



HOW TO LEAD

THE LEADERSHIP E-BOOK

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What a Leader Is and Does.

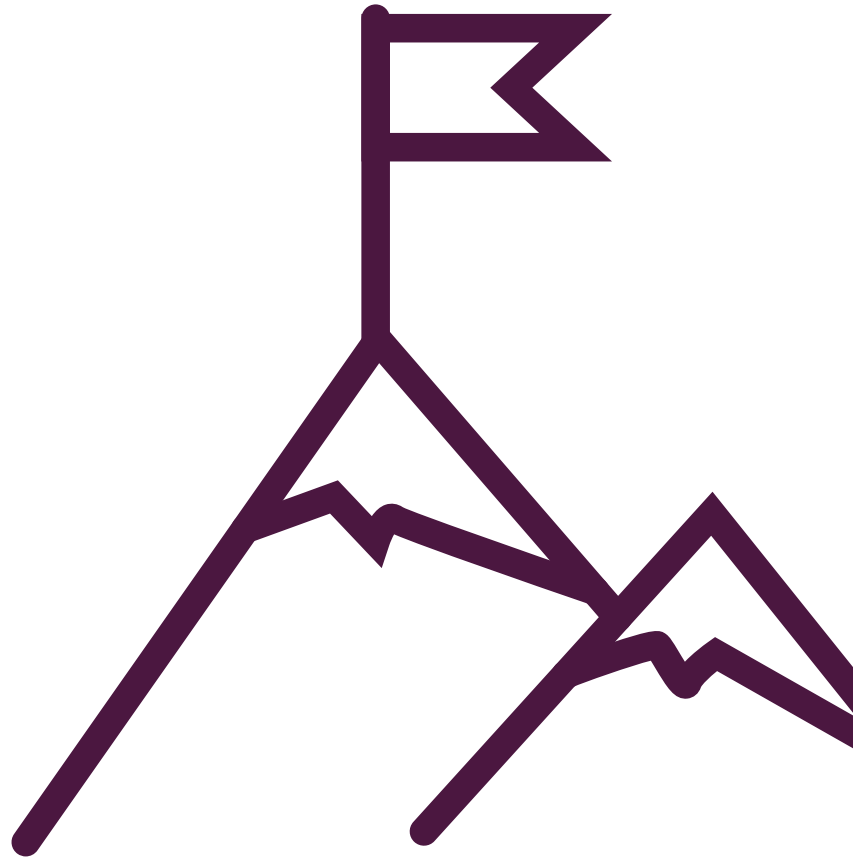
“The only definition of a leader is someone who has followers.” ~Peter Drucker

This quote of Peter Drucker’s has been bandied about and dissected by countless leadership consultants and business people. It has been called too simplistic by some, and set aside. Yet, there is nothing untrue in the quote. Instead of focusing on whether this quote stands up, spend your energy understanding why people have followers, and how great leaders lead.

What is it that leaders do that makes people follow them? What makes a leader effective? The simple answer to that is: A leader leads. They lead the people and the organization in their charge forward. They do this in many ways.

How a Leader Leads:

- **The vision thing.** The leader can only lead if she has a clear vision of where she is leading the people in her charge. That vision—and the ability to share it in a clear and compelling way—is what draws followers to her, and what inspires them to take action.
- **Making change.** No leader ever finds themselves in charge of an organization that doesn't need to change, or one that could not produce greater results than they are currently producing. That means a leader leads change. That change is what moves an organization from its current state to its future.
- **Strategy.** A leader has to have some idea of how to compete and how to win. Strategy is the plan to do so. Without strategy, the vision will not come to life, and the change will not be achieved.
- **Execution.** A leader has to ensure execution. Execution is a big deal. You can have the best strategy on Earth and the tactics to achieve them, but without execution, it is all for naught.



- **Focus.** Focus is the elimination of options. Leadership requires that you say no to all but the few, critical, strategic initiatives that are going to move the organization you lead into the future. Focus is the discipline of saying no to all but the few things that are most important. Leaders provide that focus.
- **Growing people.** Execution isn't easy. To execute, the people in the leader's charge will be required to change, to grow, and to develop personally and professionally (you cannot have the latter without the former). A great leader helps those in their charge become the best version of themselves. The greatest of leaders build leadership factories.
- **Teams.** Leaders build teams. They bring diverse groups of people together to achieve what would otherwise be impossible. Teams are a force multiplier, creating value far in excess of the individuals it is made of.
- **Nonnegotiable values.** A leader creates a culture. They decide what values are nonnegotiable, the core beliefs and behaviors that make the organization in their charge what it is. They decide where the organization stands, what it is for, and what it is against. And then the leader protects that culture.

