities for their employees? Here are two simple stepping stones.

### IDENTIFY AND APPRECIATE TALENTS

Direct managers should avoid conventional training and upskilling programmes. It is backed by countless organisations demonstrating that it simply is a better investment of money, time and effort for your employees.

When employees know that they have the best opportunities to do their best work, their organisation has a better bet in building an excellent workplace culture that contributes to overall productivity and performance.

MORE OF THIS MEANS THAT MANAGERS SHOULD AVOID CONVENTIONAL TRAINING AND UPSKILLING PROGRAMMES.

### STRENGTHS vs WEAKNESSES

Which should organisation leaders focus on to bridge the gap between employee engagement and a high-performance culture?

Join the conversation and discover how to increase productivity and grow your organisation’s performance with this webinar facilitated by Joseph Tan, CEO of Leaderonomics Good Monday.

11am | 19 July, Wednesday
ably, which is essentially the ability to recognise your feelings and how they impact your behaviour. Often, a step towards such awareness is feedback from trusted colleagues or mentors. In Justin’s case, Eva, the company sales director with whom he’d worked for years, could give him some frank, confidential feedback. Such a colleague could acknowledge Justin’s stressful situation and ask about the meeting with Alice and about rumors she’d heard of Justin’s increased criticism of his team members.

At first, Justin might be defensive. But, Eva could help Justin see that no matter how challenging a situation might be, he needed to find ways to cope and not have it impact his work. After recognising that his anxiety got in the way, how can Justin manage future tough situations? My colleague George Kohlrieser, professor of leadership and organisational behaviour at IMD in Switzerland, offers advice in my new release, Emotional Self-Control: A Primer. He said, “This idea of remaining calm, composed, and collected is to learn the signals of when you are about to go into an overreaction so that you can prevent it.” 

Part of that is also rewiring your brain to stay calm. You can rewire your brain through mindfulness meditation, by taking deep breaths, or by finding alter-natives to release your emotions, such as writing them down. Whatever method you use to calm down, you need to practice it regularly so your body can learn how to return to that calmness. That is the key, learning ways to “hit the pause button” long enough to keep yourself from going into an overreaction. Mindfulness meditation teaches you to acknowledge thoughts and feelings but not overly identify with them. You notice them when they are present, but do not get carried away by them.

EMOTIONAL SELF-CONTROL IN ACTION

What if Justin recognised his level of stress and had been skilled in the emotional self-control competency? How could he have handled himself going into the meeting with Alice? As soon as Justin felt his anxiety rising, he would have realised he needed to take steps to keep that anxiety in check. As an expert whitelistaker confessed told me, when he is about to paddle a challenging rapid, it’s not that he doesn’t have butterflies in her stomach, it’s that she gets those butterflies flying in formation. Using deep breaths or mindfulness, Justin can take note notice of his feelings and know this is what he has a choice in the way he responds to them. Before walking in through that door to the meeting, he could imagine how he’d thought of the product launch event, focus his attention on the work he’d done over the year to cultivate the relationship with Alice’s company, and maintain that focus. Had he done that, he might have walked into that meeting well on his way to an important contract.

Additionally, this competency can help you take a step back and address the real problem, in order to prevent the conditions from which harmful emotions arise in the first place. In this case, it’s clear that Justin is overwhelmed with responsibilities. Rather than taking that anxiety to his supervisors and conveying a sense of incapability, Justin could assess the entire situation and propose ways to make his role more manageable. Perhaps it’s to hire an additional team member to handle certain responsibilities, or better prioritise his time.

Once his emotions are balanced, it’s far easier to see the big picture and come up with sustainable solutions.

By DAN ROCKWELL

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Communication is a two-way street. It necessarily involves a sender and a receiver. In a social setting, you cannot force the receiver to pay complete attention to everything the sender is saying but there are ways for leaders to communicate and ensure that people actually listen to the intended messages.

1. Decide if you care about great communication skills. Are you willing to kick yourself in the pants or do you prefer to blame the listening skills of others?

2. Judge your message harshly. How do you have anything worth saying? Always add practical value.

3. Realise that others don’t love the sound of your voice as much as you.

4. Talk in short bursts. Adopt the general rule that you talk too long. (Introverts might need to adapt this rule.)

5. Hit the highlights. No one cares about the backstory except you. Some detail adds color. Too much is a snoozer.


7. After reading suggestion #11, go back to suggestion #1. Do you care enough to challenge yourself, self and adapt, or do you want to cover behind it, “It’s just not me?”

8. Be yourself. It’s ineffective to adopt new techniques and forget the reason you’re doing them.

9. Seek feedback.

10. Like the people you’re talking to. How might leaders talk so people will listen?

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Every effective leader is inevitably also a mentor, and one who strives to raise the competency level of others. Leaderonomics has comprehensive coaching and mentoring programme to help executives and their teams develop the necessary leadership and relational skills, learn about the different types of mentoring relationships, identify and set mentoring goals, and strategies to achieve intended results within and outside the organisational life.

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