LOOKING TO THE FUTURE OF LEADERSHIP IN 2018

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CREATING AN ENVIEABLE WORKPLACE

HOW HR (AND BUSINESS LEADERS) CAN CHAMPION THE CAUSE

By ED BALDWIN
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EVENTUALLY, all leadership teams come to the realisation that if they "win" in attracting higher calibre people to their company instead of their competitors, then they will also "win" in their marketplace.

Having a better team of people in place is a sure-fire way to create a sustainable competitive advantage. But doing so is tricky. Why?

Look no further than Google as a means of proving my point.

Search "envious workplace" or, better yet, "best place to work" on Google and you'll be bombarded with endless frameworks, strategies, processes and "how-to" tips for building a better workplace for your current and future employees.

So who do executive teams typically turn to for guidance and counsel? Who do they ask to lead them to the Promised Land?

Enter the chief human resources officer and their human resources (HR) team. Most HR teams today are charged with leading a strategy that translates their run-of-the-mill workplace into one that will attract and retain a better and more capable talent mix.

Such a charge typically comes in the form of improving employment brand, increasing employee engagement, and reducing staff attrition rates — or all of the above.

But the formulae for achieving this are mind-numbing. So, I'm here to offer a more basic way to think about this challenge, and frame your solutions:

1. A COMPETITIVE SALARY

By competitive I don't mean top quartile, or even 50th percentile. It simply means you've got to be in the ballpark.

Pay enough that compensation comes off the table as a reason people won't come to work for you. If you don't offer competitive pay and benefits, then being unique and different won't matter. Other strategies won't matter either.

Pay strategies (a mix of base, variable and benefits offerings) vary dramatically based on position, level and role. But do your homework on what your competitors are paying for similar roles, and make sure you are in the same basic range.

2. GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Again, this is not just giving somebody a promotion or paying for their Master of Business Administration.

I'm talking about professional development in-role, access to working in new areas or functions, job shadowing or stretch assignments.

Sure, tuition reimbursement policies, promotions and rotation programmes are great ways to show you're committed to each employee's professional development.

But what if I don't want to climb the career ladder? What if I'm unwilling to trade the additional time for the incremental pay associated with the next rung on the ladder?

Making sure each employee in your company has the opportunity to grow and develop professionally is critical to becoming an enviable place to work.

3. AN ATTRACTIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

It doesn't have to look like Apple, Google or Facebook. You don't have to offer five-star meals, have ping-pong and pool tables in the common area, or offer on-site child care (although any of these would certainly help).

You just have to be certain that employees have the tools they need to do their jobs at a high level, and that they are comfortable, feel supported, and get along with the people with whom they work.

The latter two (feeling supported and getting along with people) are often the most challenging part of the formula.


And yes, arrogance breeds more arrogance too, so be careful who you hire and be absolutely certain that they will attract more of those you want to be part of the team, not attract more who will detract from the work environment you are trying to create.

4. BE UNIQUE AND DIFFERENT

Great employers craft their own unique cultures. Apple didn't copy IBM, Google didn't copy Facebook, and Zappos didn't copy Amazon.

Figure out what makes your company different, why someone would want to work there, and promote those enviable traits.

If you can offer more advancement opportunities than your competitors, great. Maybe you offer greater professional development, or your employees get to work on cooler more "at-home" projects.

Maybe work-from-home arrangements or schedule flexibility is your shtick.

Don't just think about the tangible elements of employment (pay and benefits) that can be your differentiators, but rather anything that your company can offer that others can’t — or at least not in the same supply.

Innovation attracts innovation. Brilliance attracts brilliance. And yes, arrogance breeds more arrogance too, so be careful who you hire and be absolutely certain that they will attract more of those you want to be part of the team, not attract more who will detract from the work environment you are trying to create.

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Ed Baldwin is a passionate HR leader with proven success leading transformation and change in diverse environments. He understands the importance of leadership advocacy and how the commercial and operational understanding to effectively deploy HR services and support. To connect with him, email us at editor@leaderonomics.com

www.leaderonomics.com | Saturday 6 January 2018

Happy New Year!

Bringing it all together

If you offer something unique and different, pay and reward competitively, invest in employee development and offer a solid work environment, then you are on your way to being an enviable place to work.