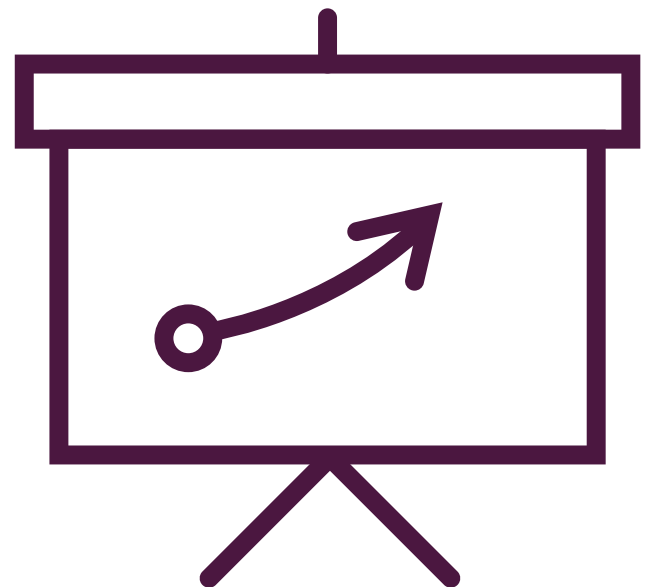
These are some of the component parts of leadership. That said, what a leader really does is lead, but that doesn't mean that you lead the same way in every circumstance.

Different circumstances require different leadership approaches. You will need to manage all of the following if the need arises:

Turnaround: When an organization is in trouble, it requires leaders who will take charge. Difficult circumstances or an existential threat requires that people take action now, without having the time to debate the choices of action, without a chance to build consensus around the approach, and without concern for tradition. The turnaround leader can break things on their way to making things better, and they can create ill will along the way. But when survival is at stake, this approach is necessary.

Change Agent: A turnaround is a shift of 180 degrees; the organization is moving in the wrong direction. A change agent needs to adjust the organization's direction by degrees, more than 1 degree and less than 180. The strategy isn't quite right and needs to be significantly adjusted. The business model isn't producing the expected results, and the go-to-market strategy needs to be significantly modified. There isn't all the time in the world to debate the choices and build consensus, but there is some time to enlist the support of other leaders to help make change. When things aren't working, a leader has to make change.

Execution: There are some circumstances that require a leader who can execute and deliver results. The organization is in no danger, no real change is needed, other than greater execution of what is already in place. This choice is often overlooked by new leaders, who believe they must be a turnaround leader or a change agent. But sometimes all that is necessary for the leader to help the organization reach its full potential is to create accountability for executing on what is already in place. The execution leader has time to build consensus, build traditions, and inspire greater action.



One of the ways to be a great leader is to know what role you need to play to best serve your organization. When your organization needs better execution, being a turnaround leader or a change agent will prevent you from producing the results you need. Likewise, when something is broken, execution isn't enough to realize the organization's potential.



What a Leader Doesn't Do.

You are most certainly aware of the phrase “Do as I say, not as I do.” If you’ve given this concept any amount of thought, you know that it doesn’t work in real life. To ensure that you’re not living this concept in your role as a leader, you need to take an honest look at your own behaviors.

Are you full of performative contradictions? Are you doing what you say one cannot—or should not—do?

- You say that your salespeople should block off time for their most important tasks, like nurturing their dream clients, prospecting, and following up. You want the members of your team to do the things that make a difference and produce results. Are you blocking time for coaching your sales team, the most important activity and the one that generates the highest return on effort?
- You tell your sales team to get out from behind their email and get in front of clients, to go where the action is and make a difference. You tell them not to waste time with the browser and their twelve open tabs. However, you dole out this direction from behind your CRM's dashboard. Staring at the score never helped anyone win a game. How often do you see a coach with his back to the field of play?
- You want your salespeople to study so they'll have the business acumen to create value for their prospects and clients, as well as distinguish themselves in a crowded field of "me too" competitors. You want them to read, to educate themselves, to do their homework. Are you better and more widely read than your sales team? Do you have the business acumen to be a peer when you are sitting in front of their clients? Or might you fail the test you ask your team to pass?

Your people will follow your lead. They're more likely to do what you do than what you say, especially when your words and your actions are in conflict. If you want your people to follow you, you have to lead them. That means you have to embody the values you want them to hold, and demonstrate the actions you want them to take.

