

Are Leaders Born or Made? A True Story



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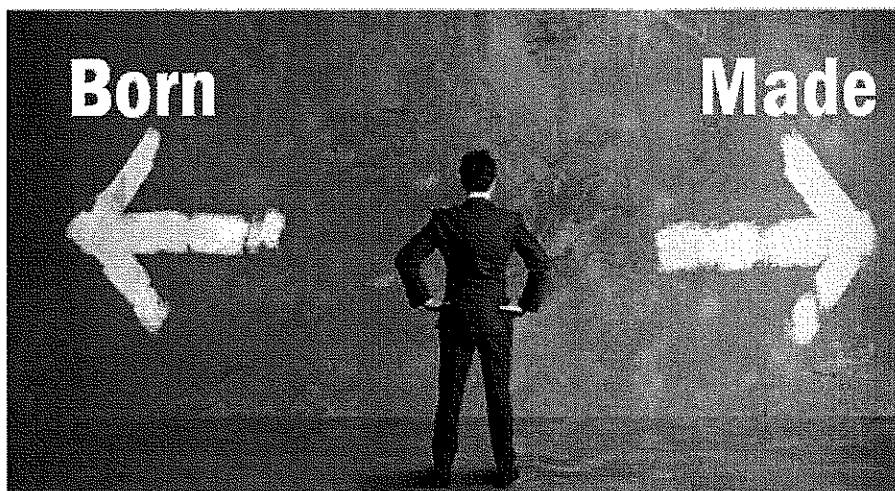
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Which came first the chicken or the egg? To be or not to be? Nature versus Nurture?
Can we finally put this age old argument to rest and come to a conclusion.
Leadership: "Exercising of influence over others on behalf of the leader's purposes, aims or goals."
"

Leaders are born not made:

Great Man theory and Trait theories believe that **people inherit certain qualities and traits** that make them better suited to leadership.

To suggest that leaders do not enter the world with extraordinary endowment is to imply that people enter the world with equal abilities, with equal talents." (Thomas Carlyle 1840)

There are certain inborn characteristics that predispose people to be and become leaders. There is a significant difference between "**learning a skill**" and **mastering one**, in the same way that others are born with amazing musical gifts or athletic talents. They will excel naturally in these areas but others would be like a fish out of water and may struggle to get to the same point.

Born (natural) Leaders are different to made (artificial leaders). All remarkable leaders have great history behind them. They were leaders from the onset of their journey.

If leaders were solely born what is the point of the rest of us studying leadership or management?

Birth is a natural process and the notion to associate leadership with it is arguable.

Leaders are made not born:

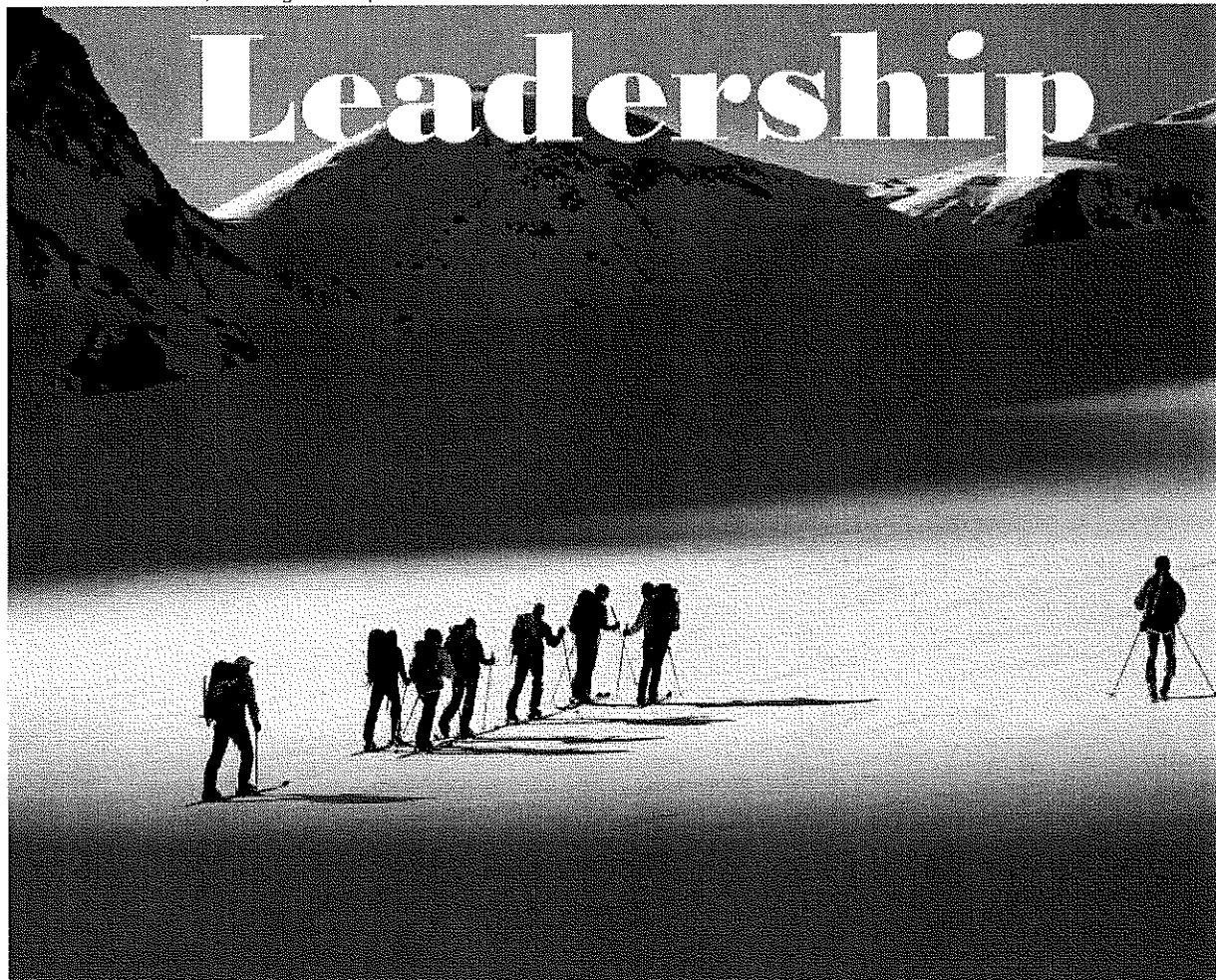
Behavioral Theories believe that **people can become leaders through the process of teaching, learning and observation.** Leadership is a set of skills that can be learned by training, perception, practice and experience over time. Leadership learning is lifetime activity. Good leaders seek out development opportunities that will help them learn new skills.

The military embraces this doctrine which is evident through its leadership training programme. Can enrolling for a programme on management and leadership makes someone a leader upon completion? Can **Charisma, Influence, Integrity and the ability to Inspire be taught?** Will the granting of a certificate and a few letters after one's name make them a leader?

Leadership can be learned by anyone with the basics. But an awful lot of leadership cannot be taught. Some do well but others find themselves poorly equipped rendering mediocre results.

The Verdict:

Leadership is an art rather than a science. It is a set of innate traits, refined and perfected over time with education, training and experience.



There is also an aspect of being in the **right place in the right time**. You may be a leader but also a matter of whether or not you are in the position within which your talents can shine forth. The discussion about leadership also needs to identify the **location as well as the environment**. Are we speaking about these major performers (born or made) in a small organization, in an industry, in a society, in a country or in the world?

If the fear of leading overrides the willingness to take on the responsibilities then one is a follower. Not everyone can be a leader just like not everyone can become a good actor. Some people will never have that aspect in them while others have the latent ability and thus can be taught how to lead. **All the books, classes education and training cannot turn a follower into a leader.**

To be a leader in a structured environment, one needs some formal training. Most people can learn to manage well, start a business, lead a project team since good management is based on rules - rules that can be learned and mastered.

Leadership is often a Choice. A leader is a person who comes forward to take the challenge. If a leader rises up from the multitude, then that person was already a leader to begin with. Should someone have all the best training, nurturing and opportunities, but would rather be hidden in the crowd, an unwilling participant...not a leader.

Leadership styles varies with maturity, followers and situations.

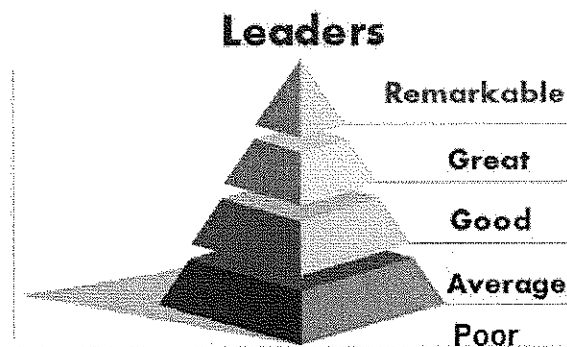
In the GLOBE research across 60 countries leader attributes conclusions were thus: "Integrity; charisma, inspirational, visionary, encouraging, positive, confidence builder, dynamic,

communicative ability, and emotional intelligence. Therefore a leader is born, developed, skilled in communications, and cultivated through life experiences.

The best estimates offered by research is that leadership is about one-third born and two-thirds made.

It all depends on how one defines leadership. It is possible for either. Depending on how you define leadership everyone can lead and be a leader.

Perhaps we should seek to quantify leaders rather than qualify.



Remarkable Leaders would include the likes of Nelson Mandela, Mahatma Ghandi, Martin Luther King Jr, Aung San Suu Kyi...etc. Individuals that seek neither wealth nor fame, selfless, loved justice, passionate about people and worked for the greater good of others.

In studying leadership, the theories can be overwhelming. It is evident you cannot really support a side and negate the other. Although there are thousands of books, decade's worth of well documented studies, the debate can go on forever without converging to a logical conclusion. That's why I would like to share a true story. Well, my story.

My Story:

From the time I was little, all the elderly villagers (who have long past) would tell my mother "This child is different". I was **always focused and driven and had a passion and desire to lead**. I was not born with a golden spoon or a silver spoon or any other spoon for that matter. Things were extremely tough growing up. I am actually the only one in all my relatives to have attained undergraduate education. My mother is now taking literacy classes, and I am so proud of her. I remember two moments quite vividly from my early childhood. The first was having a conversation with my mother when I was around 5 years and telling her I wanted to go to school. But at that time she could not afford to send me. The second was playing marbles around 7 or 8 years with a neighbour and hearing his mother whispering to him, "Why are you playing with Brigitte. She is so serious." I was **just persistent and well competitive**.

Whilst most of the people in my community accepted being a victim of circumstances and floated downstream, I **instinctively paddled upstream against the prevailing currents**. Was it hard? "Yes". Was it lonely? "Yes". Did I get depressed? "Yes". Yet, I was compelled to keep moving forward. Thank God!

I believe there must be some deep rooted spark if not an intense fire within. Are leaders born OR made? I beg to differ and shift the gauge to read both. Leaders are both born and made. The Pareto principle named after economist Vilfredo Pareto, also known as the 80—20 rule states that for many events, roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes. It observes that most things have an unequal distribution. According to this principle, leaders are 80 percent made and 20 percent born. However, studies conducted out of the University of Illinois, support past research that leadership is 30 percent genetic and 70 percent learned. As to how the percentage is precisely divided between both born and made, I believe this may be subject to individual circumstances, since no two leaders will have the exact ratios listed above.

What is your story?

My new book is now available! Please see link below:

Dangerous Leaders
How and Why Lawyers Must Be Taught
to Lead

By
Anthony C. Thompson

Pages 1-19

INTRODUCTION

A New Vision of Leadership for Lawyers

TAYLOR MATTHIAS WILLIAMS could not breathe at birth. Born three months premature, Taylor depended on a ventilator to keep him breathing and a heart monitor to track his vital signs. This is not unusual for premature babies. But Taylor's situation was particularly precarious. Taylor was born in Flint, Michigan, in 2016. His mother had bathed in Flint's contaminated water throughout her pregnancy; she had contracted listeria, which caused the premature birth. Following the delivery, doctors tested Taylor and detected lead in his bloodstream. Children are especially vulnerable to lead poisoning because it attacks the developing brain and central nervous system. Exposure can cause behavioral disorders, cognitive difficulties, and other developmental problems. Right now, it is still too soon to say whether Taylor will experience these health effects,¹ but he and his family will face, at a minimum, years of worry and possibly a lifetime of suffering. It is a heartbreaking story but one among thousands arising from the water crisis in Flint. And these stories move from heartbreaking to disturbing to infuriating as we realize that they are all rooted in the financial decisions and leadership failures of men and women who not only should have known better but should have done better.

