



# As One

Individual Action, Collective Power

by Mehrdad Baghai and James Quigley with Ainar Aijala, Sabri Challah and Gerhard Vorster

From AS ONE by Mehrdad Baghai and James Quigley

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## Focus

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## Take-Aways

- Leaders and followers should work “as one” – in a unit – to solve problems.
- Eight archetypes describe successful leader-follower relationships:
- “Landlord and tenants”: The leader controls a resource others want.
- “Community organizer and volunteers”: In a reversal of power, leaders inspire, but followers set the agenda and act.
- “Conductor and orchestra”: A leader sets rules; followers offer their “personal best.”
- “Producer and creative team”: The organization gives a team of experts and innovators the resources and the creative freedom to meet the producer’s goals.
- “General and soldiers”: The leader’s “mission” – and the followers’ sense of security – depends on clarity, hierarchy, and command and control.
- “Architects and builders”: Architects ask a team of diverse but interdependent builders to bring their blueprint to life in clearly defined stages.
- “Captain and sports team”: Captains inform the team and help it adapt to change.
- “Senator and citizens”: Like-minded people work together as a community, choosing to observe the same “constitution.” Their leader is a mentor, not a dictator.

## Rating (10 is best)

Overall

9

Applicability

8

Innovation

9

Style

10

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## Relevance

### What You Will Learn

In this Abstract, you will learn: 1) What “As One” collective leadership means and 2) How As One archetypes work as seen in models of successful collective leadership.

### Recommendation

*getAbstract* strongly recommends this expansive, beautifully produced, hugely entertaining book about leaders and followers. Management consultant Mehrdad Baghai and former Deloitte global CEO James Quigley, writing with top Deloitte managers, relate widely diverse stories to show how leaders interact with followers. They draw eight leadership models of collaboration – each of which is proven to work in the right circumstances, and each of which can be applied to organizations today.

## Abstract

### “As One”

Research and discussion about leadership skills tend to center on a leader’s qualities and to pay little attention to followers and what motivates them to contribute and succeed. Organizations are likely to fail when they suffer a “disconnect” between leadership styles and strategic goals – and between prevailing and preferred ways of working. For people to reach their full potential, leaders and followers need to work as a collective – a single organism united for a common purpose. Examples from politics, business and the not-for-profit sector suggest eight models or archetypes of collective leadership. Spanning command-and-control and laissez-faire leadership formats – and hybrids of the two – these models provide a taxonomy for “As One” behaviors:

#### 1. “Landlord and Tenants”

Under this model, a leader’s power rests in a valuable or scarce asset, which the leader, or landlord, controls from the top down. Followers agree to the landlord’s rules in return for access to the asset or resource. Apple’s App Store typifies the relationship. Apple contracts with independent developers to create apps for the iPhone and iPad and sells them through its online store. It splits the earnings 30/70, giving the lion’s share to the developer. Strict rules – no porn, no distribution outside the App Store and no disclosure of sales terms – keep Apple in control. Developers (like tenants) accept the arrangement because it gives them access to millions of buyers and, given the 30/70 split, they also gain a chance to get rich. These characteristics distinguish the landlord and tenant model:

- **“Landlords gain structural advantage through control of a power base”** – Union boss Walter Reuther used his major asset, labor, to force US carmakers (the tenants) to accept union demands in the 1950s.
- **“Landlords articulate the overall direction and strategy”** – With funding of \$60 billion, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is the world’s largest philanthropic organization. Perhaps the ultimate benign landlord, it uses its power and influence to attract institutions and scholars to its projects.
- **“Landlords...define and reinforce the rules”** – They “set precedents and resolve conflicts.” Firms must follow 6,000 rules to remain on the New York Stock Exchange.
- **Landlords reward “the best performing tenants”** – Walmart promises that suppliers who agree to its terms will benefit from a high volume of business.

*“As one...those five letters symbolize the culmination of individual action into collective power.”*

*“The concept is a starting point for all leaders to understand how they can apply specific collective leadership techniques to best fit the situations and challenges they face.”*

*"Are you using the archetype that is most effective for your organization...or simply the one that is most natural for your own leadership style?"*

*"Apple's virtual marketplace enables creativity to flow from developers and into the hands of iPhone enthusiasts."*

*"Bill Gates will popularize the idea of giving all of one's wealth in the pursuit of a personal dream."*

*"The community of Linux users and developers is held together by pride and the thrill of working toward a common goal of a universal, free, elegant, bug-free or bug-resistant alternative to Windows."  
(Russ Roberts, BusinessWeek)*

- **Landlords gain more power as they get more tenants** – Rupert Murdoch provides access to what advertisers want most: mass media. The more print space or broadcast spots they buy, the more Murdoch's empire grows.