Your people will do as you do, not as you say. This means you need to be behaving consciously as a leader, aware at every moment that your actions are your leadership, not your words. Included in these actions that you determine will make up who you are as a leader are a list of nonnegotiables.

There are some things that a leader cannot and should not negotiate. There are some things, some values, that must be written in stone and written clearly for all who come in contact with an organization to see.



The Non-negotiables:

- **Culture:** A leader must create and sustain a positive, empowering culture. Culture is non-negotiable. If someone or something threatens culture, the leader is obligated to take action. Allowing a positive empowering culture to be destroyed is to allow the organization to be radically changed for the worse.
- **How people are treated:** People who are treated well perform better than people who are treated poorly. People who are trusted are more trustworthy, and people who are expected to take initiative and be resourceful try to do those things. When people are treated like their workplace is something between a prison and daycare, you lose great people. Leaders set the tone and ensure people are treated right. You can't attract and build new leaders otherwise.
- **Values:** Values are what sustain an organization, especially through times of great change. Values are what persist, what provide a foundation. If one of the values is integrity, then allowing people to color outside the lines is a non-starter. The leader not only has to embody the values, she has to enforce them.
- **Business models:** This isn't to say that business models can't, won't, or shouldn't change. They can, will, and should over time. But only at the right time and for the right reasons. Allowing price reductions that inhibit your ability to produce results breaks the model. Selling products and services that don't create the value your clients want, need, and expect from you changes the model, too. A leader cannot allow the model to be negotiated.



A leader needs a list of non-negotiables that cannot be allowed to change because someone doesn't like the culture, the values, the business model, or doesn't want to treat other people well. Being a leader means you are the one who stands up and enforces what is non-negotiable.



You Can't Need to Be Liked.

You will find that this is a short chapter, but because it is one of the greatest challenges leaders face, it needs to stand alone so that you don't overlook or set aside its importance. If you are to lead, you are to be unpopular and disliked at times. One cannot exist without the other.

Leadership is a tricky subject. There are so many attributes, beliefs, and behaviors that make up a good leader that it's impossible to come up with a single defining characteristic. And the same could be said for mistakes that would-be leaders make. One of the most common, and most damaging mistakes leaders make is the need to be liked.

One thing that leadership is not is a popularity contest. A leader can't have an overwhelming need to be liked. This isn't because leadership requires a hardness or uncaring persona; it is for very real, very fundamental reasons.

- **The need to be liked can prevent a leader from having the tough conversations that are necessary to good leadership.**
- **The need to be liked can cause some leaders to avoid taking action because they are afraid that someone will think less of them for making a decision—even when it is the right decision.**
- **In the worst of all cases, a leader with a strong need to be liked will refuse to hold people accountable for fear of that person not liking them.**

You Do Not Need to be Feared, But You Must Be Respected.

None of this means that a leader should want to be disliked. How you achieve outcomes as a leader is every bit as important as the outcomes themselves.

The idea that it is better for a leader to be feared than loved if she “can’t be both,” is 500 years old. Much about leadership has changed.

- The best leader you had cared enough about you to have the tough conversations necessary to help you see your blind spots. They weren’t mean-spirited in their criticism. They just saw something more in you than you could see at the time.
- The best leader you will ever have will make the decision to do what is right even when it is the unpopular decision. That leader will weigh their decisions carefully and do what is best for the people that they lead.
- A great leader will hold you accountable for producing results, even when those results are difficult to achieve.

The leader that you love won’t be one that you fear. It will be the one that you respect and who care about you and the people they led. By not needing to be liked, the leader earns the love and respect of the people they have the privilege to lead.

The Absolute Necessity of Accountability.

Next to shedding yourself of the need to be liked, the need to hold yourself and your team accountable is critical. The lack of accountability is why sales funnels are full of false opportunities, why cultures become stagnant, and why companies fail.

In order to hold people accountable, they must see you hold yourself accountable. You must prove that you have the will to accomplish your stated goals, and the ability to hold yourself, and your team, accountable.

Be the Leader Your Team Needs.

Managerial will is the leadership to tell your people that you are going to take the hill, and then driving the action to actually take the hill. Regardless of compensation. Regardless of plans and metrics. You achieve the goal through your personal leadership.

You establish the goal, and you employ all your resources, including time, energy, money, and people in achieving that goal. Come hell or high water.

Inspect and Adjust.

The second part of managerial will is holding people accountable for their role in achieving the goal. You ask them about their progress. And then you ask them again. When they're struggling, you help remove the obstacles to their performance. You coach them. You help them with whatever will enable them to do their part in producing the results you need them to produce as part of the larger goal.