The political choice to prioritize budget cuts over citizens' health returns as a theme throughout the events triggering the water contamination in Flint. In 2011, an audit conducted by the State of Michigan's Department of the Treasury projected a \$25 million budget deficit for the city of Flint, inciting the State of Michigan to place Flint's finances under the control of an

emergency manager answering to the governor. The emergency manager's mandate was to cut the budget at any cost. Flint's water supply alone accounted for \$9 million of the deficit. Officials had been using some of that money to cover shortfalls in the general fund. To reduce the water fund shortfall, the city switched in 2014 from paying Detroit for water supplied from Lake Huron to drawing water from the Flint River. The state treasurer, Andrew Dillon, applauded the decision, saying it would bring "desperately needed" savings.² Government officials intended this move as a stopgap measure until a pipeline connecting Flint to water from Lake Huron could be completed.

But the Flint River, running through town, was known to local residents for the filth and waste polluting it. Almost immediately after the changeover occurred, residents noticed a murky color and odor to their water and complained to city officials, who insisted the water was safe. Soon after, the city detected bacteria and other disease-causing organisms contaminating the water and took steps to add chlorine to the system. Five months after the chlorine "fix," experts discovered a buildup of a cancer-causing byproduct of mixing chlorine and organic matter. Then, in June 2015, an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) report warned of high levels of lead in Flint water, and a study conducted by the Hurley Medical Center revealed that the number of children with elevated lead levels in their blood had nearly doubled after the city altered its water source. In July, a spokesperson for the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality stated in a media interview that "anyone who is concerned about lead in the drinking water in Flint can relax."³ Later that month, the governor's chief of staff sent an email to the state health department indicating that Flint residents were rightfully concerned about lead in the water and "they are basically getting blown off by us (as a state we're not sympathizing with their plight)."⁴ The health department responded that their data showed no increase in lead poisoning.⁵

In October, the local General Motors plant refused to use the river water because it was rusting car parts.⁶ So the city arranged for the company to tap into a different water line. Meanwhile, Flint residents still had to drink the river water.⁷ In December 2015, the city of Flint and the county of Genesee declared a health emergency.⁸ One month later, the governor's office finally issued a statement declaring a state of emergency.⁹ Later in January,

the state attorney general opened an investigation to uncover whether any Michigan laws had been violated that resulted in the contamination crisis.¹⁰ When details of the inquiry surfaced, the story made national headlines.¹¹ And the nation demanded answers.

Given the choices made and the stakes involved, everyone was eager to hold someone liable. There is plenty of blame to assign. With the benefit of hindsight and careful investigation, it seems clear that the responsibility for this failure to safeguard the Flint population falls both on technical experts (engineers and environmental officials) who did not sound the alarm or recommend appropriate solutions and on the elected officials in Flint who neglected their duty or failed to respond quickly enough to the crisis. As of August 2016, the attorney general for Michigan charged state and local officials with offenses ranging from neglect of duty to conspiracy to withhold information.¹² Closing out the year, the attorney general charged four more officials—two of Flint’s former emergency managers who reported directly to the governor, and two water plant officials—with felonies of false pretenses and conspiracy.¹³

One group of leaders has thus far escaped both criticism and charges: the lawyers who were involved throughout this crisis. Why should we think of lawyers and their responsibilities when this seems to be a matter of failing government? Ask yourself: Where were the lawyers who worked for the water companies paid to advise Flint officials whether the water was safe to drink? Where were the lawyers in the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality who allowed their department spokesperson to assure the general public that there was no reason for concern over water from the Flint River? Where were the lawyers from the city attorney’s office who failed to help local officials make the case to state authorities once health professionals began to document the contamination problems? Sitting atop this crisis was Governor Rick Snyder—a lawyer by training. Governor Snyder did, in the end, acknowledge that he was ultimately responsible as governor, but only after he had blamed “career bureaucrats” for the water crisis. He never acknowledged that those same career bureaucrats were serving in his administration and executing what they perceived to be his priorities. The governor as the leader of his administration sets the tone and priorities that will guide the choices of state employees. The tone that Governor Snyder

set, at a minimum, enabled the state officials to perceive fiscal controls as the most pressing priority.

Why bother asking where the lawyers were? Certainly, where individual officials broke the law, lawyers had a role to play advising their clients not to take such steps. But the lawyers in both the public and private sectors had *leadership* obligations that they failed to exercise: to step up and raise critical questions about the decisions that state officials were making. Lawyers recognizing and embracing that leadership role might have asked, "What are the risks involved in the options we are considering?" "What do these financial choices say about who we are as a state?" "What are the competing stakes in this decision?" If lawyers had seen themselves as part of a larger ecosystem, situated to see conflicting vantage points and interests—as an engaged leader would—these events would likely not have occurred. This was not a question of professional ethics or a violation of governing rules of professional conduct. This was a question of leadership. Lawyers were intimately aware of the events and decisions that led to a crisis endangering countless lives. That awareness triggered a leadership responsibility beyond asking the technical legal question—"Can we do this?" They had the responsibility to ask, "Should we do this?"

Lawyers
or
theologians?
- Are lawyers to
consider
more
freestans?
Ans depends on
how leader's
lawyer is
defined.

Flint offers one recent example of a catastrophic event where lawyers played a role. But if we were to examine the major events or key decisions made in any industry in the world, we would likely find lawyers involved. Lawyers are often positioned to make or advise others on many of the most critical decisions in today's world. Given that reality, their ability to lead effectively in those positions matters. The world has become infinitely more complex, dangerous, and connected. In our current culture, we face great uncertainty. Surprise and volatility that occur even in remote parts of small regions can produce unexpected outcomes that reverberate around the world.¹⁴ This vast unpredictability has become relentless largely because of global connectedness. Assessing the range of uncertainties happening around us and figuring out the best course of action requires a breadth of perspectives and a quickness in insight that are elusive for any single leader. Indeed, this new normal demands a new kind of leader. But a disjunction exists between the ways that we prepare our best minds to lead and the demands of a volatile world. When we look at the one profession from which

we often draw our political, business, and organizational leaders—the legal profession—we find a deep chasm between what law schools teach lawyers to do and what the world expects of these lawyers who so often become leaders. Legal education ignores leadership as a subject of study and as an inevitability and responsibility for many law school graduates. The legal profession is sending the next generation of likely leaders into a dynamic world dangerously unprepared.

Some discernible global trends—a continuing shift in economic power away from the West, greater global connectivity driven by technology, and growing social unrest given a widening gap between the “haves” and “have-nots”—have shifted the expectations and forces at work in the populations that leaders will need to activate and guide. The interdependent nature of these challenges, coupled with the need to develop multidimensional solutions, has proven to be quite disorienting. Unpredictability has become a mainstay, but we expect leaders to foresee and prepare for problems even in this chaotic environment. The next generation of leaders requires new tools and methods to lead effectively. They will need to be adept at leveraging a range of voices and perspectives to generate effective approaches and viable solutions for their ever-changing context. They will need to recognize and read nascent trends. To enable their organizations and institutions to withstand and move through massive challenges, they will need to bring people together at various intersections and manage their understanding of each other as well as what may seem to be competing interests. Effective leadership will require both focused attention and new forms of learning.

Business schools have recognized the need to address questions of leadership as they prepare their graduates for potential positions of authority. But even their efforts have come up short. As the 2008 global financial crisis underscored, an overreliance on static models and Western case studies will not effectively prepare leaders for the world that they will encounter. For too long, leadership training has been preoccupied with—and premised on—dangerously outdated models.¹⁵ The operating assumption has been that businesses (even global companies) are functioning within the context of relatively stable developed economies. But that is not today’s reality. New, powerful players are coming from emerging markets rather than solely from developed economies. Markets are changing rapidly and unexpectedly, so

experience with turbulence may prove more important than lessons gleaned from historical success in more stable contexts. Of course, with the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to debate and criticize the effectiveness of leadership training that business schools have provided to date. But, at least, business schools have acknowledged that they are in the business of developing and preparing leaders.

Law schools have not yet recognized that they are in a similar business; they have fundamentally misunderstood their task. Law schools are preparing law students to become practitioners of the law in various forms but are not accounting for the leadership positions our culture fills from the pool of legal professionals. A surprising proportion of political leaders, leaders of industry, and global influencers have been legally trained. Given the cultural tendency to place lawyers in these key positions, law schools must acknowledge that likely role and prepare lawyers for it. Effective leadership today means adapting to context. The problem is that legal education looks backward by definition: it is precedent driven. The legal system privileges prior interpretations of the law to create a stable and predictable legal framework for decision making. Those characteristics arguably enable a large legal system to operate effectively. However, a retrospective view as well as an insistence on stability can prove dangerously narrow when contemplating new issues in an otherwise dynamic environment. The world that law graduates are stepping up to lead is not a static scene of precedent and deductive reasoning.

Research in the past few decades has debunked the notion that leadership cannot be learned.¹⁶ But law schools seem to have ignored the discussion as well as the evidence. Despite the danger and full-throated claims to the contrary, legal education does not equip its graduates to lead in today's dynamic environment. They are simply not teaching leadership as a substantive focus. Why? Some law schools actively reject the notion that law schools should teach leadership because they believe the purpose of a legal education is to immerse students in the law. This anachronistic thinking typically characterizes those law schools that maintain that lawyers either will possess innate leadership traits or will somehow develop the necessary skills on the job. Other law schools fail to prepare law students for leadership out of laziness or ineptitude. They see the trend and the need but do not know how to teach the skills necessary for leadership. Others still pay lip service to their

preparation of the next generation of leaders but somehow fail to update their approach or pedagogy. The numbers reveal the importance as well as the enormity of the task. There are 205 ABA-approved law schools and about 32 non-ABA-approved law schools. That means there are roughly 237 law schools in the United States.¹⁷ Those law schools have produced over 1.22 million lawyers in the United States.¹⁸

While the development and honing of leadership skills ought to be part of a continuous process of learning throughout a professional trajectory, the thinking and approaches that one adopts at the launch of a career can help shape habits that will develop into more effective leadership behaviors over time. Student reflection prior to the start of a career—on ways that he or she will engage with colleagues, address professional challenges, and ultimately exercise leadership, even in the absence of an official title or organizational recognition—is a necessary first step toward effective leadership. Still, some law schools attempt to rationalize their failure to teach leadership by arguing insufficient student interest. But the role of legal education is to recognize and then make the case for leadership training for law students who may not yet see its value. Even if law students cannot imagine themselves assuming leadership roles, they likely will at some point over the course of their career. Even those who will not assume formal leadership roles will find that they will become more effective lawyers if they adopt leadership behaviors. But instead of embracing this reality, legal education sidesteps its responsibility to guide and enhance students' learning at this formative stage.

Dangerous Leaders exposes the risks and consequences of these lapses. It also hopes to provide law schools, law students, and the legal profession with tools and models to help build a better foundation for leadership acumen. *Dangerous Leaders* examines real problems that arise in a contemporary context and proposes real solutions. Through the use of case studies, the book explores catastrophic political, business, and legal failures that have occurred precisely because of a lapse in leadership, specifically from those with a background primarily in the legal profession. These failures range from corrupt practices in business and politics to the smaller yet equally toxic failures in judgment that affect countless individuals and communities but escape notice because they occur out of view. To the extent that the public or pundits have addressed such failures, they have misinterpreted them as personal ethical

lapses. The premise of this book challenges that view: these failures are the result of chronic practices that not only could have been addressed but also could have been avoided.

