

# **COLLECTIVE CONFIDENCE: WHY SOME TEAMS REFUSE TO FAIL**

Dr. Andre Martin

ETLS 2025

---

**OD  
Consultant**



**Enterprise  
Associate**



**CLO &  
Head of  
Engagement**



**CLO,  
VP Talent & Culture**



**CLO,  
VP Talent  
Development  
& Change**



**CLO,  
VP People  
Development**



**Culture Strategist,  
Board Member,  
Operating Advisor**



**HOW CAN WE HARNESS AI AND OUR LIMITLESS  
HUMAN INGENUITY WHEN OUR TANKS ARE  
EMPTY AND OUR OPTIMISM IS AT AN ALL TIME  
LOW?**

---

# THE STATE OF THE WORLD

---

# **UNCERTAINTY\*** DOMINATES TODAY'S EXECUTIVE LANDSCAPE, RESHAPING EVERY DECISION AND STRATEGY.

**\*3 year low**, confidence CEO's have in their executive team to lead through uncertainty (Russell Reynolds).

**\*2/3's of employees** say experienced more change this year than in years past (PwC).

---

# **ISOLATION\*** CREATES FEAR AND ERODES EMPATHY, IT IS THE MAJOR LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE OF OUR TIME.

**\*15 cigarettes a day** has the equivalent health effects of daily loneliness (U.S. Surgeon General).

**\*1 of 5** Americans experience daily loneliness (Gallup).

---

**PESSIMISM\*** IS PERVASIVE AND IS MAKING  
IT FAR TOO EASY TO SEE WHAT IS WRONG OR  
TO BE DISAPPOINTED IN EACH OTHER.

\***32% of people** believe things will be better for the next generation (Edelman).

\***Over 67% percent** of us believe governments and business leaders purposely mislead people (Edelman).

---

40

% of employees  
feel “isolated”  
everyday at  
work

9.6

Global cost (in  
trillions) of  
disengaged  
employees

75

% of workers in  
the USA who  
suffer from  
“Sunday Scaries”

79

% of employees  
who felt burnt  
out at the end  
of 2024

20

% of employees  
think about  
quitting every  
single day

Today, we face **unprecedented challenges** and **ever-increasing pressure to perform**. At every turn, there is a reason to disengage, jump ship, take fewer risks, or simply stand still.

---



**WE ARE TRYING TO DO INCREASINGLY HARD  
THINGS WITH LESS CREATIVE ENERGY ,  
OPTIMISM , AND BELIEF IN EACH OTHER.**

**THIS HAS TO CHANGE.**

---

# COLLECTIVE CONFIDENCE: THE SECRET WEAPON TO WHAT AILS US

---

LEADERSHIP EMERGENCE AND EFFICACY – IMPROVING  
MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE IN  
LEADERLESS TEAMS

André C. Martin, BA, M.S.(R)

A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate  
School of Saint Louis University in Partial  
Fulfillment Of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Doctorate of Philosophy

2000

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

UMI Number: 3104700

Copyright 2002 by  
Martin, Andre C.

All rights reserved.

UMI<sup>®</sup>

UMI Microform 3104700  
Copyright 2003 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.  
All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against  
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company  
300 North Zeeb Road  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

DIGEST

The goals of this research were twofold. First, the study sought to clarify the relationship between efficacy and performance by exploring how collective efficacy, past performance, and group performance interacted with one another over the life span of a group. The second goal was to better understand leadership emergence in groups by exploring why leaders emerge and what effect that leadership has on performance. Specifically, the relationships between self-efficacy, leadership emergence, leadership style, and a leader's self-efficacy were explored.

The participants were 178 adults in 35 teams from a recreational basketball league in a large southwestern city. The participants completed questionnaires at three points in their 5-week, 10-game season. The participants were mostly males with an average age of 30 years old.

The findings showed that collective efficacy and performance have a significant relationship across the life span of the group, with those groups higher in collective efficacy generally enjoying higher performance. Furthermore, it was found that past performance and collective efficacy account for similar portions of the variance in current group performance. The process-oriented measure of point differential proved to be the strongest predictor of current performance followed by collective efficacy.

The variables of past performance, a leader's self-efficacy, and the aggregate measure of the team's self-efficacy showed strong predictive relationships to collective efficacy. However, these variables could not be tested

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

**COLLECTIVE CONFIDENCE\*** IS THE  
UNWAVERING BELIEF THAT TOGETHER, WE  
CAN ACHIEVE GREATNESS.

Rooted in the work of Albert Bandura, it has been studied across domains ranging from sports to education, to the workplace. It is the key ingredient to performance of a team or collective over time.

---

### Collective confidence is a powerful predictor of performance in the best teams.

Collective confidence accounted for nearly  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the variance team performance over time (self reported by team members.)

### Past performance is not the only predictor of collective confidence.

Six different contributors emerged as predictors to collective confidence including: past performance, self confidence, contributory confidence, vicarious experience, shared learning, and shared leadership.

### Collective confidence was predictive of other highly valued team outcomes.

Collective confidence accounted for a significant portion of the variance beyond team performance, including: team cohesion, team resilience, team collaboration, and creative risk taking.

### Collective confidence to performance link is reliant on strong group process

When group process variables\* were included in the model, the predictive value of collective confidence dropped showcasing that good or bad group process amplifies the impact (or not) of confidence.

\*Open communication, role clarity, recognition, goal setting, constructive conflict.

**A survey of 400 team members** from USA, Europe, and Australia provided insights into the relationship between collective confidence and team performance.