Without the leadership component to managerial will, compensation and other levers rarely produce the results desired. If you had to choose between the two, managerial will is the safer bet—especially with a great actualized leader.

Without the accountability component, you will achieve results that are far less than what you are capable of producing.

This resistance to managerial will comes from the great—and real—fear that people will be hurt when managerial will is exercised by an unenlightened dominator who makes poor leadership choices. But this too stems from a lack of managerial will, namely that of the manager's leader in allowing bad behavior.

Managerial will, when exercised by a thoughtful, enlightened, caring leader is a force multiplier that allows their team to outproduce larger, better-resourced competitors who lack this discipline.

Everything Is Your Fault.

Being accountable to yourself means having the belief that you control your own destiny. You cannot hold anyone else accountable if you believe your success is dependent upon, or due to, anyone else. In order to be accountable to yourself, you must believe that everything is your fault.

Your team didn't deliver the numbers you needed. It is time to assess what went wrong and how to fix it. Here's where you start:

Don't be unhappy that your team didn't deliver the numbers you needed them to deliver. Be unhappy that you didn't lead them well enough to produce those results. As the leader, you were responsible for holding them accountable and making whatever changes were necessary to reach your goals.

Don't be miffed that your team didn't perform up to their abilities. Be annoyed with yourself for not developing and coaching them to deliver that performance. Once you hire someone, you are responsible for giving them everything they need to succeed. That means the mindset, skill sets, and tool kits. It also means the training, development, and coaching.

You shouldn't be angry with people who are disengaged and who don't buy into your vision. Be upset with yourself for not transferring your emotion to them strongly enough to engage them. People want to be inspired. They want to dream bigger. They want to make a contribution to a cause greater than themselves. You can give them that.



There are people who bother you because they destroy the culture you are creating with their negativity, dragging many good people down with them. Be bothered by the fact that you didn't act soon enough to prevent them from doing so. One of your primary roles as a leader is to protect the culture you create from anything or anyone who would harm it.

The most successful people in life believe that they are responsible for the results they produce. People that struggle to find the success they are capable of look to externalities to explain away their lack of success.

If you are responsible for the outcomes you don't like, you are also empowered to change them. Everything is your fault.



Tough Decisions and Harsh Realities.

Leaders make tough decisions. It means you deal with complicated client issues, doing what is right, even if it is unpopular, and even if it isn't easy. You deal with problem employees based on your values, even if it costs you an A-Player. You make decisions based on non-negotiables by making them known, and by holding people accountable. You make decisions, knowing that you have incomplete information, and knowing that you cannot always be 100 percent certain that you are making the right decision at the right time.

Right or wrong, you must decide. This is what leaders do.

In addition to making tough decisions, a leader must face harsh realities. This is as true for one who would lead themselves as it is for one who leads an organization.

The only thing that happens when you avoid harsh realities is that you suffer the harsh consequences you wish to avoid.

If you don't have enough opportunities to be able to reach your goals, avoiding that reality will do nothing to improve it. By shining a light on the fact that you don't have the potential deals you need, you can create a burning platform, determine a new course, and take massive action. By facing the harsh reality of too few opportunities, you can take steps to avoid the negative consequences.

"But wait," you say. "That will take too much time." The time will pass whether you take action or not. By acting, you may be able to mitigate the harsh consequences.

You may not relish the idea of letting go an employee who is a top performer with massive character flaws, and who is so negative that they are destroying your culture. The harsh reality is that they are disruptive and damaging your workforce. The consequences are a culture unlike the positive culture of high performance you have built. Facing the fact that you've allowed this employee to run roughshod for too long and removing them prevents you from paying a higher price than you are paying now.

“But what about the revenue they bring?” you ask. You can replace their revenue, and you can replace it by hiring someone who can perform at that level without the character flaws and baggage.

The harshest reality that a leader has to face is that they are ultimately responsible for what happens on their watch. The harsh reality is that the leader has to make hard calls, calls where the cost of making the decision is high and the cost of not making it is even higher. A leader is charged with making decisions that move the people they lead forward, even when they are unpleasant.

There are harsh consequences for not facing harsh realities. It is a mistake to think that avoiding the decisions you need to make doesn't come with a stiff penalty. Over time, you pay a higher price.

- **What is the harsh reality you need to face?**
- **Why are you avoiding the decisions and the actions?**
- **What is the price of your inaction?**

Managing People.