Dangerous Leaders proposes a fundamental rethinking of legal education and leadership training aimed specifically at preparing lawyers to assume the types of roles that the emerging world requires. To that end, *Dangerous Leaders* offers a new leadership model that brings divergent sets of experiences and styles together to enable individuals to lead given what the world has become. This new leadership framework—intersectional leadership—challenges leaders to see the world through a different lens and expects a form of inclusion and respect for other perspectives and experiences that will prove critical to maneuvering in an environment that is at once complex and uncertain. This new form of leadership can and must be taught and experienced in law schools to prepare the next generation of leaders. The book also offers tools to lawyers currently in practice, enabling them to fill gaps in learning and perform more effectively as leaders in the current environment.

I come to this work through a cross section of experiences in the law and in executive education focused on leadership and strategy execution. I spent a decade as a public defender in Northern California. I have been a law professor for the past twenty-two years. In that capacity, I have also developed and taught a course specifically focused on leadership. Over the last fifteen years, I have consulted with Fortune 100 and Global 100 companies on a range of issues related to leadership and strategy execution. This work has focused on developing leadership capabilities in those already at the top of the house and in executives exhibiting high potential for greater responsibility. I have worked with countless leaders as they have grappled with the reality that transforming an organization and equipping it for today's challenges involves changing themselves at an individual level, only to then develop and hone skills to energize and inspire the collective actions of their teams. These executive education programs have often included lawyers such as executives in general counsel offices, regulatory offices, or other legal units. More often than not, these lawyer participants have expressed surprise that they too have gleaned critical lessons from these programs, largely because they tend to see their roles as separate and distinct from other executives in the company.

This is a fair assumption on their part; the lawyer's role is usually distinct. In thinking about that distinctive role, I recognized that lawyers often face unique leadership challenges. Whether they work in a legal unit in a global company, as a partner in a law firm, or as an elected or appointed official in government, lawyers have obligations that often create an inherent tension in their role as a leader. In a business, leading as a lawyer means understanding the economic and industry imperatives, not just thinking through the lens of the legal unit. Leading as a lawyer means taking part in collaborative efforts not as the person who says "no" at the end of the process but as the person who helps to guide the process of innovation and collaboration by saying, "Here's how we can do this and not run afoul of any regulatory constraints or legal barriers." Lawyers need to become arbitrators rather than the arbiters they were taught to be in law school. And, in government, lawyers as leaders are not just advocates, as their leader-peers from other backgrounds might be able to be; they have greater responsibilities to issues of justice and fairness. Far too frequently, we see lawyers as leaders making poor decisions because they have failed to appreciate and navigate the pervasive, specific tensions in their roles. This book seeks to highlight the fact that lawyers who lead without significant and focused exposure to leadership lessons often make the sort of judgments that can derail organizations or pervert entire systems, which makes them dangerous. Many of the leadership issues that *Dangerous Leaders* examines are ones that all leaders face. But the book uses case studies that feature lawyers, and will work through them with lawyers in mind, to help lawyers begin to see how leadership challenges affect them.

Many talk about the need for leadership, but these discussions too often suffer from narrow definitions of the term. First, some authors frame leadership in terms of the position or title an individual assumes. If your position authorizes you to make certain decisions and to have individuals reporting to you, then, functionally, you are a leader. Or so the argument goes. But leadership is not role-specific. Today's leaders must learn to lead with—and *without*—formal authority. Second, others suggest that a leader is someone who possesses the skills necessary to run a meeting, to set expectations for subordinates, and to define and delineate outcomes for the enterprise that he or she leads. These skills, while operationally important, conflate leadership with management and fundamentally misunderstand the concept and

goals of leadership—developing a shared vision and engaging others in the achievement of a shared goal. Third, some authors contend that leadership involves the ability to align a group's thinking to whatever the leader considers important. This definition proceeds from a flawed premise: the presumption that the leader is somehow all-knowing and simply needs to articulate and impose his or her view.

My definition of leadership takes issue with these conventional views. Simply put, exercising effective leadership does not depend on hierarchy or position. The best leadership involves engaging others in a collaborative process of imagining, defining, and working toward a common cause or greater mission that is meaningful for the enterprise and for its stakeholders. To lead effectively, the individual does not have to be omniscient or heroic. Quite frankly, no single individual can have all of the answers to the range of problems leaders will likely encounter in our complex environment. The most influential leader may not even sit at the top of the organization. Instead, such leaders will place themselves in the middle of intersecting and often competing attitudes, listening to and learning from them. Through the creative tension that emerges when cultures and experiences collide, effective leaders begin to see problems differently and engage in a process of addressing them that is inclusive, collaborative, and, ultimately, more effective.

This is intersectional leadership.

My vision of intersectional leadership has five key components. The first involves developing—and relying on—a team that brings traits, styles, and experiences dissimilar to the leader. The complexity of the world and the leadership challenges it poses places the leader in unexpected and unfamiliar settings. To thrive in that environment, the lawyer as leader needs to engage with individuals whose perspectives have been born from a different set of experiences and life lessons. The leader's role does not involve promoting harmony above all else in the team. Instead, the leader must help teams live and thrive in the dilemma of collective action and robust debate.

The second component is related but distinct. The intersectional leader must recognize that learning often comes from unlikely sources. Seeking out viewpoints from the least experienced individuals in an organization or from people outside the expected set of experts can create a learning juncture that expands the thinking of all involved. Embracing diversity in all of its

dimensions and actively looking to derive insights from individuals whose interests, needs, and expectations diverge from those of the lawyer-leader distinguishes the intersectional leader.

The third component expects leaders to engage in genuine collaboration where they expect to subordinate their own interests in the service of a greater goal. Collaboration is to be distinguished from teaming, where groups function as a team operating collectively because they have shared goals and incentives. Collaboration hurts—in a good way—when it is done right. It often involves working across units and functions to achieve a goal that may not be immediately apparent to all members of the group. It also means giving up something meaningful to the lawyer-leader—such as credit, time, and talent—to help advance a larger objective. The leader must subordinate his or her agenda and power for the greater good.

Fourth, the intersectional leader adopts a mind-set that insists on being suspicious of agreement. Some roles create both the opportunity and necessity for dichotomous thinking. But even when the lawyer-leader's role does not demand it, he or she needs to question, seek out alternate views as a way to challenge assumptions, and push his or her thinking.

Finally, the intersectional lawyer-leader must act with moral courage, even behind closed doors. The global financial crisis offered glaring examples of the corrosive effect of elevating personal ambition and gain above all else, and how much easier it may be to let this happen when one's choices are hidden from scrutiny. Lawyer-leaders must develop processes and disciplines that force them to question their own judgment rigorously and to put checks in place to elevate the good of the enterprise over personal ambition.

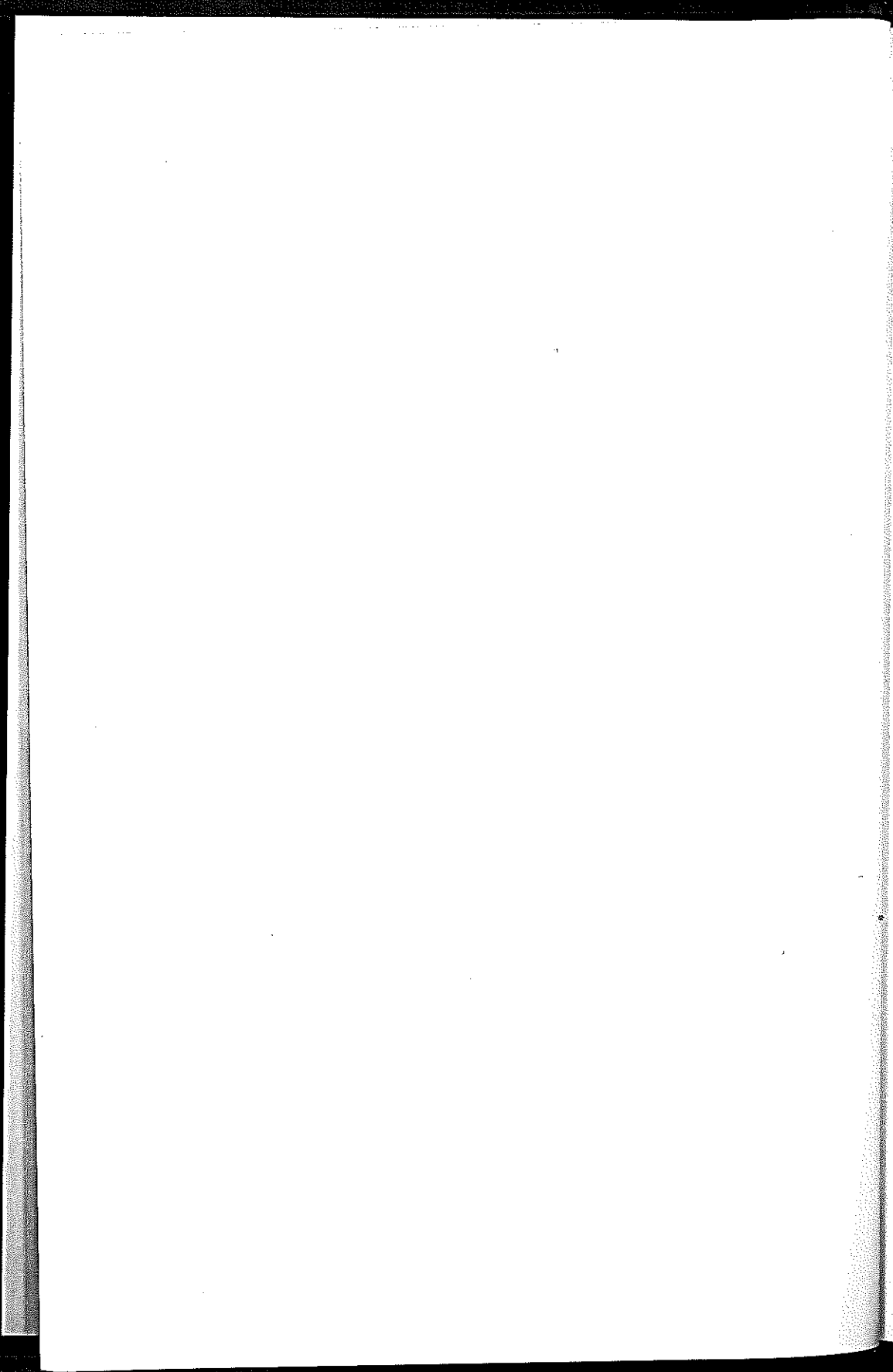
The lawyer-leader will operate in environments that are far less homogeneous than those met by leaders in the past. Intersectional leadership can be learned, practiced, and developed. Indeed, teaching leadership early in a career can better position individuals to exercise leadership as they move through their career trajectory. Education in leadership is particularly important for lawyers because conventional legal training may interfere with their ability to lead well in business, political, and legal settings. Legal education emphasizes cognitive skills almost to the exclusion of emotional skills that will be critical to a leader's effectiveness and influence. Law students learn that they can rely on the rigor of their training to reach a conclusion, then

trust in their own judgment. This singular focus on an individualized rather than a collaborative approach to issue identification and problem solving sits at the core of what is distorting and dangerous about legal education. The operative premise is that the critical and analytical skills that law students acquire and develop will prepare them better than their non-legally-trained counterparts to detect and resolve a wide range of legal, social, and political challenges. Law school then teaches law students to develop and assert a point of view with a degree of confidence that brooks no objection. What too often flows from this confidence is a degree of arrogance about one's personal expertise that can lead lawyers to underestimate and misread the value and contributions of others who may not be legally trained. Such lawyers afford greater weight to their personal abilities and judgment and, in the process, often distance themselves from nonlawyers. This insularity blinds the lawyer-leader to the need to collaborate, to listen, and to make room for competing views and ideas.