Not for everybody, but for those you most hope to attract. Remember, you need all of the above.

If you have a great work environment but don’t offer professional development then people will leave for better opportunity.

If you offer professional development opportunities and a great work environment but don’t pay competitively then people will go where the financial rewards pay them what they’re worth.

Follow this simple formula and you can avoid the pitfalls of complicated strategies and frameworks for what might be the greatest challenge facing HR teams today, yes, it’s that simple.

When your executive team is happy, your employees are even happier, and you’ll sleep well at night knowing you’ve created an environment where employees can thrive and prospective employers want to be. Job well done.

First things first, what do you need to do to create an enviable place to work?
YOUR STARTING POINT

5 WAYS TO GET THE BALL ROLLING ON MAKING A CHANGE

By ROSHAN THIRAN
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FOLLOWING my previous article on taking the first step to make a change, I’m grateful to the many people who took the time to offer their thoughts through comments and messages. It’s truly a blessing to be able to share ideas and know that they provide some help and guidance to people who want to take it to the next level.

One message that particularly grabbed my attention was from a graduate. She had a few great ideas about where her career could go and how she could make a difference. And while she was inspired by the article, she found that, although there was a desire to begin, there was no obvious starting point.

Although not exclusive to young graduates and professionals, I find there’s a pattern among younger people who, despite being highly intelligent and skilled, sometimes lack the necessary experience to know exactly how to get a head start.

This isn’t an issue that’s solely experienced by young people; however, I wonder if perhaps leaders can sometimes forget that everyone has their struggles to overcome in the beginning. We forget that what now comes naturally to us usually started out challenging and we should remember that people sometimes need a direct guiding hand to start them off.

It’s with that in mind that I re-share some of the tips from my previous article, only this time going a little more in-depth into why a particular step is important.

On that note, here are five ways you can get started on making an effective change as we start the new year:

1 READ A LOT

I always give this advice to anyone who’s looking to improve themselves in any way.

It’s a piece of advice you hear all the time, but it’s one that’s heeded by far fewer people than you imagine. Why? Because reading self-development books takes effort – and who has time for that?

Successful people, that’s who. The top 1% of leaders, along with a great number of others.

Research carried out by habit and wealth creation expert Tom Corley shows that, while less successful people read for entertainment, those at the top are avid readers of self-improvement books. In fact, 85% of successful people read two or more educational books per month.

Most people stop actively learning once they leave education, or they at least learn nothing new outside their own field of interest.

By reading three good quality books on any given subject, you’ll likely have an edge over most of your peers.

Developing a habit of reading self-development and educational books gives you an edge on many levels, and it also provides you with tonnes of ideas.

2 SPEAK TO LEADERS IN YOUR AREA OF INTEREST

Squat around for a mentor who can help you figure out where you want to go and how to get there.

Almost all leaders (time allowing) are happy to offer their advice and insights – particularly if you throw in a free lunch! Being active in seeking out people who are where you want to be can help you avoid a lot of pitfalls and obstacles.

Most of the time, people are afraid to learn by doing because they feel they don’t know enough about what they’re trying to do.

Therefore, the smart move is to talk to people who have gone through every problem, challenge and hurdle you’re likely to face.

Who better to provide the right balance of encouragement and constructive advice that you need?

3 ATTEND RELEVANT EVENTS

There are so many avenues available these days to anyone who takes the initiative to learn.

There is an abundance of events and workshops available on just about any topic of interest.

This presents you with a valuable opportunity to learn from, and share ideas with, a lot of like-minded people who can potentially become your network base.

While romantic stories exist of successful start-ups or careers having begun in garages or dorm rooms, these are exceptional occurrences.

To make the best use of your skills and ideas, connecting with as many people as possible is a great way to inform the kinds of choices you want to make along the way.

From there, while maintaining positive connections, you might want to focus more on a select few whom you feel can add real value to what you’re trying to achieve.

4 SET SPECIFIC GOALS

These can range from the minor to the major, and they’ll all tie in to pushing you farther along the path you wish to travel.

For example, reading two educational books per month is a specific goal as opposed to “reading more”.

Making connections with three key people and inviting them to lunch is a specific goal, rather than “building a network.”

Be specific in the goals that you set yourself, because this will help you maintain your direction and focus in building something more concrete.