As a leader it is your responsibility to manage your people in such a way that you get the most out of them. To do this, you need to understand what people really want, and what they don't want.

No one wants to be micro-managed. No one wants someone to hover over their shoulder directing their work. Nor do they want their manager nagging them about what they're doing. Most leaders don't want to micro-manage their people. Many worry so much about micro-management that they create a culture that lacks accountability.

Most of the time, what one person perceives as micro-management is actually macro-management.

Macro Activity and Macro Outcomes.

The most important outcomes you need as a leader are macro. They're high value, strategic outcomes that lead to objectives being met. The failure to achieve these outcomes creates problems for the company, for divisions or departments, and for teams. These outcomes should command people's time and attention because the effort of the organization must be aligned with the outcomes.

If what you are doing isn't producing the necessary outcomes, then your leader is going to ask you to focus your efforts on the activity.

If the activity isn't aligned to big outcomes, a conversation is necessary.

Accountability Counts.

Yes, I touched on this topic in Chapter 4, primarily around leaders holding themselves accountable. I'm returning to it again because it's supremely important that leaders hold themselves and their teams accountable. If an outcome isn't being achieved, something isn't right. It could be that someone isn't doing what they need to do. It could also be that they aren't effective at the actions they need to take. But as a leader, accountability starts and ends with you. That means you have to start by making sure your team knows what is expected of them, understands what needs to be done and why, and has the resources to achieve their goal.

As a leader, you are responsible for the outcomes being achieved, and that means you are going to need to inspect the results, ask questions, understand challenges, and remove constraints. Asking questions is not micro-management; it's macro-management. Requiring more—or different—activities be taken in the pursuit of your goals isn't micro-management either, especially if not enough action is being taken. Much of the time those who complain about being micro-managed aren't putting forth the effort to produce results, or they're doing something they prefer doing instead of what they need to do. Correcting this is macro-management.

Great Leaders are Compassionate.

I know a great leader who had an employee in trouble. It was rather serious financial trouble, and it jeopardized her family. She wasn't a top performer. She wasn't anyone's favorite. But she was one of his people, and he did what was necessary to help her out of her financial jam.

I know another great leader who helps people who don't perform well into other roles. Sometimes those roles are within his company. Other times, he helps them find their way into new companies where they can be successful. He doesn't throw people out onto the street. He cares about people.

You've no doubt heard stories like these—or you have made similar decisions yourself. Maybe you've done what you believed to be right, even when it wasn't popular, and even when you have stood alone.

Compassion isn't walking a mile in someone's shoes. Compassion isn't the mental process of understanding intellectually what another person is going through.

Compassion is feeling in your heart what the other person feels in their heart.

Think compassion is weakness? Think compassion means that you don't have to make the hard decisions? Compassion is an indication of your strength. It's an indication that you are strong enough to do something to help.

Being compassionate doesn't mean that you aren't tough as nails when it comes to protecting your culture. It doesn't mean that you don't expect your people to perform. And it doesn't mean that you ever allow anyone to walk all over you, abuse your generosity, or take advantage of you.

Compassion means you are a living example of what it means to lead, what it means to care, and what it means to serve. Your people won't do what you say, but they will be who you are. If you lack compassion when it comes to the human things, so will the people you have the honor to lead.

People are going to remember what you do to help others. Are you strong enough to be compassionate?



Compassion Does Not Mean Being Too Empathetic.

Some leaders believe that they always need to be patient and empathetic. There is no doubt that as a default approach, this is a pretty good choice. But it isn't always the right approach. Sometimes, to make your point felt, you need to be impatient and demanding. Serious issues may need a serious, unrelenting response.

Empathy and patience can sometimes be the wrong response. Being empathetic at the wrong time can cause people to believe that a serious issue isn't a big deal. It can lead people to believe that they aren't really accountable for change when they have a serious behavioral issue or when they aren't producing results. But worst of all, when it is your only approach, you are a pushover, and you can just as easily lose your moral authority.

Some people and some situations call for patience and empathy. Some call for coaching and an approach that fosters learning. Sometimes you need to explain yourself carefully. But other people and situations call for a more self-directed approach.

You Can Also Be Too Self-Directed.

Some leaders believe that they need to be very self-directed to be effective. Self-directed can come across as self-oriented, selfish, and oblivious to what the other person needs or the constraints with which they are struggling. I've met some leaders who pride themselves on their self-directed approach. And sometimes it is exactly the right approach. This is especially true when the leader is protecting the culture they've built, or when they are dealing with a legal or moral issue. There are some issues that are non-negotiable.