Dangerous Leaders starts with the challenge that law schools are failing to prepare lawyers to assume leadership roles in the dynamic world unfolding around us. This failure can be traced to basic structural problems with legal education. Law schools have misunderstood that their central task—preparing law students for the practice of law—also involves training lawyers to lead. Many critics of the legal profession have sounded the alarm that legal education needs to identify and demonstrate its relevance in the world, yet far too many law schools are ignoring that call. Second, the pedagogical methods law schools typically employ reinforce outdated and limited approaches to problem solving that reinforce the mistaken view that change is principally incremental. Recent world events continue to expose the limitations of this perspective. What we have come to see through experience and have been reminded of, particularly lately, is that change is constant and involves periods of incremental adjustments punctuated by quite disruptive transformation. Leaders need to be ready for both. Third, the experiences and missteps of lawyers in leadership positions offer law schools an opportunity to examine their mistakes, to learn from them, and to pivot. To make the case for change, I analyze a series of case studies that highlight the types of skills contemporary lawyers need and the leadership pitfalls these skills will help to avoid. These case studies alternate between large and small failures. The

examples of dangerous behaviors and choices by lawyer-leaders offer not only cautionary tales but concrete lessons that the reader can learn to avoid similar missteps. These case studies also lead to specific suggestions to educators regarding ways that leadership training can address and prevent such failures. In the final chapters, the book lays out the ways that law schools and lawyers in practice can implement the intersectional model of leadership as a new framework in the emergent world. This chapter will emphasize the need to engage adult learners differently so they enhance learning this form of leadership. It will examine various approaches to engage individuals in the experience of leadership as a way of helping them practice, reflect on, and adopt the behaviors of the intersectional model.

The bottom line is simple: lawyers routinely hold key decision-making positions and unless they understand the leadership components of those roles, they will continue to be dangerously ill-prepared for the world in which they are expected to perform. The examples offered in *Dangerous Leaders* are tailored to lawyers to highlight the varied challenges and tensions that arise both for leaders generally and specifically for lawyers as leaders. This book examines not just the failings of law schools but how things can be set right. We have reached a point in the maturation of the discipline and the profession where it is high time for legal educators to develop and teach leadership frameworks to prepare lawyer-leaders for their likely roles in order to reduce the danger they currently pose.



CHAPTER ONE

Piloting the Boat by Looking at the Wake

Leadership Challenges for the Legal Profession

LAWYERS ARE LIKELY TO BE LEADERS. Of the forty-five American presidents, twenty-four have been lawyers.¹ In the 114th Congress, members with law degrees held 53 of the Senate's 100 seats and 160 of the 435 seats in the House of Representatives.² The list of Fortune 500 companies in 2012 boasted forty-six lawyers serving as CEOs.³ If we add to that inventory state legislators, cabinet members on the state and local level, city council members, and mayors, the total number of lawyer-leaders skyrockets. Lawyers also occupy key leadership roles in industries that perhaps are somewhat less expected: technology,⁴ media,⁵ pharmaceutical,⁶ and toys,⁷ to name just a few. They run nonprofit organizations and philanthropic foundations. Lawyer-leaders are tapped to play key roles in virtually every industry and sector. While all law schools pay lip service to their commitment to preparing law students to become the next generation of leaders, the disturbing reality is that law schools more often than not fail even to offer courses on leadership or to surface leadership concepts and dilemmas in the standard curriculum. Given their likely positions, lawyer-leaders will need to develop and exercise the skills and behaviors that will enable them to perform successfully in a leadership role. In addition to understanding the law, they will need to be more self-aware, more comfortable with ambiguity, and more globally fluent than any who have preceded them. The good news is that these skills will not only make them better leaders but will also make them better lawyers.

LEAVING THE DOCK

More must be done even before the lawyer-leader enters practice. When I first proposed specifically teaching leadership skills to law students, my colleagues in the academy were quick to raise objections. Some of the responses were rather predictable: "Won't the students be too immature to internalize these types of lessons?" "Will they have been exposed to enough practical considerations to make sense of leadership lessons?" "They probably won't hold leadership roles for a long time, so how will this be helpful early in their careers?" I pointed out that leadership skills were like any other skill set—if practiced, they improve. Taking the conversation further, I mentioned the difference between leadership and authority; many colleagues responded with blank stares. I drew quizzical looks when I insisted that law students could—and should—begin to exercise leadership before leaving law school since, soon after graduation, many law students will begin making significant decisions affecting clients' lives and businesses. One colleague quipped, "Leadership? I thought that people joined the military to learn leadership."

For the most part, law professor colleagues were unclear what leadership was, why it made any sense for law students to study it, and why anyone would want to teach such a subject. The questions were part of the overall rigidity of the structure of legal education. American legal education has remained remarkably unchanged since it first took modern form in the 1870s.⁸ It has carried with it a correspondingly stable body of critiques,⁹ centering on the need to prepare law students better for legal practice and the need to introduce perspectives in the study of law that might shape the law but were too often ignored by the law. For example, scholars criticized the legal academy for failing to expose law students to the critical intersection of race, gender, power, and the law as a means of understanding how the law is developed and applied.

The debate over what to teach in law school has been transpiring for at least a century.¹⁰ Critics have centered on the structure and content of the legal curriculum, looking to determine ways to ensure the best use of the three years of law school. These assessments, ranging from historical critiques to the more recent warnings of a crisis in legal education, share a consistent theme and diagnosis: law schools fail to prepare their graduates adequately

for legal practice. No one questions that law schools teach their students to tackle and grapple with legal theory. But the worry is that a legal education focuses almost exclusively on the law's theoretical underpinnings and possibilities and ignores the practical realities that lawyers and their clients face. In essence, law schools fail to impart the precise skills that lawyers will need to meet the demands of both their employers and their clients. For example, most law students graduate without knowing how to read or write a contract, interview a client, or conduct a deposition. Law schools uniformly offer courses in legal writing to provide some basic training in legal research and writing. But to move beyond the basics and to develop practice-ready skills, law students often need to take clinical courses or experiential classes. Only a small percentage of law students elect to take such courses. The net result is that law students do not learn these skills before entering practice. If their first employer does not adequately train them to practice well, these new lawyers may learn at the expense of the client.

As importantly, legal education does not prepare students for the world in which they will practice because the traditional curriculum ignores critical issues of race, culture, and professional values. The core legal curriculum does not acknowledge or address the salience of race in the law. Much of what occurs in the U.S. legal system implicates race, but law schools typically pretend that race does not affect legal analyses or that the decisions that actors in the legal system make somehow occur in a race-neutral vacuum. Law schools rarely examine the intersection of race, law, and power as part of their core training and instead relegate questions of race to the margins. Because they are not trained to examine questions in the law using a lens that focuses on race, class, gender, or difference, law students can easily miss or misunderstand their significance in understanding the law, its application, and its implications. Similarly, law schools do not address the ways that culture can influence our understanding of the law and legal institutions. U.S. law schools typically operate from the assumption that there is a single dominant culture and, in that mistaken approach, fail to help law students develop the tools to see and appreciate cultural signals and differences. Law schools simply squander the opportunity to teach law students ways that they might begin to integrate cultural awareness and competency into their professional experience. Finally, to the extent that legal education

addresses professional values at all, it does so in a limited context: ethics classes. But decisions and questions that implicate a lawyer's values abound, and by insisting that such questions arise only in the context of ethical rules or guidelines fundamentally weakens law students' ability to recognize that their choices, behaviors, and perspectives reflect and convey values. At the start of students' careers, law schools should help them begin to think about who they will be as lawyers and how they can begin to develop a purpose-driven trajectory for their careers. However, law schools do not provide this in-depth career planning.

In recent years, questions about the efficacy and value of a legal education have entered the public dialogue. The general public has begun to question the worth of a legal education given its expense. Governing bodies such as the American Bar Association (ABA) and the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) have received a share of the criticism for their lack of oversight and standardization of law schools. The positions the ABA takes in the next few years may be key in determining the general future of law schools, deciding whether they will be more practical or will remain more theoretical and doctrinally focused. But even without the mandate from these bodies, law schools need to reimagine what they are doing to prepare lawyers for their roles in the workforce or they will continue to put clients at risk.

When people ask about the purpose of a legal education, the standard response is that a legal education prepares students to "think like a lawyer."¹¹ The meaning of this well-worn phrase has long been the subject of considerable debate in the legal community. On one hand, thinking like a lawyer means being exposed to legal doctrine, understanding the methods of analytical thinking, and learning to raise critical questions in the law. The proponents of this perspective emphasize that law school is not in the business of training students for the workforce but is designed to introduce students to larger theoretical questions about the law and how it should operate. Thinking like a lawyer thus means that students are able to pose and examine the sorts of questions that will enhance understanding of the law's potential, intersections, and limitations. In effect, this casts law school as a doctoral program in the law.

On the other hand, thinking like a lawyer involves exposing students to the practice of law, often through clinical education or experiential learning.

The intent is to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Proponents of this position argue that a legal education must teach practical skills to prepare students for the demands of the profession. Students should learn basic skills such as client interviewing, negotiating, legal research, and writing. Skills such as working with statutes, administrative rules, complex factual records, and treaties are also integral to a comprehensive legal education.¹² Students often get the opportunity to practice these skills as part of the law school's social justice mission. Many schools breathe life into that mission by finding ways to serve the communities located around the law school and offering the services of students to help traditionally underrepresented segments of those communities. The practical skills theory also contends that teaching students how legal institutions actually operate is key to preparing them for practice.¹³ In essence, proponents of the practical emphasis in legal education stress that law school ought to prepare students not just to think like lawyers but to *be* lawyers.¹⁴

What does the standard debate miss? A legal education has the obligation to do more. It must prepare students to lead. Given that large numbers of lawyers become leaders, law schools must openly acknowledge and embrace their role in helping their students understand the dynamics of leadership. It is not enough for law schools simply to claim that they mold future leaders and policy makers. They must consider the skills such leaders will need and give students opportunities to learn and practice them.

CHARTING THE WAY FORWARD— INTERSECTIONAL LEADERSHIP

In order to prepare lawyers for leadership, both legal education and practical training must break from the habit of looking backward for guidance. Preparing lawyers to be leaders means paying closer attention to the world that exists and unfolds around them and then teaching lawyers the skills and attributes needed to be successful leaders given that context. The dangers and lessons examined in the next chapters flow from my observations of lawyers in practice and the challenges they experience because of a failed understanding of their leadership roles. The principal way that lawyers can escape the backward-glancing methods that typify legal interactions is to use and develop an “intersectional leadership” framework, which expects

Lawyers as Leaders

By

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Pages 1-24

Lawyers as Leaders

IT IS IRONIC that the occupation most responsible for producing America's leaders has focused so little attention on that role. The legal profession has supplied a majority of American presidents, and in recent decades, almost half the members of Congress.¹ Many of our nation's most revered and most reviled public figures have been attorneys: Abraham Lincoln and Thurgood Marshall; Joseph McCarthy and Richard Nixon. Although they account for just 0.4 percent of the population, lawyers are well-represented at all levels of leadership, as governors, state legislators, judges, prosecutors, general counsel, law firm managing partners, and heads of corporate, government, and non-profit organizations.² Even when they do not occupy top positions in their workplaces, lawyers lead teams, committees, task forces, and charitable initiatives. Yet rarely have these lawyers received training for leadership responsibilities. Although leadership development is now a forty-five billion dollar industry, and an Amazon search reveals close to 88,000 leadership books in print, the topic is largely missing in legal education.³

This book is a step toward filling the gap. Its aim is to shed new light on why we trust lawyers with so much power and why we are so often disappointed in their performance. My central claim is that the legal profession attracts a large number of individuals with the ambition and analytic capabilities to be leaders, but frequently fails to develop other qualities that are essential to effectiveness. The focus of legal education and the reward structure of legal practice undervalues interpersonal capabilities and ethical commitments that are necessary for successful leadership. Drawing on a broad array of interdisciplinary research, as well as biographical and autobiographical profiles, the book explores leadership competencies that are too often missing in practice.