---

# **BUILDING COLLECTIVE CONFIDENCE**

---

## Inputs to collective confidence

### PSYCHOLOGICAL INPUTS

Self confidence  
Contributory  
confidence

### PERFORMANCE INPUTS

Past performance  
Vicarious  
experience

### COLLECTIVE CONFIDENCE

### LEARNING INPUTS

Shared leadership  
Shared learning/  
training

### TEAM PROCESS INPUTS

Clear ways of working  
Consistent team  
rituals & routines

1. SELF CONFIDENCE
2. CONTRIBUTORY CONFIDENCE\*
3. MASTERY EXPERIENCES\*
4. VICARIOUS EXPERIENCES\*
5. SHARED LEARNING
6. SHARED LEADERSHIP

**CONTRIBUTORY CONFIDENCE\* IS AN  
OFTEN OVERLOOKED AND  
UNDER-APPRECIATED ELEMENT TO  
COLLECTIVE BELIEF.**

\*Contributory confidence is the extent to which i believe I can make a unique and significant contribution to the team given the mix of skills and abilities.

---



A large group of people, mostly women, are posing for a group photo in front of a large, white, stylized structure that resembles a giant face or a mask. The structure has the words "CAMP CORNY" written on its forehead. The people are dressed in various costumes, including hats, sunglasses, and face paint. Some are holding flags or props. The background shows a desert landscape with mountains in the distance and other structures or tents visible on the left and right. The overall atmosphere is festive and creative.

**THE “SLOW HANG” IS A GAME CHANGER  
MAKE EVERYONE THE “BOSS” OF SOMETHING.  
COMPETENCE BORROWING EMERGES FROM “UNLIKELY DUOS”.**

---

**EARLY SUCCESS\*** AS A TEAM CREATES THE  
**HABIT OF WINNING THAT SUSTAINS  
COLLECTIVE BELIEF IN HIGH PRESSURE.**

\*The early success should be in **analogous and low stakes environment** as it allows the team members to practice trust and build psychological safety.

---



A large group of people, mostly men, are gathered on a rocky mountain peak. They are wearing various outdoor gear, including hats, sunglasses, and backpacks. Many of them are raising their hands in a celebratory gesture. In the center, two banners are being held. The left banner is white with a blue 'X' logo and the text 'THE NEXT ASCENT', 'PEAKSPAN', and 'READY TO CLIMB'. The right banner is blue with the word 'PEAKSPAN' in white. The background shows a vast mountain range under a blue sky with scattered white clouds.

**THE “FARM SYSTEM” CREATES LOW STAKES WAYS TO WIN.  
THE WEEKLY WARM-UP EXPOSES EVERYONE TO EXCELLENCE.  
HYPE UP THE LITTLE THINGS IN BIG WAYS.**

**INSPIRATION\*** FROM TEAMS THAT ARE  
**BEST-IN-CLASS IS VITAL TO SEE THAT  
HIGHER LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE ARE  
POSSIBLE.**

\*Vicarious experience moves beyond being enamored by what a team accomplished and uses the **secret science of inspiration** to ask the question “why not us?”

---



THE DEADLIEST CATCH PRODUCTION TEAM - 2006

---

# DEADLIEST CATCH


Discovery

**“FILM SCHOOL” MADE IMPOSSIBLE, POSSIBLE.  
DEBRIEFS DECODED THE SECRET SAUCE OF SUCCESS.  
CAMARADERIE AND RIVALRY ARE VITAL.**

---

# THE SHADOWSIDE OF COLLECTIVE CONFIDENCE

---

A close-up portrait of Elizabeth Holmes, co-founder of Theranos. She has blonde hair pulled back, blue eyes, and is wearing a black turtleneck. She is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression.

**INSPIRATIONAL HUBRIS HIDES HICCUPS.  
AMBITION MUST BE REALISTIC.  
PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IS THE CURE.**

---





THE BOEING 737 MAX - 2018

---

**THE DANGER OF INSTITUTIONAL INVINCIBILITY.  
THE SECRET SAUCE WAS LOST.  
RE-RECRUIT THE TEAM TO AVOID THE CLIFF.**

---



# CURATING COLLECTIVE CONFIDENCE

---

### Inputs to collective confidence

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL INPUTS

Self confidence  
Contributory  
confidence

#### PERFORMANCE INPUTS

Past performance  
Vicarious  
experience

#### COLLECTIVE CONFIDENCE

#### LEARNING INPUTS

Shared leadership  
Shared learning/  
training

#### TEAM PROCESS INPUTS

Clear ways of working  
Consistent team  
rituals & routines

01

Reinforce **individual accomplishments** and offer constructive feedback to make them better.

02

Make everyone **the “boss” of something** and provide an opportunity to contribute in unique ways

03

Provide the team opportunities to succeed together in **analogous, low stakes** environments.

04

Provide **inspiration doses** of teams in similar situations that have exceeded expectations.

05

Take time for the team to learn and **build capability together** as opposed to separately.

06

**Rotate leadership roles** to allow every member to share in the responsibility.

# A FINAL THOUGHT

---

## A CONFIDENT TEAM WILL:

**PLAY TO WIN** RATHER THAN PLAYING NOT TO LOSE.

**INNOVATE** RATHER THAN STICKING TO SAFE FORMULAS.

**SEE CHALLENGES** AS OPPORTUNITIES NOT THREATS.

**REGROUP AFTER FAILURE** INSTEAD OF POINTING FINGERS.

---

**THE END. AND, THE BEGINNING.**



**CONNECT ON LINKEDIN**

---