But unless you have the relationship that allows for self-directed communication, every time you are self-directed when it is unnecessary takes a little something out of your moral leadership. When you are unnecessarily direct and short with people—even if it's because you are short on time and under pressure—you are making a withdrawal from your relationship.

If you've ever seen a coach on the sideline during a game, you've no doubt seen them grab a player and light them up when they are trying to make a point, rev them up, or change their state. If your approach is always high negative energy, then when you really need to call on that approach, it won't mean anything. You will have worn out the approach.



When Problems Arise. And there will be problems.

Invariably, in business, things go wrong. People make mistakes. Sometimes they make mistakes even when they have the best of intentions. Other times, they are simply negligent. People also fail to follow directions, sometimes because they misunderstand what was necessary, and sometimes because, mistakenly, they think they know better.

Focusing on People Is the Problem.

It's easy for a leader to focus their attention on the person who made the mistake, failed, lost the client, or generally botched things up. That leader can blame the person for what went wrong by yelling at them, by embarrassing them, by threatening them, or by somehow penalizing the individual. This choice is often made by a leader who believes that people are the problem. The leaders of this variety are eternally plagued with people problems.

When people don't feel a sense of psychological safety, they don't do their best work. They also don't stay long.

Focus on the Problem, Improve People.

Another leader, a more enlightened leader perhaps, would focus on the problem instead of the person. Instead of focusing on trying to discover “what’s wrong” with the person, they focus on the mistake, using it as an opportunity to teach the person how they made the mistake, why it is important, and how to do something different when faced with the same scenario in the future.

Instead of focusing on the failure, the enlightened leader works on recovering from the failure. They allow the person to help with the recovery, teaching them how to do better in the future, and how to recover the next time they fail, something that is almost a certainty.

Instead of threatening, embarrassing, or punishing the person who botched things up, they help them un-botch things. By working with people to solve problems, the enlightened leader solves the problem and builds their people at the same time. They get problems solved, and they get better people. They also create a culture of psychological safety.

If you believe that people are your problem, that belief is your problem.



Building and Protecting A Culture

Leaders build and protect the culture of their team. Culture is made up of what your company is on the inside. It is critical that what you are on the inside is different than what is outside.

Outside vs. Inside:

Outside: Outside, your people are bombarded daily with negative messages. The news and their social feeds are predominantly negative. Your people are continually barraged with news stories designed to create fear, angst, and unrest. The talk of recessions persist years after a recession ended. Stories of loss open every newscast, regardless of medium.

Outside: Your people are told that they're not good enough, that they are somehow broken. They are told that they can't be more, do more, have more, or contribute more. They are messaged by marketers in ways that drive them to feel as if they are inadequate and incomplete.

Inside: You have to have a message that inoculates the people you lead from negativity. Your message has to be optimistic and future-oriented. Inside has to be a place where people feel safer than they feel on the outside. Hope, promise, and possibility needs to live inside your four walls.

Inside: Inside, you must have a message to contradict and counteract these infections. A leader sees something in the individuals they lead that they don't see in themselves, and makes it visible. They see something in a team that the team doesn't see and brings it to light. A leader sees something in a company that the organization can't yet see, not only making it visible, but making it possible.

It has to be better inside your company than it is outside. You have to create greater certainty and greater psychological safety. You have to create a sense of community and belonging that no longer exists in neighborhoods. You have to help enable a sense of meaning and purpose that some of your people won't bring with them, and many won't find outside.

No one knows if Drucker really said, “Culture eats strategy for breakfast.” If he didn't, I believe he would support the statement—and its ramifications for leaders.

A Culture That Is Safe for Constructive Conflict

Even though they can make some people uncomfortable, disagreements and arguments are a critical part of business. Without disagreements and arguments you get groupthink, and you end up with mediocrity. When you have constructive conflict and disagree about what is right, you get a chance to explore new ideas, even ideas that make some people uncomfortable.

But constructive conflict needs to be done in a way that is safe and beneficial to the organization. “Safe” means it can’t harm the individuals that make up the organization.