You can set daily, weekly, monthly and yearly goals.

Whatever the goals, the idea is to make sure that they’re actually helping you towards something, rather than making up a generic to-do list that is unlikely to be completed and will leave you feeling demoralised.

5 FOCUS ON YOUR DAYS

While it’s important to have some idea of where you want to be in five years’ time, this shouldn’t be your main focus.

Your main focus should be: What am I doing with the next 16 hours of my day that I’m awake?

Needless to say you won’t be fixated on your ideas every minute of the day. However, there should be an awareness of how well you’re using your time.

Recently, someone complained to me that they didn’t have enough time in the day.

I advised them to get an app that tracks their smartphone and social media usage per day. On average, they were using up to seven hours of their time on non-urgent tasks.

Let’s be generous and say that two hours of that time were productively spent. Across Monday-to-Friday, that’s still 25 hours of – more than one full day gone!

You have more time than you think, and it’s always unfolding.

With these tips, let’s get the ball rolling for a great start.

Happy New Year 2018!!

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Roshan Thiran is the founder & CEO of Leaderonomics – a social enterprise working to transform the nation through leadership development. Connect with Roshan on Facebook or Twitter (@RoshanK) for more insights into business, personal development, and leadership. To share your thoughts on how you’re starting your New Year with renewed vigour, write to us at editor@leaderonomics.com

Call Piao at 012 330 7450 or email info@leaderonomics.com to start planning now!
TINTED GLASSES
HOW WE OFTEN GET BLINDED INTO HIRING THE WRONG CANDIDATE

By VS RAVI
editor@leaderonomics.com

The war for talent was a great battle, but we now need to turn to victory through organisation. To read Dave Ulrich’s piece on talent war, check out bit.ly/2lEmgGx

Ravi is the founder and CEO of Invictus Leader. He is leading a movement that urges people to start intellect thinking, which nurtures the habit of processing what you learn by convergence of questioning, thinking and reasoning, not by simply accepting anything we are told. To connect with him, email us at editor@leaderonomics.com

If decision makers with substantial exposure and experience could inadvertently commit fundamental attribution error, then how much more careful do the rest of us need to be when sourcing for talent?

MINIMISING FUNDAMENTAL ATTRIBUTION ERROR
Now that we have a better understanding of fundamental attribution error, can we make a positive change in our daily conduct?

Yes, we can! On an interpersonal level, we can start by giving others the benefit of the doubt, in the same way we want others to do for us.

The funny thing is that, if we ourselves commit a questionable act, we know how to justify our own behaviour by pointing to external circumstances instead of at ourselves.

For example, if we had hired the wrong financial advisor without doing a background check, we would be quick to trumpet the candidate’s deceit rather than our own negligence in due diligence.

On an organisational level, the management could assess employees’ dispositional ability by taking into consideration Kurt Lewin’s attributional equation.

This equation tells us that behaviour is a function of not only the person’s disposition (personal characteristics) but also of the situation (external circumstances).

Understanding this will help us be more mature, accommodating and approachable leaders while endeavouring to our peers and followers.

So, shed your tinted glasses today for clearer leadership and hiring vision.

A published research paper titled Inflated Applicants: Attribution Errors in Performance Evaluation by Professionals by Samuel A. Swift, Don A. Moore, Zachariah S. Sharek and Francesca Gino, reveals that fundamental attribution error is so entrenched in our decision-making that even highly trained professionals such as hiring managers and school admissions officers are not spared from falling prey to it.

In the study, 23 professional admissions officers were asked to review nine candidates for MBA (Master of Business Administration) admission. They had graduated from nine different schools that were equivalent in terms of quality and selectivity.

The only difference in the schools was that some were rated “lenient” in terms of task difficulty, while the others were rated “harsh.”

The outcome showed that the admissions officers were biased towards candidates who performed better in easier tasks over those who performed less well in difficult tasks, despite being informed about each school’s task difficulty.

Conducting a similar study, the researchers consulted 129 business executives to evaluate 12 candidates for job promotion.

Once again, the results showed that candidates who performed well in easier tasks had a higher selection rate than candidates who performed less well in harder tasks.