## 2. "Community Organizer and Volunteers"

In this model, leaders and their followers operate more as an "ecosystem" than as a formal organization. The leader has a compelling vision that inspires people to act. Consider the Linux open-source movement. Engineer Linus Torvalds built a community of developers dedicated to improving the kernel of his operating system, an open source alternative to Windows. Torvalds allowed people to profit from their contributions, provided they kept the source code open to all. As a result, he won the support of major corporations such as Dell, IBM, Sun Microsystems and Nokia. By 2010, the Linux ecosystem was worth an estimated \$40 billion. Participants in this model have these traits:

- **"Volunteers [are] independent decision makers"** – The Visa credit card system unites autonomous banks into a "chaordic" – both chaotic and orderly – organization.
- **"Volunteers...opt into campaigns case by case"** – To keep followers motivated, community organizers actively engage them, treat each one equally, and show all of them that their opinions and passions matter.
- **"Community organizers...use narratives to motivate the volunteers"** – Barack Obama channelled his personal story into a message of hope and change.
- **"Community organizers' power increases as the number of volunteers grows"** – When the Nazis ordered the extradition of the Jews from all occupied territories, the Danish king, Christian X, refused to comply, and, one by one, the Danes followed his example. The Danes offered more than 7,000 Jews refuge from their persecutors or helped them escape to neighboring Sweden.

## 3. "Conductor and Orchestra"

An orchestra's goal is to play a musical score flawlessly. The conductor must help the musicians achieve the highest standards. In this model, followers conform to strict guidelines that reduce the risks of mistakes. This archetype is commonly found in the health care sector. For example, at Medco Health Solutions, the pharmacy-benefits manager provides 1,000 specially-trained pharmacists with tools and technologies to prevent medication-dispensing errors. Medco's expertise and emphasis on precision and quality have helped make it the world's "largest mail-order pharmacy." This model's key characteristics are:

- **"Orchestra members have clearly defined roles and tasks"** – FedEx Ground relies on 15,000 independent contractors to deliver more than 3.5 million items each day; "task clarity" means each driver can earn money based on the number of deliveries.
- **Musicians follow "detailed and scripted processes"** – Conductors encourage individuals to pursue their interests and hone their skills, but not at the expense of other members. The orchestra must be greater than the sum of its individual parts.
- **Musicians undergo "extensive training and orientation" to perform with precision** – Only when you master the basics of your craft can you enjoy the freedom of creativity.
- **"Compliance and incentives" are closely related** – People continue to fly with Ryanair and comply with its rules because its low-cost basic fare acts as an incentive.

## 4. "Producer and Creative Team"

On a movie set or in a theater, a producer takes care of the "big picture" and lets innovative, independent artists put on a show, harnessing, not unbridling, creativity. Cirque du Soleil's scouts search worldwide for unusual creative artists for its productions. Its huge pool of

*“Successful generals are able to not only visualize strategic opportunities, but also to use their key soldiers to execute more tactical and detailed missions.”*

*“For conductors and orchestras... driven by efficiency and cost management, precision and attention to detail are what makes the difference between mediocre and flawless performance.”*

*“There is no ‘cookie cutter’ approach to Cirque – the combined work of the performers, directors and backstage crew add up to a show that’s never been seen before.”*

*“You can’t simply describe what needs to be done in an emergency situation; it needs to be experienced.”*

employees and performers creates unique, crowd-pleasing spectacles through discipline and hard work: training “boot camps” push performers to their limit; taking a show from “page” to stage can involve years of work. This model’s primary traits are:

- **“Producers articulate an overall objective...the creative team...brings it to life”** – Despite often toiling in anonymity, producers create the vision that guides the team.
- **“Members...complement the rest of the team”** – The Mayo Clinic, one of the best hospitals in the US, expands or reassembles surgical teams as individual cases demand.
- **“The creative team [has] complete freedom”** – Following an illness, *Star Wars* creator George Lucas had to cede directorial control of *The Empire Strikes Back*; the film was later acclaimed as the best in the series.
- **Leaders use “dissent...to push the creative boundaries of the team”** – Bridgewater Associates investment managers invite their colleagues to criticize their proposals harshly as part of a mutual effort to produce the best plans for clients.
- **“The creative team collaborates closely”** – To foster participation, creative teams usually have a broad set of skills but relatively few members.