Handling Conflict:

- **Assume good intentions:** When someone disagrees with the way something is being done and engages with others around that issue, it is imperative that you assume that person has good intentions. By assuming they have good intentions, you can shift your focus to the value of the idea, instead of evaluating the individual who is brave enough to bring up the idea.
- **Don't blame people for mistakes, problems, or challenges:** A personal review is something different from constructive conflict, even though it might include some constructive conflict. When you blame the individual for the mistakes, the challenges, or the problems your business is experiencing, you cause people to operate from a place of fear. If you have to operate from fear, you are going to avoid constructive conflict because the repercussions are likely bad for you. Blaming people keeps organizations from solving their deepest problems, and it keeps them from growing.
- **Focus on generating new ideas, withholding judgment about any idea:** When you do have constructive conflict, it's easy to dismiss another person's ideas without giving them a fair hearing. You can very quickly get to all the reasons that something can't or shouldn't be done. But this isn't how you solve problems. You solve problems when you generate new ideas and explore them before you choose one.



The healthiest cultures invite arguments and disagreements. A culture that is strong can withstand the idea of change. There are no sacred cows that must be protected. And every issue is seen as an opportunity to grow, not something to be avoided because egos are too fragile or feelings too easily hurt. **Constructive conflict is necessary,** and it's incredibly valuable when done well.



Leaders Communicate the Culture.

I was speaking at a conference when the CEO of the company leaned over and whispered in my ear. He said, “I am giving the same speech I’ve given the last two years. The stories are different. The examples are different, too. But it’s the same message.”

The CEO wondered whether he was wrong in doing so, and asked me what I thought. I told him, “Your message was right three years ago. It was right last year. And it’s right this year. As soon as you change your message, your people are going to be confused about who they are and where they are going. You aren’t delivering change. You’re doubling down.”

Great Leaders Relentlessly Communicate Their Message.

- **Mission:** Great leaders relentlessly communicate their company's mission. Those who never speak of "mission," never capture the hearts and minds of the people they have the honor to lead. Great leaders aren't afraid to communicate about the difference their organization is making, and they remind their teams of that mission with a steady stream of examples.
- **Vision:** Great leaders also take every opportunity to remind the people they lead where they are going, how they are going to get there, and who they are going to become. They communicate this vision, knowing that they win converts slowly and over time.
- **Values:** A leader leads through her values. What is important to her is important to her organization. What she ignores, they will also ignore. Great leaders draw a line in the sand separating "who we are" from "who we will never be." I know one leader who refuses to make money from his vendors, money his competitors take. I know another who never stops talking about caring. Their companies live those values.
- **Who We Are:** Effective leaders talk about their competition. They explain to the people they lead how they are different from their competitors, why they do things different, and why it matters. By talking about these things, they help the people they lead understand their place in the world.

As a leader, it is impossible to over-communicate in any of these areas. It is possible to cause people to lose their enthusiasm if you don't bring these ideas to life with stories, anecdotes, and examples of people getting things right. Your culture is based on actions, but it is also built on words - your words and the vision you create for your people.



A Leader's Legacy.

A leader's legacy is easily visible. That legacy is the leaders that she has built while she had the responsibility to lead.

You can't be a leader if no one is following you. But the measure of your success as a leader isn't the raw number of people you lead. Success isn't measured by what you've accomplished with and through the people you have the honor to lead. If you produce outstanding results for your company as a leader and leave it unprepared for the future, you have failed as a leader.

Your legacy is going to be the quality of the people you led, and that is most easily measured in the quality of the leaders you have helped to build.

The best leaders help others realize their potential. A leader sees something inside some of the people they serve that those people often can't yet see for themselves. One of the ways they build new leaders is by continually giving these high potentials assignments and responsibilities that stretch them. They push the high potential to take on a little more than he is ready to take on. And each time the high potential grows into his role, the leader pushes him into something that once again tests his boundaries.

My Great Leaders Share These Traits.

- **A Compelling, Inspiring Purpose and Vision:** If you are going to lead, you are going to have to create followers. So, where are you taking us? Why should we want to go there, and more still, why should I want to go there? A leader provides a clear, compelling vision that inspires others to act. Without that vision, you aren't a leader; you're an administrator.
- **A Burning Desire to Win:** For my money, I want a leader who loves a good fight. I want someone with a fire in their belly and an insatiable desire to win. A leader knows that her organization is competing, maybe against direct competitors, maybe for attention, maybe for donations. A leader can't be someone who is okay with the losing; they have to hate losing, learn from it, and go back and compete again.
- **An Unshakeable Optimism:** No one wants to follow a pessimist. No one wants a leader who believes all is lost. That isn't something a leader can be. A leader can't be the person who is full of fear and loathing when it comes to the future. Optimism is what allows you to act. A leader recognizes negatives as a burning platform and makes the decisions to move the organization she leads into a better future.