In both the aforementioned cases, decision makers underestimated or overlooked the external factors that influenced candidates’ performance.
By Dr Travis Bradberry
editor@leaderonomics.com

HERE’S enough advice on happiness floating around out there to make your head spin. Yet, this is understandable, as everyone is different. What makes one person happy might make another miserable. In the face of so much contradictory information, what are you supposed to do if you want to live a happier life? Just forget about all that subjective advice and focus your energy and attention on science-proven facts.

Gratitude boosts levels of serotonin and dopamine – the brain’s happy chemicals and the same chemicals targeted by antidepressant medications. The striking thing about gratitude is that it can work even when things aren’t going well for you. That’s because you don’t have to feel spontaneous gratitude in order to produce chemical changes in your brain; you can force yourself to think about something in your life that you appreciate.

LABEL NEGATIVE FEELINGS
There is an amazing amount of power in simply labelling your negative emotions. In one study, participants underwent FMRI scans of their brains while they labelled negative emotions. When they named these emotions, the brain’s prefrontal cortex took over and the amygdala (where emotions are generated) calmed down. Effect didn’t just work with your own feelings; labelling the emotions of others calms them down too, which is why FBI hostage negotiators frequently rely on this technique.

MAKE DECISIONS
Like naming emotions, making decisions engages the prefrontal cortex, which calms the amygdala and the rest of the limbic system.

The key is to make a “good enough” decision. Trying to make the perfect decision causes stress. We’ve always known that, but now there’s scientific research that explains why. Making a “good enough” decision activates the dorsolateral prefrontal areas of the brain, calming emotions down and helping you feel more in control. Trying to make a perfect decision, on the other hand, ramps up ventromedial frontal activity — which basically means your emotions get overly involved in the decision-making process.

LEND A HAND
Taking the time to help your colleagues not only makes them happy but also makes you happy. Helping other people gives you a surge of oxytocin, serotonin, and dopamine, all of which create good feelings. In a Harvard study, employees who helped others were 10 times more likely to be focused at work and 40% more likely to get a promotion. The same study showed that people who consistently provided social support to others were the most likely to be happy during times of high stress. As long as you make certain that you aren’t overcommitting yourself, helping others is sure to have a positive influence on your happiness.

BE SOCIAL
Our brains are wired for touch. Humans are social animals, to the point that our brains react to social exclusion in the same way that they react to physical pain, with activity in the anterior cingulate and insula. Similarly, our brains are hard-wired to interpret touch as social acceptance. Touch is one of the primary stimuli for releasing oxytocin, which calms the amygdala and, in turn, calms emotions.

There are even studies that show that holding hands with a loved one actually reduces the brain’s response to pain. You might think that’s bad news for people who are socially isolated, but studies show that a massage increases serotonin by as much as 30%. Touch reduces stress hormones, decreases the perception of pain, improves sleep, and reduces fatigue.

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER
Korb’s research highlights just how amazing the brain is, and he summarises his findings succinctly by saying: “Everything is interconnected.” Gratitude improves sleep. Sleep reduces pain. Reduced pain improves your mood. Improved mood reduces anxiety, which improves focus and planning. Focus and planning help with decision-making. Decision-making further reduces anxiety and improves enjoyment. Enjoyment gives you more to be grateful for, which keeps that loop of the upward spiral going. Enjoyment makes it more likely you’ll exercise and be social, which, in turn, makes you happier.”

KEY TO HAPPINESS
5 TRICKS TO RELIEVING STRESS AND GETTING MORE OUT OF LIFE

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Dr Travis Bradberry is the award-winning co-author of the #1 bestselling book Emotional Intelligence 2.0, and the co-founder of TalentSmart, the world’s leading provider of emotional intelligence tests and training, serving more than 75% of Fortune 500 companies. To connect with him, email editor@leaderonomics.com

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10 DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGY TRENDS IN ASIA

Are you ready for them?

By BRUCE CHANG

This is one of Asia’s most technologically advanced regions. For decades, it has been a leader in manufacturing and has now moved into digital disruption. In 2019, the region is set to witness a wave of technological innovations that could drastically change the business landscape and global dynamics:

1. CRISPR:
Genetic engineers have broken through the barrier of genetic modification in human cells, opening up exciting possibilities in human health care. This could provide a cure for some genetic conditions and even extend life expectancy.