Discussion proceeds in three parts. The first section of the book offers an overview of leadership traits, styles, and development. This introductory

chapter focuses on the role of lawyers, and explores why they so frequently occupy positions of power even though the public has little faith in their qualifications for those positions. Chapter 2 looks at the nature of leadership more generally and identifies its defining characteristics and predominant styles. Chapter 3 surveys leadership development. It explores how lawyers learn to lead and the forces shaping their paths to leadership. Chapter 4 addresses core leadership capabilities: influence, decision making, innovation, conflict management, and communication.

A second section of the book addresses ethics in leadership. Chapter 5 focuses on the role of ethics, the influences on ethical conduct, the tensions between means and ends, and the strategies for fostering ethics in organizations. Chapter 6 explores scandals: the role of hypocrisy, the corrosion of judgments involving money and sex, and the dynamics of crisis management and corrective action.

A third section of the book views leadership in context. Chapter 7 addresses diversity: the nation's historical patterns of exclusion, the persistence of bias, the limits of law, the case for inclusiveness, and the most effective diversity-related strategies for leaders and those who aspire to leadership roles. Chapter 8 centers on leaders in law firms: their challenges, their successes, and their failures. Chapter 9 focuses on lawyers in social movements: the conditions of social change, and the leadership strategies that have been most and least effective in producing it. A final chapter looks at the legacy of leaders. Drawing together themes from the preceding chapters as well as empirical research on successful leadership, the book concludes with thoughts on what lawyers can do to advance their individual commitments and the public interest.

The Paradox of Trust

To put this exploration of leadership in context, it makes sense to begin with a paradox. According to a PEW public opinion poll, honesty is the most important leadership trait.⁴ This is not a characteristic commonly associated with lawyers. The most recent Gallup poll finds that less than a fifth of Americans rated lawyers high or very high in honesty and ethical standards.⁵ In another poll in which people were asked to volunteer what profession they trusted least, lawyers ranked highest (26 percent), with over twice as many votes as the next highest, members of Congress and sellers of used cars (11 percent).⁶ Only 11 percent of Americans have "a great deal of confidence in people in charge of running law firms," while almost a third have "hardly any."⁷

Yet Americans place lawyers in leadership roles in much higher percentages than other countries. Only one nation (Colombia) has a higher proportion of lawyers in the national legislature.⁸

Part of the reason for this seeming mismatch in public attitudes and actions may stem from ambivalence in the public's views. Although they distrust lawyers as a group, Americans like their own lawyers. In one survey, over half of those questioned were very satisfied with the quality of legal services provided and another fifth were somewhat satisfied; only 12 percent were very or somewhat dissatisfied.⁹ When the public is asked about lawyers' positive qualities, the characteristic most commonly chosen is that their "first priority is to their clients."¹⁰ But that is also what the public dislikes in other people's lawyers. The most negative quality attributed to lawyers, by some three-quarters of Americans, is that attorneys are "more interested in winning than in seeing that justice is served."¹¹ In short, people want an advocate who will serve their own interests, but not the professional norms that result when everyone else wants the same.

These ambivalent attitudes do not, however, fully account for why lawyers in the United States are so much more likely to occupy leadership roles than lawyers in other societies. Researchers have attributed the distinctive influence of American lawyers to several factors. First, the centrality of law in American culture has contributed to the centrality of the legal profession.¹² The country's longstanding tendency to frame questions of social policy and morality in legal terms has elevated lawyers to positions of authority. As de Tocqueville famously noted, "[i]n America, there are no nobles or literary men, and the people are apt to mistrust the wealthy; lawyers consequently form the highest political class and the most cultivated circle of society."¹³ Because lawyers functioned, in de Tocqueville's phrase, as the "American aristocracy," upwardly mobile individuals who aspired to public influence often chose law as their career. Lawyers' ability to practice part-time reinforced that decision because many state legislatures were also part-time.¹⁴ As law became associated with positions of influence, those who were interested in leadership increasingly saw it as the occupation of choice. Woodrow Wilson captured prevailing wisdom when he noted: "The profession I chose was politics; the profession I entered was the law. I entered one because I thought it would lead to the other."¹⁵ The similarity in functions required in law and politics has pushed in similar directions. According to some researchers, these are convergent professions: skills in investigation, drafting, procedure, and oral advocacy all work to advantage lawyers who seek public office.¹⁶

Whatever the causes for the centrality of lawyers in leadership positions, there is reason to question whether they are well-qualified for their role. Almost two-thirds of Americans believe that the nation faces a leadership crisis, and only 15 percent have confidence in the national government, which is heavily staffed by lawyers.¹⁷ Part of the problem may stem from the mismatch between the traits associated with leaders and those associated with lawyers.

Although, as chapter 2 notes, what constitutes effective leadership depends on context, certain qualities are rated as important across a vast array of leadership situations. The most well-documented characteristics cluster in five categories:

- values (such as integrity, honesty, trust, and an ethic of service);
- personal skills (such as self awareness, self-control, and self-direction);
- interpersonal skills (such as social awareness, empathy, persuasion, and conflict management);
- vision (such as a forward-looking and inspirational); and
- technical competence (such as knowledge, preparation, and judgment).¹⁸

A survey of leaders of professional service firms (including law firms) similarly found that the most important leadership qualities involved personal values and interpersonal skills, such as integrity; empathy; communication; and abilities to listen, inspire, and influence.¹⁹ Particularly in times of stress, a key capacity is the ability of leaders to inspire others with a vision that is both emotionally compelling and attainable.²⁰ This research is consistent with other surveys of law firms and professional service firms, which stress interpersonal qualities such as the ability to chart a direction, gain commitment to that direction, and set a personal example.²¹ A leader, in Napoleon's phrase, "is a dealer in hope."²²

Not all of these leadership qualities are characteristic of lawyers. Several decades of research have found that attorneys' distinctive personality traits can pose a challenge for them as leaders, particularly when they are leading other lawyers. For example, attorneys tend to be above average in skepticism, competitiveness, "urgency," autonomy, and achievement orientation.²³ Skepticism, the tendency to be argumentative, cynical, and judgmental, can get in the way of what George Walker Bush famously dismissed as the "vision thing."²⁴ "Urgency," defined as the need to "get things done" can lead to impatience, intolerance, and a failure to listen.²⁵ Competitiveness and desires for autonomy and achievement can make lawyers self-absorbed, controlling, combative, and difficult to manage.²⁶ Lawyers also rank lower than the

general population in sociability, interpersonal sensitivity, and resilience.²⁷ They are less likely to be comfortable in initiating social interactions and participating in activities requiring emotional rather than analytic intelligence. Lawyers' relative lack of resilience or "ego strength" makes for difficulties in accepting criticism, and in responding without defensiveness to performance evaluations.²⁸ Lawyers lacking in "soft skills" tend to devalue their importance rather than address their absence.²⁹

Of course, general tendencies do not accurately predict individual behavior, and lawyers who reach a leadership position may have profiles more suited to that role. The point is not to paint an overly bleak or simplistic portrait of the "lawyer personality." Rather, it is to identify some ways in which lawyers are not ideally suited for leadership, and to suggest that formal preparation is often essential for lawyers to perform effectively in that role.

The Paradox of Power

Another paradox arises from the disconnect between the qualities that enable lawyers to achieve leadership positions and the qualities that are necessary for lawyers to succeed once they get there. What makes leaders willing to accept the pressure, hours, scrutiny, and risks that come with their role? For many individuals, it is not only commitment to a cause, an organization, or a constituency. It is also an attraction to money, power, status, and admiration. But successful leadership requires subordinating these self-interests to a greater good. The result is what is variously labeled the "leadership paradox" or the "paradox of power."³⁰ Individuals reach top positions because of their high needs for personal achievement. Yet to perform effectively in these positions, they need to focus on creating the conditions for achievement by others. As the philosopher Laotse famously put it, "A leader is best when people barely know he exists. When his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: 'we did it ourselves.'"³¹

If left unchecked, the ambition, self-confidence, and self-centeredness that often propel lawyers to leadership roles may sabotage their performance in those roles. Research on personality and organizational effectiveness finds that narcissistic individuals are frequently selected for leadership positions because they project the confidence and charisma that makes a positive impression. Yet over time those characteristics can translate into a sense of entitlement, overconfidence, and an inability to learn from mistakes.³² Strong ego needs can also prevent leaders from letting go of their positions when an organization would benefit from change.³³ These personal weaknesses are

compounded by the environments in which leaders function, which often fail to supply honest criticism. Subordinates may be understandably unwilling to deliver uncomfortable messages. And the perks that accompany leadership may inflate an individual's sense of self-importance and self-confidence. Being surrounded by those with less ability or less opportunity to display their ability encourages what psychologists label the "uniqueness bias:" people's belief that they are special and superior. Such environments reinforce narcissism and entitlement; leaders may feel free to disregard rules of ethics, or norms of courtesy and respect that apply to others.³⁴ As Abraham Lincoln reportedly put it, "nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power."

The most effective leaders are those who can see past their own ambitions, and retain a capacity for critical reflection on their own performance. In Peter Drucker's phrase, successful leaders "think and say we."³⁵ Enduring legacies are left by those who advance collective purposes and transcend personal needs in pursuit of common values.

The Nature of Leadership

WHAT EXACTLY IS leadership? Does it involve traits that are generalizable across different situations? What qualities and styles are most and least effective? What challenges do contemporary leaders confront? The discussion that follows explores these questions and casts doubt on conventional wisdom about the nature of leadership.

Characteristics of Leadership

What defines a leader? That issue has generated a cottage industry of commentary, and by some researchers' accounts, over 1,500 definitions and forty distinctive theories.¹ The term "leader" dates to the thirteenth century, but "leadership" appeared only in the nineteenth.² Although popular usage sometime equates leadership with power or position, most contemporary experts view it rather as a relationship. John Gardner, founder of Common Cause, noted that heads of organizations often mistakenly assume that their status "has given them a body of followers. And of course it has not. They have been given subordinates. Whether the subordinates become followers depends on whether the executives act like leaders."³ Leaders must be able to inspire, not just compel or direct their followers. To borrow a metaphor from Harvard Professor Joseph Nye, holding a title is like "having a fishing license. It does not guarantee that you will catch any fish."⁴ Moreover, some leaders exercise influence without the formal status that would convey their role. Paul Hoffman's *Lions in the Streets*, a celebrated profile of elite New York law firms in the 1970s, noted that their heads were often not those known as leaders in the outside world. An attorney he interviewed put it this way: "The man who really runs the firm is the guy who tells the secretaries whether or not they have to work on Washington's Birthday."⁵

What qualities are necessary for leadership? The traditional assumption has been that leadership requires exceptional personal traits, particularly intelligence. Max Weber added the concept of charisma, a term that Catholic theologians applied to gifts manifesting God's grace.⁶ Weber used the term in a secular sense to convey the magnetism and persuasiveness that made individuals able to attract a wide following, especially in times of crisis or rapid change. Building on Weber's insight, traditional theorists have defined charisma in terms of qualities such as emotional expressiveness, empathy, self-confidence, and control.⁷ By their definition, leaders are charismatic figures whose inspirational appeals tap into followers' values and identity.⁸

Recent research, however, has challenged these "trait theories" of leadership, and has stressed the importance of context.⁹ The skills needed to run a thousand-person law firm with multiple branches in multiple countries are not the same as those needed to launch a small public interest organization or to win a state governor's race. Over the last half century, some one thousand studies on leadership characteristics have produced no clear profile of the ideal leader.¹⁰ Even the much celebrated quality of charisma is not necessarily related to performance. Charisma does not explain popular support or organizational success.¹¹ Indeed, some studies find that the leaders of the most continuously profitable businesses have tended to be self-effacing and lacking in the qualities commonly considered charismatic.¹² Biographies of many highly successful lawyers reveal similar traits. Burke Marshall, the head of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division in the Kennedy Administration, was "modest," "mild mannered," and "self-deprecating"; Warren Christopher, secretary of state under Clinton, was equally reserved and reluctant to self-promote; Archibald Cox, solicitor general in the Kennedy Administration, was shy and lacking in a "natural, easy social sense"; Erwin Griswold, solicitor general under the Johnson Administration and dean of the Harvard Law School, was "shy, stiff, formal and sometimes gruff"; and John Doar, head of the civil rights division under Johnson and counsel to the Watergate Committee that recommended Nixon's impeachment, was "dry, methodical," and able to read the *Happy Hooker* aloud in a way that would "put you to sleep."¹³ Paul Cravath, architect of the modern system of law firm training, viewed "sound and steady" as the key to effectiveness.¹⁴

Even when a lawyer is widely viewed as charismatic, what exactly is meant by the term is not always clear or uncontested. Barack Obama is the most recent prominent example. Some commentators credit him with remarkable personal magnetism and an ability to connect with different constituencies;

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he can reportedly adjust his style to church basements, huge stadiums, backyard barbecues, and elite policy forums.¹⁵ Yet other commentators fault him for being “aloof,” “detached,” “professorial,” “technocratic,” “tone deaf,” and susceptible to “policy speak disaster.”¹⁶ “Cannot emote” is a common assessment.¹⁷ This description of “no drama Obama” is hard to reconcile with the candidate who gave us some of the most memorable rhetorical moments in recent political history with his 2008 campaign messages on hope, change, and racial reconciliation.¹⁸ At his best, he seemed “able to call us back to our highest selves, to the place where America exists as a glittering ideal, and where we, its honored inhabitants, seem capable of achieving it. . . .”¹⁹ These varying views underscore the larger point that historian James McGregor Burns made about “charisma” as a leadership trait. As he put it, the term is “so ambiguously and inconsistently used . . . [that] it is impossible to restore the word to analytic duty.”²⁰ Often it seems to function as a conclusory label that fails to specify what accounts for the appeal described.