- **Impatience and a Sense of Urgency:** Leaders know they are playing against a clock. They never believe they have enough time. A number of U.S. Presidents (maybe all of them) have had calendars with the days they have remaining. They know that whatever they are going to get done has to be done now—if not sooner. They have to be impatient for results and lead their organization with a sense of urgency.
- **An Extraordinary Emotional Intelligence:** There are countless stories about great leaders who were nasty, foul, and completely lacking in emotional intelligence. They are exceptional, not so much as leaders, but in that they are the exception. Great leaders have very high emotional intelligence. They can work a room. They rely on their powers of persuasion and not their formal authority because they know persuasion is more effective. A leader is in the “people business,” and that means they need an extraordinary emotional intelligence.
- **A Desire to Help Others Grow:** A poor leader from a dominator hierarchy looks at their people as a means to an end. A great leader looks at their people as the end. They focus a good part of their time and attention on helping the people they lead grow and develop. A leader builds future leaders. They pull people up. They nurture people and teach others to do the same. A great leader knows that their legacy is how the organization performs after they are gone.

Great leaders know that they are building a leadership factory. They build leaders who in turn work to build new leaders. They pass on to the leaders they are building all that they have learned, their vision, their mission, and their values. These new leaders do the same, building the next generation of leaders behind them. Creating leaders propels the whole organization forward and helps the organization to reach its full potential—along with all of those within it.



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About Anthony Iannarino.

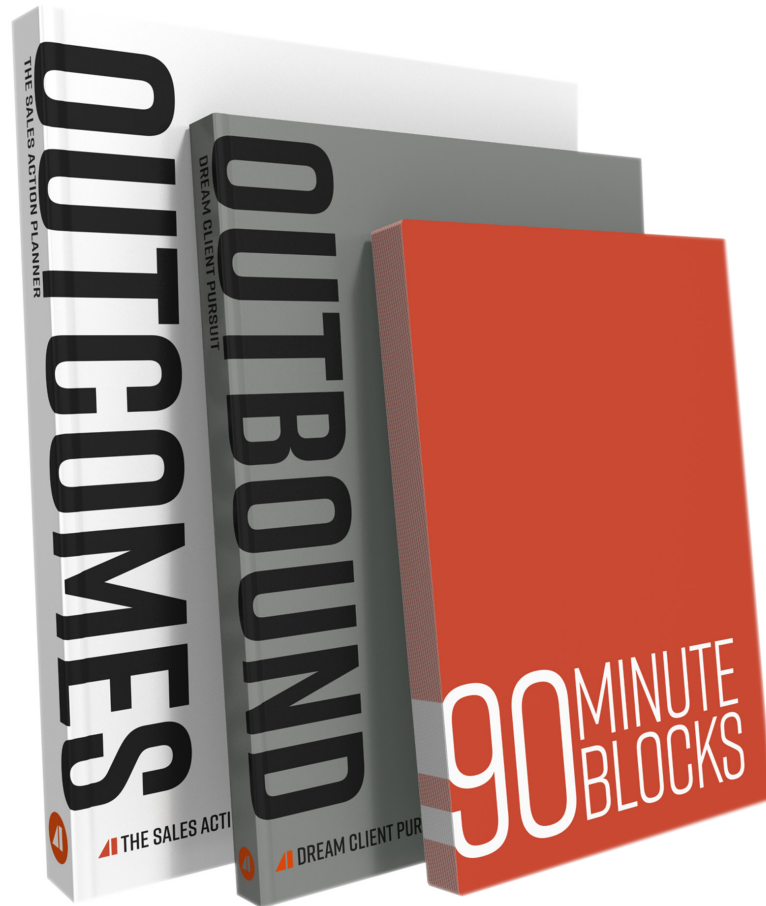
After receiving degrees and certificates from Capital University, Capital University Law School, and the Harvard Business School, Anthony founded B2B Sales Coach & Consultancy, a coaching and consulting firm. He has worked for—and spoken to—global giants like Accenture, NetJets, TransUnion, Wells Fargo, General Electric, and RR Donnelly.

Anthony has been internationally recognized as a thought leader in sales and leadership, being named one of the 50 most influential people in sales by Top Sales World and one of the 25 most influential people in sales and marketing by Open View Partners.

He's a national bestselling author of *The Only Sales Guide You'll Ever Need* and *The Lost Art of Closing: Winning the Ten Commitments That Drive Sales*; a contributing editor at *SUCCESS Magazine*; contributing columnist for *Selling Power Magazine* and *Forbes Magazine*; and an avid blogger, with over 3,000 posts to date on his site, *The Sales Blog*.

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