2. IoT:
A network of connected devices and objects, where data is exchanged in real-time. This could revolutionize industries like transport, agriculture, and manufacturing.

3. Big Data Analytics:
Large volumes of data are being analyzed to make informed decisions. In finance, this could lead to more accurate predictions and in healthcare, it could help in diagnosing diseases more effectively.

4. 5G:
The next generation of wireless technology that promises much faster speeds and lower latency. This could revolutionize industries like entertainment, healthcare, and transportation.

5. Open AI:
A new type of artificial intelligence that is not limited to specific tasks but can learn and adapt in a wider range of situations. This could lead to more innovative and efficient solutions.

6. Blockchain:
A secure and transparent system for recording transactions that is not controlled by a central authority. This could replace intermediaries in various industries and promote trust and transparency.

7. Artificial Intelligence:
AI is becoming increasingly sophisticated and is being used in various sectors like health care, finance, and manufacturing. This could lead to significant improvements in efficiency and accuracy.

8. Geospatial Information:
With the help of GPS and satellite data, we can now track and analyze information on a global scale. This could lead to more efficient resource management and disaster response.

9. Autonomous Driving:
Self-driving cars are becoming more reliable and are being tested in various parts of the world. This could lead to safer roads and reduced carbon emissions.

10. Internet of Things (IoT):
Everyday objects are being connected to the internet, allowing them to communicate and exchange data. This could revolutionize industries like manufacturing, agriculture, and energy.

These trends are not just limited to technology. They are also shaping the way we think, interact, and work. As we move into the age of disruption, we must be ready to embrace change and adapt to new challenges.


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About the author: Bruce Chang is a technology journalist and author. He has been covering technology trends for over a decade and is known for his insightful analysis of the tech landscape.
THE NEW FACE OF LEADERSHIP

HOW THE EMERGENCE OF THE DISRUPTIVE LEADER IS CHANGING THE GAME

By ANTON VAN DER WALT
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N 2018, disruption driven by technology, consumers and artificial intelligence (AI) will accelerate. Disruption is no longer just a catchphrase. Cultivating leadership for this unpredictable environment is not only required, but it is also essential for survival. For leaders, disruption typically takes place on two levels. Firstly, long-standing business models are disrupted and, secondly, self-disruption takes place. Self-disruption is a natural outflow, as the two concepts are inseparable, according to KPMG’s Global CEO Outlook. Every day, leaders must deal with many competing priorities. They have to:  
- Act and deliver - with speed, urgency, and decisiveness  
- Interpret and visualise the future, engaging employees and key stakeholders  
- Exhibit the trap front with humility  
- Have an adaptive mindset in a disruptive environment with the ability to continually re-position the business  
- Constant change, even in uncertain times, is becoming increasingly necessary for business success.

Progressive companies will focus the development of their leaders through non-traditional models. The future trends in developing leadership are discussed in a white paper by the Center for Creative Leadership. In summary, they propose that leadership development will take the following direction:  
- More focus on vertical development - rather than receiving training from a single expert (horizontal development), vertical development will be earned i.e. self-development.

- Transfer of ownership for development to the individual - the leader becomes responsible for their own growth.

- Greater focus on collective, rather than individual, leadership - leadership development becomes an inclusive process spread throughout networks of people.

- Much greater focus on innovation in leadership development methods.

As we look at 2018, what will continue to be the key business disruptors globally?  
- Customers, Foremost, this is likely to continue to be the biggest driver of global disruption. How customers want their products, in what form, and when and where will continue to drive disruption of any business model.  
- Technological advances. Better and smarter technology allows for more efficient production processes.  
- Competitors. The rapid rate of disruption and emerging competitors in sectors previously protected by patents and high entry costs.

Where and at what rate customers want their products will continue to have a massive impact on distribution channels and methodologies.

Disruption will continue, but what business trends can we expect in 2018?  
- Ian Altman’s Forbes article - The Top 10 Business Trends That Will Drive Success in 2018 - identified key business trends. Some of the relevant thoughts for this article are:  
- Artificial Intelligence (AI) drives customer experience - innovative leaders realise that AI in performing repeatable and redundant tasks, doesn’t avoid human interaction, it enhances it.  
- Communities embrace live interactions over social media - top companies realise that building greater communities engenders brand loyalty. Nothing drives strong communities better than in-person and live interactions.  
- Social learning outperforms remote learning - social learning takes place through peer social interaction. Successful companies develop mentoring and coaching tools that leverage internal expertise organically.  
- Live streaming video content gains momentum - customers demand real connections with real people. Companies who plan for and dedicate resources to live stream videos will dominate their industries.