Although what constitutes an ideal leader depends on context, and charisma is not an essential attribute, certain other qualities do appear effective in the vast array of leadership situations. As chapter 1 noted, the most well-documented characteristics involve vision, ethics, interpersonal skills, technical competence, and personal capabilities such as self-awareness and self-control. Consistent predictors of leadership failures are to some extent the flip side of those traits: incompetence, rigidity, arrogance, callousness, dishonesty, indecision, and intemperance.²¹ Inability to establish a clear mission, learn from mistakes, model integrity, and respond to the needs of others are among the fatal flaws that can derail an otherwise promising career.²² Ambition is one of the most common traits that can propel it.²³

Yet the relative importance of those qualities varies across contexts, and successful leadership requires a match between what the circumstances demand and what the individual has to offer.²⁴ So, for example, Ralph Nader was extraordinarily effective during the activism of the 1960s and 1970s in galvanizing a progressive consumer movement. But he was far less successful decades later in running a presidential campaign on similar issues. The self-righteous iconoclasm that stood him well in one historical era worked against him as a third-party candidate in a different political climate.²⁵ Warren Burger is another leader whose skill set was reportedly not a good match for his role as Chief Justice. To his colleagues he seemed “pompous,” “petty,” “overbearing,” and sometimes incompetent—incapable of recording votes accurately and unwilling to stop speaking long after he had run out of things to say.²⁶

John Gardner notes that history makes leaders and leaders make history; no single pattern of styles and traits is apparent. What produces leadership are "great opportunities greatly met."²⁷ The most effective leaders are those who have a good sense of their capabilities, and are able to place themselves in positions where their strengths are critical and where they can minimize or compensate for their weaknesses. According to the Center for Creative Leadership, self-awareness is the primary characteristic that distinguishes successful leaders and, as chapter 3 indicates, such self-knowledge provides the foundation for professional development.²⁸

Challenges of Leadership

Part of leaders' self-awareness is an appreciation of how well they are addressing the situational challenges that stand in the way of effective leadership. Although the contexts in which lawyers lead vary considerably, most share some common features. Increases in competition, complexity, scale, pace, and diversity have all complicated the lives of leaders, and heightened difficulties in their role.

Competition

Over the last several decades, competition has intensified within and across many organizations that lawyers lead. Their success in those positions often depends on the ability to achieve short-term results, sometimes at the expense of long-term goals.²⁹ In law firms, internal rivalries have bred acrimony, defections, and sometimes dissolution.³⁰ According to one consultant, the result is a low-trust environment, in which more and more partners are behaving as "bands of warlords, each with his or her followers... acting in temporary alliance—until a better opportunity comes along."³¹ In the public and nonprofit sectors, competition for support and resources also has intensified, particularly during the recent economic downturn, and budgetary difficulties have become an often debilitating fact of daily life.³² These pressures pose difficulties on an interpersonal as well as a financial level. All too often "competition brings out the best in products and the worst in people."³³

Scale and Complexity

Other challenges arise from the growth in scale and complexity of legal organizations, as well as the problems that they confront. Over the last half century,

the size of the fifty largest law firms has increased more than ten times and the staff of the most prominent public-interest legal organizations has more than doubled.³⁴ In the corporate sector, the number of in-house counsel has also doubled since 1970; general counsel's offices have expanded to keep pace with the growth of their organizations.³⁵ Legal employers are operating in many more locations, and they have more alliances, subsidiaries, and outsourcing arrangements that also require oversight.

This increase in scale, together with other social, economic, and technological changes, has significantly complicated the landscape of leadership. Governments, markets, organizations, and professions are interacting in more complex ways, and leaders' actions play out on a larger stage.³⁶ Technological advances have increased both the pace of decision making and the accessibility of decision makers. Leaders often face a barrage of information along with pressure to make complex judgments instantly.³⁷ As one former deputy attorney general noted, "if you don't like an issue before you, wait fifteen minutes... Somebody will give you a new one."³⁸ Leaders remain tethered to their workplaces through electronic communication, and the personal costs can be substantial: stress, burnout, substance abuse, and related mental health difficulties.³⁹

Additional challenges arise from increased diversity within the legal profession and its clients. As chapter 7 notes, this trend has had many organizational payoffs, but it has also complicated the lives of leaders. Among their responsibilities is ensuring that institutions deal productively with differences across race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, culture, and sexual orientation in an increasingly interconnected world.

The Role of Leaders

The nature of the leadership role brings further complications. Although the extent and complexity of demands on contemporary leaders frequently argues for shared authority, many stakeholders still want a single heroic figure at the helm. As Joseph Nye describes it, this "Mt. Rushmore syndrome" rests on a fundamental "leader attribution error"—a tendency to ascribe undue credit or blame for performance to the person at the top.⁴⁰ The dynamic is common in all sectors of the legal profession. Stakeholders often expect quick fixes to complex problems and intractable market dynamics, and fail to value or to institutionalize shared leadership.⁴¹

So too, although lawyers might want, or benefit from, the results of strong leadership, they may not like to be led, and may not welcome the changes and

sacrifices that it demands. As chapter 1 noted, attorneys value independence and are well-prepared to challenge authority when they disagree. By training and temperament, lawyers are experts at locating loopholes and are attached to precedent; leaders' efforts at innovation are often met with skepticism and counterexamples.⁴² In public sector bureaucracies, rigid legal constraints, job protection for civil servants, insulation from market pressures, and potential political landmines can also foster resistance to change.⁴³ Many policy settings tend toward what experts describe as "organized anarchy." No one is really in charge: power is dispersed among shifting coalitions and interest groups, which require considerable leadership skills to align in pursuit of societal goals.⁴⁴

A final challenge for leaders lies in maintaining a sense of humility in circumstances that push in the opposite direction. Recent research finds that authentically humble leaders are more effective; they are more likely to view themselves objectively, more open to new ideas and critical feedback, and more willing to admit mistakes.⁴⁵ Yet as chapter 1 noted, the power and perks of leadership often reinforce arrogance and overconfidence.⁴⁶ Soliciting criticism and remaining self-reflective about one's own weaknesses are critical leadership skills.

Styles of Leadership

The mystery of what leaders can and ought to do in order to spark the best performance from their people is age-old. In recent years, that mystery has spawned an entire cottage industry: literally thousands of "leadership experts" have made careers of testing and coaching.

DANIEL GOLEMAN⁴⁷

Harvard psychology professor Daniel Goleman is unusual among those experts in that his conclusions about effective leadership have a broad empirical base. Drawing on a sample of almost four thousand leaders worldwide, Goleman has identified six styles, each reflecting distinctive forms of "emotional intelligence."⁴⁸ *Effective leaders* "do not rely on only one leadership style; they use most of them in a given week—seamlessly and in different measure—depending on the [situation]."⁴⁹ Goleman summarizes the styles as follows:

Coercive leaders demand immediate compliance.

Authoritative leaders mobilize people toward a vision.

Affiliative leaders create emotional bonds and harmony.
Democratic leaders build consensus through participation.
Pacesetter leaders expect excellence and self-direction.
Coaching leaders develop people for the future.⁵⁰

All of these styles are readily recognizable among lawyer leaders, and other commentators have added variations that are relevant for professional development.⁵¹

The Coercive or Intimidating Style

Coercion, the style most often associated with positions of power, is typically the least effective. Goleman suggests a number of reasons why. A leader's "extreme top-down decision making" kills new ideas. People feel so "disrespected that they...won't even bring...ideas up" or so "resentful that they adopt the attitude, 'I'm not going to help this bastard.'"⁵² Because the leader has not conveyed a sense of shared mission, people can become "alienated from their own jobs, wondering, 'How does any of this matter?'"⁵³ Research on lawyers similarly suggests that while this approach may accomplish short-term results, it often does so at the expense of longer-term problems of morale.⁵⁴

That is not to suggest that coercive styles are always ineffective. They are often useful in conditions of crisis or emergency, or with "problem" employees with whom all else has failed.⁵⁵ Stanford business school professor Roderick Kramer also suggests that a certain form of coercion, practiced by "great intimidators," can yield impressive bottom-line results.⁵⁶ These leaders, while not above using a few "ceremonial hangings" are not your "typical bullies."⁵⁷ Their motivation does not involve "ego or gratuitous humiliation"; rather, they are impatient with impediments, including human ones, and willing to use anger to achieve their ends.⁵⁸ One of Kramer's examples is Clarence Thomas, whose capacity for intimidation was on display during Senate confirmation hearings on his appointment to the Supreme Court. In response to questions about whether he had sexually harassed Anita Hill, Thomas accused Senate committee members of engaging in a "high tech lynching for uppity blacks..."⁵⁹ The result was to silence critics and help secure his nomination.