## 5. “General and Soldiers”

Under this command-and-control archetype, leaders expect people to perform specific, assigned tasks that reflect their place in the hierarchy. The structure of the model, however, is supportive rather than oppressive. “Soldiers” use their training and experience to advance through the ranks. At the Marriott Hotels, entry-level employees perform routine tasks but have a chance for promotion. The company runs an English program to increase opportunities for nonnative English speakers. For example, Mexican Sara Redwell began as a housekeeper but retired as a hotel general manager. This model’s characteristics are:

- **“Generals take charge of a mission”** – Patriarchs in the “Bamboo Network” run expatriate Chinese family businesses in Asia, creating huge industrial complexes.
- **Leaders “clearly define...roles, processes and tasks”** – Baristas at Starbucks train rigorously, so each outlet offers the same service.
- **“The organizational model relies on hierarchy and rank”** – Multilevel marketing networks, such as health care, beauty and homecare specialist Amway, organize their sellers into ranks and offer motivational awards. The more people independent business owners recruit to sell products, the greater their chances of promotion.
- **“Training is highly specialized”** – Jesuit priests spend 10 years in study, training, religious retreat and charitable work before taking their final vows.
- **“Uniforms and rituals reinforce...common identity”** – Boot camp unites soldiers.

## 6. “Architect and Builders”

The architect is a leader with a vision who relies on the skills, ingenuity and creativity of others to bring it to life. Ratan Tata, chairman of India’s Tata Group, typifies the architect. He dreamed of producing a car that would sell for \$2,500. To do so, he had to win the support of his suppliers. His company used minimalist design and innovative production processes to bring the Tata Nano, the Indian “people’s car,” to life.

- **“Architects are visionaries with a goal that seems an impossible dream”** – Shai Agassi, founder of Better Place, wants to “change the world” by building a global energy network for electric cars.
- **Architects unite a team** – Builders need skills and commitment to realize their dream.
- **“‘Revolutionary’ problem solving is critical”** – Capital One saw credit cards as “information,” not as “banking,” and pioneered the balance-transfer service.

*“The study of collaboration may be about working together, but it isn’t necessarily about working as one.”*

*“A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history.”  
(Mohandas Gandhi)*

*“As One. Five letters that make all the difference between a group of individuals and a unified team. Two words that transform individual action into collective power. One idea that can help you realize the full power of your people.”*

- **Builders have “freedom within a frame”** – They can be creative, but they must meet the architect’s goals on time.
- **“Builders...are interdependent links in a chain”** – Architects must ensure that they see the bigger picture and don’t work in isolation from each other.

## 7. “Captain and Sports Team”

The followers in this model abide by the game’s rules but make strategic decisions during the match. The captain isn’t the boss so much as first among equals; team members work on the field, assessing the game and conveying information to their teammates. Mumbai’s 5,000 *dabbawalas*, or “lunchbox men,” act as a highly coordinated, dynamic unit. They punctually and consistently deliver 200,000 hot meals a day – handing over lunchboxes to colleagues at set relay points. Their low failure rate – one lunch in 16 million, or one in 60 days – has earned them Six Sigma certification. The key characteristics of this model are:

- **“Recruits primarily join to achieve their personal goals”** – The individual wants to excel, but within the team’s “strong sense of shared identity” and “pride.”
- **“There is minimal hierarchy and sometimes no apparent leader”** – The captain serves as the team’s “mouthpiece” and coordinator.
- **“Tasks and processes are clearly defined”** – And “internal communications are extensive.” When players are tuned in to one another, the team operates as one unit.
- **“Strategy emerges gradually”** – Training prepares people; it doesn’t provide a how-to manual. For example, firefighters must adapt in a moment to changing conditions.

## 8. “Senator and Citizens”

Using this model, citizens unite to help their community, bound together by shared values. As their representative, the senator wields minimal power. Design and engineering company W.L. Gore & Associates eschews titles and organizational charts. People work in ad hoc teams that coalesce and disband as needed. “Sponsors,” not bosses, guide projects; the company lets its employees select work that interests them and tolerates mistakes “above the waterline” – errors that puncture the boat but won’t sink it. This model’s main traits are:

- **“A ‘constitution’ enshrines the principles and values that govern the citizens”** – The senator safeguards the tenets of a mission statement.
- **“Citizens voluntarily...join the community”** – Harley Davidson motorcycle riders enjoy being HOGs, members of the Harley Owners Group.
- **“Autonomy is a fundamental right”** – and **“participation is a core responsibility”** – Citizens trust that their constitution and system ensure the right behavior and they believe that dissenting voices contribute to improving processes.
- **“The community only functions if the structure is fluid and adaptive”** – Japan’s Kyocera, a manufacturer of electronics components, encourages using “amoebas,” or small working groups, to resolve issues.
- **“Communities can be both physical and virtual”** – The Internet and social networks can facilitate Senator & Citizens communities.

## About the Authors

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