- Millennials welcome Generation Z - those born after 1998. Gen Z’s are now entering their formative years and are the first digital native generation.  
- Greater focus on self-development.

These elements continue to democratis leadership to all levels of the organisation. Cultivating disruptive leadership for this unpredictable environment is not only required, but it is also essential for survival. Leaders should respond to this environment by not perceiving disruption as having a negative impact, but as an opportunity to be embraced. To achieve this, consider the following strategies:  
- Challenge your own leadership and your role.  
- Is your role one of positional power, or do you empower and influence your team to cultivate innovation, risk-taking, and creativity?  
- The key findings from the PwC Global CEO Report explains the impact of robotics and AI on people, and how chief executive officers (CEOs) should respond.  
- Twenty years ago, there were fewer than 700,000 industrial robots worldwide; today there are 1.8 million, and the number is expected to soar to 2.6 million in another two years.  
- The role of the CEO is to not see this as a threat, but recognise the window of opportunity to rethink and redesign the way they employ, manage and interact with people.  
- Many senior executives are spending more time than ever on self-development and self-management strategies.  
- Understanding what drives you and what deters you, has great benefits.

Stay focused on leveraging your core business and, at the same time, develop strategies for entering future growth.  
- Build organisational resilience in your leadership and your employees. A disruptive environment has a big impact on employee well-being and the ability to manage their work life.

- Steven Worrall, managing director of Microsoft Australia, said: “New technology is exacerbating people’s already demanding lives. “So, empathy is critical for senior leaders to enable their employees to be more efficient and productive. “I want to ensure my team and my clients are not overwhelmed. “They need to have a sense of well-being and balance to thrive in the complex environment, but to also have a rich and full life with their families.”  
- Focus and exploit cognitive technology - this refers to AI such as robotics, speech recognition, and machine learning.

Cognitive technology will most certainly impact headcount levels, but smarter, more technological ways of doing business will act as counter and open avenues for job creation. Start by developing and leading yourself in order to grow. Personal growth is a powerful tool and leads to greater influence. Working with disruption as an opportunity, rather than a threat, builds leadership agility and, as a result, will future-proof leaders and their businesses. It is the new face of leadership. It is the emergence of the disruptive leader. And it is happening now.
SETTING GOALS FOR 2018? FIRST, TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO BE PROUD OF ALL YOU DID IN 2017

By MINDA ZETLIN
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Are you thinking about your goals for 2018? Whether or not you believe in traditional New Year’s resolutions, I’m willing to bet you’ve already put some thought into what you hope to accomplish this coming year. That’s great—but before you set out to fulfill your next ambitions, you must take a little time to celebrate what you’ve achieved this year. Imagine that you work at a job you love, but your boss is hard to please. Every week, your boss sets goals for you to achieve. Some of these are easy goals and some are stretch goals. There are lots of them, covering every aspect of your job. You do your best, achieving some, partially achieving others, and completely making no progress at all on a few of them. But no matter how well you do, every Monday morning, you arrive to find a new list of goals. Sometimes your boss complains about the tasks you didn’t finish. But he or she never says a word about the objectives you did reach. How motivated would you be to keep trying your best for that hard-to-please boss? How long would it take before you went looking for a different job where you could report to someone else? If you’re like most people (including me), that boss is you. You set yourself lots of ambitious goals, and yell at yourself when you fail to meet your own challenges. But you hardly ever stop and praise yourself for the things you did right. The problem is that, like any good employee, you will lose patience if you never get rewarded or even acknowledged for the things you did right and the level of effort you put in. If you never hear a word of praise, you may even get discouraged and quit trying. So let’s fix that right now. For the past couple of years, I’ve been working with best-selling author and executive coach Wendy Capland, and writing about the process. She helped me set some goals of my own for 2017 and, before I start that process again for 2018, she asked me to review those goals and report on the progress I’d made in the past year. It was an enlightening exercise—since I tend to focus on what I haven’t accomplished, I bet it will be for you too. It’s a very worthwhile exercise.