Moreover, according to Kramer,

A calculated "loss of temper" does more than help intimidators prevail in the heat of the moment, though. It also serves as a chilling deterrent for potential challengers. While in some instances they are clearly putting on an act, intimidators aren't always in full control of their

emotions when they go off on tirades. But even then a loss of control can be useful.⁶⁰

The biographies of famous lawyers are laced with examples of coercion and intimidation. Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy was one of the profession's most infamous bullies. His abusive tactics ruined countless careers of suspected communist sympathizers until his cruelty in televised congressional hearings appalled the nation and eroded his political support.⁶¹ Less extreme examples involve leaders whose desire for control sapped the morale and imitative of those around them. A profile of Paul Cravath, founder of Cravath, Swaine & Moore, noted that "most of the young men who worked in his offices disliked him heartily" largely because of his insistence that "everything be done his way."⁶² Washington insider Edward Bennett Williams, founder of Williams, Connolly & Califano, could be similarly autocratic. He demanded "total control" over the firm's decision making, was notoriously "unforgiving of errors" by others, and could fly into a "rage on demand."⁶³ Jeff Kindler, the lawyer who became CEO of Pfizer, reportedly lost his position because of a combative, abusive micromanagement style.⁶⁴ Ralph Nader, another micromanager, structured the public interest organizations that he founded so that "everything passed through [him]."⁶⁵ Nader even opposed unionization in those organizations, a position hard to square with his progressive ideals. As one staffer put it, Nader just felt that the workplace was "his baby and he want[ed] to run things his way."⁶⁶ That way even included a ban on soft drinks in his flagship organization, the Center for the Study of Responsive Law.⁶⁷ On discovering a contraband Coca-Cola can in the trash, Nader personally telephoned the staffer responsible. "This is a breach of trust," he explained to an incredulous reporter. "Soda is bad all the way around. It has no nutrition. It causes cavities. It is taste manipulation. Companies that make it should not be supported."⁶⁸ Steven Kumble, the founder of Finley Kumble, similarly obsessed about lawyers and clients who carried coffee cups without lids, threatening the firm's \$300,000 carpet. "I think I'm just going to have to take the coffee away from them," he announced.⁶⁹

Coercive and intimidating styles are less common in women leaders. Not only are they socialized differently, they also are punished for such "unfeminine" conduct.⁷⁰ What seems merely assertive in a man can seem abrasive in a woman.⁷¹ "Attila the Hen" and "the Dragon Lady" have difficulty gaining respect, support, and cooperation from coworkers.⁷² Indeed, some leadership coaches have developed a market niche in rehabilitating "bully broads"—women who come across as insufficiently feminine.⁷³ Still, the history of the

legal profession offers examples of unrepentant female leaders who were at least partly successful despite their intimidating styles. Congresswoman Bella Abzug, a leader on many women's rights issues, was known as "rude," "cantankerous," "abusive" to her staff, and "not kind to stupid people."⁷⁴ That insensitivity to the needs of others exacted a heavy toll. She experienced constant turnover among employees, and was fired as chair of an influential Presidential Advisory Committee on Women, because of her inability to "cooperate" with the administration, including President Carter himself.⁷⁵

Kramer claims that the "great intimidators" are not "typical bullies" because their motive is not humiliation. But it is by no means clear how much motive matters to those who are on the receiving end of abusive conduct. Most research suggests that likeability is correlated with effective leadership and that continued bullying impairs the performance both of leaders and their subordinates.⁷⁶ About half the targets of such abuse leave their job as a result.⁷⁷ Those who stay are unlikely to volunteer constructive criticism. Few wish to risk antagonizing leaders with the attitude of Hollywood's Darryl Zanuck, known for suggesting that subordinates "don't say yes until I stop talking."

Another form of intimidating behavior involves the use of knowledge in ways that preempt competing views. "Informational intimidators," as Kramer terms them, "always have an abundance of facts, and intentionally or unintentionally invoke them in ways that suppress opposition."⁷⁸ This, of course, can sometimes be a highly useful skill for lawyers, particularly in litigation. But in leadership contexts, where the goal is to understand and inspire others, this behavior can be counterproductive. It is especially damaging if done with insufficient concern for truth. In the short run, as Kramer notes, "[o]ften, it doesn't even matter all that much whether the 'facts' are right... Even the misleading or inaccurate factoid—when uttered with complete confidence and injected into a discussion with perfect timing and precision—can carry the day."⁷⁹ But in the long run, that tactic can be costly, particularly if the errors are made in public and someone has sufficient incentive and ability to expose them. Given the importance that people attach to honesty among leaders, informational intimidators can suffer serious credibility costs if they are flexible with facts.

A final type of coercive tactics arises from what is sometimes labeled a "drive to overachievement."⁸⁰ Leaders with this tendency focus too much on their own performance and need to show up not only competitors but also subordinates. Such leaders don't truly listen to others; instead, they soak up "all the oxygen in the room" by pushing their own ideas and even answering

their own questions.⁸¹ This approach may yield some short-term advantages if the leader is gifted, but the ultimate result is likely to be disengagement and dependency among followers.

The Authoritative Style

Goleman's research suggests that the authoritative style is generally the most effective.⁸² This approach combines clarity about ends with flexibility about means.

The authoritative leader is a visionary; he motivates people by making clear to them how their work fits into a larger vision for the organization. People who work for such leaders understand that what they do matters and why. . . . An authoritative leader states the end but generally gives people plenty of leeway to devise their own means. Authoritative leaders give people the freedom to innovate, experiment, and take calculated risks.⁸³

Yet as Goleman also notes, the authoritative style is not effective in every situation. It fails, for example, "when a leader is working with a team of experts or peers who are more experienced than he is; they may see the leader as pompous or out-of-touch. Another limitation . . . [is that] if a manager trying to be authoritative becomes overbearing, he can undermine the egalitarian spirit of an effective team."⁸⁴ These circumstances are particularly common in law firms; many partners are reluctant to cede too much power to a single individual.⁸⁵

So too, an authoritative manner in women bumps up against the gender stereotypes noted earlier. An overview of more than a hundred studies confirms that women are rated lower as leaders when they adopt authoritative, seemingly masculine styles, particularly when the evaluators are men, or when the role is one typically occupied by men.⁸⁶ This leaves female leaders in a double bind. They risk seeming too feminine or not feminine enough. Those with a soft-spoken approach may appear unable or unwilling to make the tough calls that leadership positions require. Those who lean in the opposite direction are often viewed as strident, arrogant, or overly aggressive.⁸⁷ During her presidential campaign, Hillary Clinton sought to strike an elusive balance, described as "something between a country-club, golf playing, hedge fund executive, with a whiff of bingo games Sunday churchgoing, supermarket aisles, and coffee clatches."⁸⁸ As chapter 7 indicates, these persistent, often

unconscious gender biases help explain women lawyers' continued underrepresentation in leadership roles. One recommended response, is to be "relentlessly pleasant" without backing down.⁸⁹ Researchers propose frequently smiling, expressing appreciation and concern, invoking common interests, focusing on others' goals as well as their own, and taking a problem-solving rather than a critical stance.⁹⁰

The Affiliative Style

The "affiliative" style of leadership puts people first. Its adherents focus on maintaining satisfaction and harmony among followers. They tend to be "natural relationship builders" who supply frequent positive feedback, value personal relationships, and celebrate group accomplishment.⁹¹ The result is a high level of trust, loyalty, communication, and innovation.

Many successful politicians and heads of law firms and in-house counsel offices have been known for such relational skills. Robert Kennedy was a prominent example. Shortly after his appointment as attorney general, he astonished Justice Department lawyers by walking into their offices announcing, "I'm Bob Kennedy" and then asking where they had gone to law school and what they were working on.⁹² He got minor officials their first invitation to the White House, sent thank-you notes to staff whom he saw working on holidays, and called or wrote lawyers with congratulations when they had accomplished some difficult task.⁹³ As Victor Navasky summed it up, this leadership style "brought out the best in others and enlarged their sense of possibility."⁹⁴ Hillary Clinton has earned similar praise in her position as secretary of state. She has been famously "big on feedback," an Internet "Secretary's Sounding Board is bringing the suggestion box into the modern age."⁹⁵ Clinton also gains respect for following through on the ideas that she hears. After receiving complaints that full benefits for domestic partners were not yet available, she cut through bureaucratic obstacles with a simple directive: "Fix it."⁹⁶

Similar examples are common in the private sector. Michael Kelly's *Lives of Lawyers Revisited* profiles a general counsel who made it a priority to sponsor social events and to meet individually with staff and find out what they would like changed.⁹⁷ Larry Sonsini, one of the founders of the Silicon Valley legal establishment, including the law firm that bears his name, is legendary for "bridge build[ing]" and having "a firm grasp of what is important to others."⁹⁸ Louis Brandeis, who distinguished himself in many leadership positions on and off the bench, recognized the value

of knowing the affairs of others, including clients, "better than they do" and using that knowledge to forge personal relationships. As he advised a young lawyer, "the ability to impress [others] grows from . . . confidence [that] can never come from books; it is gained by human intercourse."⁹⁹ Used exclusively, however, affiliative approaches have limitations. In some leadership contexts, too much praise and desire for harmony "can allow poor performance to go uncorrected" and internal conflicts to go unresolved.¹⁰⁰ Whatever its short term advantages in minimizing stress and unpleasantness, conflict avoidance should be avoided.¹⁰¹ As chapter 4 indicates, unaddressed problems can fester, impair performance, and lead to more costly confrontations later on.

The Democratic Style

One way to handle conflicts, as well as other leadership challenges, is through democratic processes. By giving stakeholders a say in decisions that affect them, leaders can generate new ideas, encourage buy-in, and build morale, trust, respect, and commitment.¹⁰² Many heads of public interest legal organizations employ this approach and rely heavily on legal staff to shape organizational priorities.¹⁰³

However, as experts including Goleman note, the democratic style has drawbacks that make it ill-suited for many leadership contexts.¹⁰⁴ Most lawyers have had experience with the problems, such as "endless meetings where ideas are mulled over, consensus remains elusive, and the only visible result is scheduling more meetings."¹⁰⁵ Participatory processes can also defer decisions in ways that leave individuals "confused and leaderless."¹⁰⁶ Many accomplished leaders have paid a price for this approach. Observers of Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign chronicled the downsides of her democratic style and refusal to resolve internal staff conflicts.¹⁰⁷ A year into her campaign, her advisors were still "squabbling over [the] message," and, rather than establish clear lines of authority, Clinton allowed them to share power.¹⁰⁸ The result was that "nobody knew who was in charge. Nobody wanted to be in charge."¹⁰⁹

The broader lesson from such examples is that democratic processes work best when leaders are themselves uncertain about the best direction to take and need ideas and commitment from stakeholders. Alternatively, even when leaders have a strong vision of what needs to change, democratic styles can generate constructive strategies for making that change happen, and buy-in from those most affected.¹¹⁰ But there are also times when leaders simply have

to decide; the problem with democracy can be the same as with socialism, which in a classic phrase, "takes too many evenings."¹¹¹

The Pacesetting Style

A fifth leadership style emerging from large-scale research involves pacesetting. A leader employing this approach

sets high performance standards and exemplifies them himself. He is obsessive about doing things better and faster, and he asks the same of everyone around him. He quickly pinpoints poor performers and demands more from them. If they don't rise to the occasion, he replaces them with people who can.¹¹²

This is a readily recognizable strategy among prominent lawyers. A textbook example comes from William Kuntsler's autobiography, *My Life as a Radical Lawyer*.¹¹³ He describes his first meeting with a law student intern who had just started working for the firm. Kuntsler handed him a motion to file immediately and added, with little more by way of instruction, "If you screw this up, don't come back."¹¹⁴ In explaining his strategy, Kuntsler noted,

Clearly I had no time to babysit law students if they couldn't do the work... My goal for anyone who works with me is, simply, to get the job done... I expect a lot from people... and I don't want to hear... [their] complaints or problems. I often yell when someone makes a mistake, which, I admit, is not pleasant, but that's how I function.¹¹⁵

If subordinates couldn't handle the pressure, Kuntsler had a simple solution: "I let them quit."¹¹⁶

Ralph Nader combined control and pacesetting. He created an entire consumer movement by recruiting students and recent law graduates and giving them substantial responsibility. "I'm not interested in the Lone Ranger effect," he famously insisted.¹¹⁷ "The function of leaders is to produce more leaders."¹¹⁸ To that end, he looked for Nader Raiders who would be "highly self-directed as well as highly motivated." "Advice-giving [was] a luxury he [didn't] have much time for."¹¹⁹ "Don't ask me questions" he told his staff. "Just go get at them."¹²⁰

This style has some of the same downsides as the coercive approach. According to Goleman,

Many employees feel overwhelmed by the pacesetter's demands for excellence, and their morale drops. Guidelines for working may be clear in the leader's head, but she does not state them clearly; she expects people to know what to do and even thinks, "If I have to tell you, you're the wrong person for the job." Work becomes not a matter of doing one's best along a clear course so much as second-guessing what the leader wants. At the same time, people often feel that the pacesetter doesn't trust them to work in their own way or to take initiative.¹²¹

Of course, as Goleman notes, "the pacesetting style isn't always a disaster. The approach works well when all employees are self-motivated, highly competent, and need little direction or coordination."¹²² Given a talented team, "pacesetting does exactly that: [it] gets work done on time or even ahead of schedule."¹²³ Ralph Nader was revered by some staff for being "the best teacher in the world... partly because he doesn't teach you."¹²⁴ He gave junior lawyers major policy, press, and political organizing responsibilities and enabled them to rise to the occasion. Their efforts laid foundations for major consumer, environmental, and occupational safety regulations, and many of those lawyers went on to lead other public interest initiatives.¹²⁵ Yet not all "Nader's Raiders" were up for the pressure and the "hundred hour work week" that Nader thought was "perfect"; "flameout" was a significant problem.¹²⁶ The lesson is that pacesetting, like other styles, requires discretion. Leaders need to exercise judgment about when those on the receiving end are up to the task.