1. REVIEW YOUR GOALS FOR THE PAST YEAR
Start by looking at the goals you set yourself for 2017. If you wrote them down, which I hope you did, pull out that paper or open that file and look at the list. If you didn’t set goals for last year, you can still do this exercise—just skip straight to the next step. Write down the ones that you accomplished or partly accomplished. One of my goals was to sell a book and, while I didn’t quite do that, I did complete a book proposal. Don’t write down the ones you didn’t do—you can review those later on when you set this year’s objectives. For now, we’re only focusing on what you have done.

2. ADD YOUR OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Changes are, you had some accomplishments last year that were not part of your original goals. An opportunity arose, or a need, and you met it by achieving something you hadn’t originally planned. Write those successes down, too.

3. INCLUDE SOME NON-WORK ACHIEVEMENTS
Your goal-setting should include both professional and personal goals, and your list of accomplishments should too.

For example, after putting a picture of a person walking through a forest of giant, moss-covered trees on my vision board at the beginning of last year, I started hiking regularly, and later finished a 16-kilometre hike in good shape. After many months of research, I bought an electric car. And after years of thinking that I wanted to get back on horseback, I began riding again last summer. What non-work accomplishments did you complete last year? Write those down as well.

4. WRITE DOWN HOW IT MADE A DIFFERENCE
Now, for each of those accomplishments, write down how it changed things. How did the progress you made on this goal benefit you, your future career, or improve the lives of people around you? Even if your efforts failed—for instance you created a wonderful new product but it didn’t sell—you likely drew valuable lessons from the experience or found other ways to use the new skills you acquired. Now for each of the things you accomplished or even partly accomplished, write a sentence that begins: “I am proud of myself because...” Go ahead. No one will ever read it unless you want them to.

5. HAVE A CELEBRATION
If you had a good boss, he or she would plan for some sort of team celebration—an evening out or a special award or something—to commemorate a project completed or a job well done. So you do the same: Have a celebration, public or private, to mark the accomplishments that you completed in 2017.

If you’re like most people, you set yourself lots of ambitious goals, and yell at yourself when you fail to meet your own challenges. But you hardly ever stop and praise yourself for the things you did right.

What you do to celebrate is up to you. It could be an evening alone at the movies (often a favourite of mine), or one spent binge-watching your favourite television series. It could be taking your spouse out to a fancy meal or riding the Ferris wheel at your favourite amusement park or taking a belly dancing lesson. The only rule is that it should be something that you choose for yourself, and that you truly enjoy. This doesn’t mean you will forget about the goals you didn’t accomplish, or the many things you still have to do before you reach your dreams. You will turn your attention to those objectives soon enough. But you’ll improve your odds of getting there—and you’ll be happier along the way—if you stop first and give yourself credit for all you’ve already done.

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HAVE THEY FORGOTTEN?
HELP THOSE AROUND YOU SEE THE IMPACT OF THEIR WORK

By AVA DIAMOND
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Let’s face it. Not every job is challenging. Not every job is exciting. How then, as leaders, can we help people be enthusiastic about their job no matter what their job is? We need to help them see the benefit of the work they do.

Several years ago, my mother spent a couple of days in an emergency room. As I spent time there, I couldn’t help but notice one particular hospital employee. He came by every couple of hours to empty the rubbish bin and mop the floor. He was an older man with curly hair and a huge smile. He’d hum to himself as he worked, and did his work efficiently. Each time he came by, he’d spend a few minutes sharing a joke with my mother, and teasing my sister and me. He was a delightful man who clearly enjoyed his job.

“Why is this guy so happy?” I wondered.

“His job doesn’t look like much fun. All day, he has to empty trashcans and mop the floor.”

“Maybe he even has to clean the bathrooms. I wonder why he’s so cheerful.” I was really puzzled.

By the second day, I couldn’t stand it any longer—I had to ask him.

“James,” I asked, “your job doesn’t look very fun to me. Yet you walk around singing all day, you talk to people, and you make them laugh. How do you have so much fun mopping the floor?”

James looked me directly in the eye. He leaned on his mop. He stopped and thought a second.

“You don’t understand,” he said. “My job’s about a whole lot more than mopping.”

I was all ears. I figured he was going to tell me about some other, more enjoyable duties that I didn’t know were part of his job.

“You see,” he continued, “when people come in here, they’re all stressed out. Something bad happened to them or to someone they care about.”

“They usually don’t know what’s going to happen. I get to make a difference.”

“I get to joke with them, or say something nice, or tell them everything’s going to work out. I get to be something good that happens to them today.”

James had spoken to me from his heart. With tears in my eyes, I thanked him.

I realised he was the wisest person I’d met in that hospital so far. James knew the impact of his work.

He knew the difference he made. He knew how he influenced lives.

WHAT IF?
What if claims processors in insurance companies focused on the outcome of their work?
What if they were reminded that, by doing their job, people were getting wonderfully nutritious food that would give them vibrant energy and health?
What if the people who did the hiring knew, without a doubt, that their employees are what differentiate you from the competition, and were focused on the difference they made in the organisation?
What if the people in your department had a clear vision of the impact of their work?
This might be how it makes a difference in the world, how it ties in tightly to accomplishing team or company goals, or how it makes a difference to the internal or external customer. Help them see the meaning of their work.

BRINGING IT TO PERSPECTIVE
How might you do this?
• Have them talk to customers or clients. Let them hear first-hand the value that their work has.
• Share any information that shows the end use of their product or service.
• Engage them in tying their results to the goals and the bottom line or mission of your organisation.

Knowing and valuing the importance of their work increases commitment, increases job satisfaction, and enhances performance. Helping your people see how they make a difference helps you build a culture of success.

DO PEOPLE FOLLOW YOU WHEN THEY HAVE A CHOICE NOT TO?

According to Jim Collins, that is the essence of true leadership. How then can your good managers become great leaders who create sustainable impact? Our exciting “Commander” simulation challenges leaders to develop the potent combination of business success and character that can shape a lasting legacy.
CONVERSATIONS that begin: “I remember when,” are about recreating the past. But you can’t create the future while longing for the good ol’ days. The past is the future for leaders who stay the same. Persistence drives people into the past when it reflects entrenched methods and reverse-engineered goals. Questions for reinvention:

#1. What Will you do differently?
Intentions are a beginning, but new behaviours change outcomes. Stop defining yourself by entrenched methods and comfortable behaviours. Methods that worked in the past often become moral imperatives. But irrelevance sets in if you don’t change. Here are three tips for doing differently:
- Begin with easy, but make sure it’s different. If you want new results, adopt different behaviours.
- Do what you hope to become. Do you aspire to lead? Find ways to lead right now.

#2. What didn’t you do – that resulted in failure?
Imagine you won’t be shouting for joy at the end of 2018. What is something you perhaps didn’t do that ultimately resulted in failure?
One thing that is sure is that, if 2018 becomes a disappointment, you didn’t get enough help. Who should be part of your journey? The future is about people. Choose challenging relationships that disrupt strategies and expand possibilities.

“Show me your friends and I’ll show you your future.”
— Anonymous

Five more questions for consideration:
1. What is your current legacy? What do you wish it was?
2. What are you doing when you feel most energised and you’re bringing value to others?
3. What will you let go? (Perhaps this is the most challenging question for 2018.)
4. How must you develop yourself?
5. Why does it matter?

With 2018 peeking at us, how might leaders take steps to reinvent the future?

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It’s easy to get lost in the hustle of life and forget that busyness is not a sign of productivity. What is your anchor when life is “all over the place”? Listen to this podcast by culture expert Joseph Tan by going to bit.ly/productiveleadership

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WITHOUT GREAT LEADERS, EVEN GREAT IDEAS ARE USELESS

How about you?

All talk, no action. We have heard this phrase one time too many. A person can have a million splendid and creative ideas but if there is no effective action taken on it, everything will be pointless. This is where a great leader can make things happen. Great leaders not only have golden ideas, they inspire those around them to hop on and turn that clever idea into reality. Anyone can be a leader. It is all up to us.

Be a leader!

Let us help you.

At Leaderonomics, we believe there is a science to building leaders. Our customised experiential leadership development programmes and talent acceleration platforms are fast gaining recognition as cutting edge and frontrunners in the field.

Call us at 016-4220464 for a free consultation with our learning experts.

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