The Coaching Style

A final style involves coaching. Leaders taking this approach

help employees identify their unique strengths and weaknesses and tie them to their personal and career aspirations. They make agreements with their employees about their role and responsibilities in enacting development plans, and they give plentiful instruction and feedback. Coaching leaders excel at delegating; they give employees challenging assignments, even if that means the tasks won't be accomplished quickly. In other words, these leaders are willing to put up with short-term failure if it furthers long-term learning.¹²⁷

Leaders who have made coaching a priority have been responsible for some of the profession's greatest achievements. Charles Houston, the Dean of Howard Law School and head of the NAACP legal office in the 1930s and 1940s, nurtured the careers of many civil rights leaders, including Thurgood Marshall, who did the same for others.¹²⁸ Former Secretary of State Warren Christopher was revered for supporting junior lawyers; one of his mentees recounted thirty years of assistance, ranging from recruitment to Stanford Law School, to critical support and advice concerning his appointment as Associate Attorney General and judge on the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals.¹²⁹ In legal education, founding mothers such as Barbara Babcock and Herma Hill Kay not only served in leadership roles themselves, but also launched the careers of innumerable women's rights advocates and prominent public servants.¹³⁰

Yet despite its frequent effectiveness, the coaching style is the least common leadership approach that Goleman's research identified. The reason, according to interviewed leaders, is that they "don't have the time in this high-pressure economy for the slow and tedious work of teaching people and helping them grow."¹³¹ Other explanations involve interpersonal obstacles to candid feedback, such as leaders' desires to be liked or to avoid conflict, and concerns about damaging relationships and reducing chances of retention.¹³² Particularly in large organizations with high turnover rates, leaders often see little reason to invest in subordinates who are likely to leave.¹³³ As a consequence, many legal workplaces lack adequate mentoring and leadership development.¹³⁴ The problem is compounded by some leaders' lack of skills and comfort in coaching those who are different along lines of race, ethnicity, or gender.¹³⁵ Although increasing numbers of legal workplaces have responded by creating formal mentoring programs, these initiatives often lack effective oversight and reward structures.¹³⁶ Mentors take a "call me if you need me approach" that leaves subordinates uncomfortable in asking for assistance. Also lacking are well-designed leadership development strategies. Only a quarter of surveyed firms have leadership succession plans.¹³⁷

Of course, like other leadership styles, extensive coaching is not appropriate in all circumstances. The employee needs to be capable and motivated, and the effort should be proportional to the circumstances. I can still recall my first exposure to intensive mentoring when I was about the age of Kuntsler's intern, and it was not a happy experience. After my second year in law school, I spent the summer at a prominent Washington law firm. One of my assignments involved a client who raised chickens. He was suing the Department of Agriculture because it had condemned some diseased chickens and provided

what he felt was inadequate compensation. I invested a week reading condemnation cases in search of possible precedents and lines of appeal. The junior partner who reviewed my research memo treated it like a draft for a Supreme Court decision or a tenure article in a leading law review. Every paragraph was redlined with stylistic and substantive revisions, along with long digressions based on the partner's own rhetorical peeves and preferences. I was astonished. We were, after all, not writing for the ages here. This was just a memo. About dead chickens. I tried to imagine an explanation. Did the partner not have enough other work and needed to run up hours at the client's expense? Did he not have enough other opportunities to exercise power and control? Or was he so taken with his craft that every work product had to reach a state of polished perfection regardless of the stakes or the client's preferences? Whatever the explanation, if this is how the firm let associates "sink or swim," I wanted out of the water.

In the contemporary law firm, however, such micro-mentoring is rare. Not-so-benign neglect is far more common, and it exacts a substantial price.¹³⁸ Retention of talented junior lawyers is a major problem in many legal workplaces, and high attrition rates of women and minorities are of particular concern. A major contributing factor to premature departures is lack of guidance and professional development opportunities.¹³⁹ In one American Bar Association study, two thirds of women of color and over half of white women and men of color would have liked better mentoring.¹⁴⁰ Failure to develop subordinates has been identified as one of the "fatal flaws" of unsuccessful leaders.¹⁴¹ In today's increasingly competitive climate, organizations need those who occupy positions of power to support and model effective mentoring. Indeed, Goleman puts the point directly: "[a]lthough the coaching style may not scream 'bottom-line results,' it delivers them."¹⁴²

A Repertoire of Styles and a Redeeming Sense of Humor

As this overview makes clear, no single leadership style is effective in all contexts, although some are more likely to be effective than others. Leaders need multiple approaches and an understanding of when each is most appropriate. The best leaders are "exquisitely sensitive to the impact they are having on others," and able to adjust their styles accordingly.¹⁴³

These leaders also tend to have a sense of humor. The research available suggests that outstanding leaders outperform their counterparts in the use of humor and that this ability correlates with leadership effectiveness.¹⁴⁴

Humor serves multiple functions in the workplace; it can deflect and diffuse tension, relieve stress, and foster collegiality.¹⁴⁵ A capacity for irony and self-deprecating wit is not only appealing in itself, but also signals emotional intelligence. One leader who embodied these qualities was Thurgood Marshall. He was legendary among colleagues, clerks, and even opponents for his spontaneous humor and telling anecdotes. He used that strategy to build relationships, attract donors, relieve tensions, and ridicule injustice; his stories managed not only to "evoke a laugh [but also to]... make a point."¹⁴⁶ He was equally able to "chew the fat" with a white sheriff during a racial protest and to spar with royalty during a trip abroad.¹⁴⁷ While working in London on a constitution for the newly created state of Kenya, Marshall had an opportunity to meet with Prince Philip. When the Prince inquired if Marshall would "care to hear my opinion of lawyers," Marshall responded in kind: "Only if you care to hear my opinion of Princes."¹⁴⁸

Another pointed example occurred during Marshall's 1950 efforts in Japan, where the NAACP sought to challenge the racial discrimination pervasive under General MacArthur's command.¹⁴⁹ The task was complicated by MacArthur's refusal to acknowledge the problem, despite ample evidence of racially disparate treatment in job assignments, promotions, and court martials. When Marshall pointed out the absence of blacks on the entire headquarters' staff and the General's personal guard, MacArthur insisted that no blacks were qualified for such positions. Marshall then pointed out that the base's military band also had no blacks, and added "Now General, just between you and me, goddammit, don't you tell me that there is no Negro that can play a horn."¹⁵⁰

There are, to be sure, downsides to this strategy, when humor is used to deflect attention from serious and personally inconvenient issues. But for leaders like Marshall, who was never afraid to face tough questions, the wit was part of his greatness. My own favorite Marshall anecdote is a story he told during my clerkship about his initial appointment to the bench. He was one of the first African-Americans to sit on a federal appellate court, and shortly after his term began, he and his colleagues were scheduled for a group photograph to mark his new membership. Marshall arrived a bit late, just after the photographer had blown a fuse and everyone was milling around in semi-darkness. As he entered the chambers, the Chief Judge's secretary, who had not yet met him, announced with evident relief, "thank God, the electrician's arrived." To which Marshall reportedly responded, "Ma'am, you'd have to be crazy to think they'd let me in that union."¹⁵¹

Today, of course, they would, and part of the reason is Marshall's own leadership.

It seems somewhat ironic to close a chapter on lawyers and leadership with a plea for irony. The legal profession is not known for self-deprecating humor. But neither is it known for its attention to leadership. Both need to change. For better or worse, law is the occupation from which vast numbers of American leaders emerge. They need to become more informed and adept in developing the characteristics and styles that make for effective leadership.

Your Oxygen Mask First

By

Kevin Lawrence

Pages 17-58

PREMISE

"Life should not be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside in a cloud of smoke, thoroughly used up, totally worn out, and loudly proclaiming, "Wow! What a Ride!"

HUNTER S. THOMPSON, Journalist & Author

Most Advice is Nonsense

There are a billion leadership books on the market, so you might be wondering: why bother with this one? I wrote this book because the exasperating truth is that most advice offered to business leaders is complete nonsense.

Too many well-meaning authors regurgitate ideas that, in my experience, just don't match the practical circumstances of leaders.

It's not that these writers are entirely wrong—their advice might work well for normal, everyday people. But high-achievers have unique needs that require a distinct way of thinking.

For the past twenty years I've specialized in helping CEOs, executives and other high-achievers survive success so they can take on bigger and bigger challenges. I've helped them thrive, not just professionally but personally. Along the way I've studied and tested most every leadership theory known to humankind.

This book is a concise but far-reaching summary of the best information and tools I've discovered in two decades of coaching and advising. I set out to deliver it to you with no holds barred.

It's my nature to tell it like it is. I don't mince words. I don't break news gently. I say what needs to be said, even when the truth is uncomfortable. Consider this a disclaimer.

The Upside of the Dichotomy

In case you haven't already noticed, leadership is a completely crazy way to spend your life. But it's also ridiculously amazing, and that's the dichotomy.

The upside of leadership is that your life is exhilarating and rewarding beyond belief. You build the magical things you dream up in your mind.

You test your personal limits, and experience huge, unimaginable wins that make you feel like you're standing on the peak of Everest.

You meet fascinating people and build lifelong relationships that inform how you see the world.

Whether it's a start-up in your garage, a division of a multinational, a family business you've inherited—or any other situation—leadership is all consuming, and changes you forever.

In the end, if you've done it right, you'll leave this world a little or a lot better than you found it.

That's what I call a life worth living.

The Dark Side of the Dichotomy

People rarely talk about the dark side of leadership.

The harsh truth is, leadership can crush people made of steel.

You experience moments so intense you seriously wonder if you will make it out alive—much less with your business intact.

The pressure can seem so unbearable you question why you chose this life in the first place. At times, the weight of your company feels like it's bearing down on you. You need to make gut-wrenching decisions that affect people's lives and careers.

In these moments you wonder if you have the stomach for it all. You question your intelligence, your capacity—and, in the very darkest hours— even your sanity.

Elvis

My fascination with the dichotomy of leadership began on a summer day in 1977 when the music icon of a generation, Elvis Presley, died at the early age of 42. I was a kid at the time, but hearing that news hit me hard.

I couldn't understand how someone with everything to live for could self-destruct with so much life left to live. It made no sense.

As I grew up, I often reflected on amazing people who were crushed by success and wondered what the heck went wrong. People like Marilyn Monroe, Janis Joplin, Jimmy Hendrix and Kurt Cobain puzzled and fascinated me.

I always felt there had to be an explanation, an avoidable cause. I wanted to know the secret to achieving huge success, without being clobbered by it.

Eventually I made it my mission, and my career, to make sense of the leadership dichotomy. I committed myself to understanding why some people triumph while others get trampled.

After two decades of research and observation I can tell

you the difference has almost nothing to do with talent, drive or perseverance.

It all comes down to this: *If you buy into the myth of martyrdom, you will be pummelled by your own success.*

The Myth of Martyrdom

You probably believe there is literally *no* time in your life to take proper care of yourself, to indulge in activities that are just for you, and you alone.

You believe as a leader, a spouse, a parent, a community organizer —whatever combination of roles you play—that these roles far outweigh your own personal needs.

You are conditioned to believe this is what adulthood looks like, what leadership looks like.

This is the myth of martyrdom; the dark lie that makes leaders feel guilty for having human needs.

But it is *impossible* to steer a company to its greatest potential if you aren't in your strongest state as an individual.

So if you ever feel profoundly depleted or distressed by your business, it's not a sign to slow down or walk away. It's a sign that you're suffocating and need a new approach to survive success.

There is no in-between with leadership. It either it slowly destroys your life or it forces you to get stronger.

You Need Oxygen

The solution is simple: you need oxygen. And lots of it. All the time.

In a plane crisis, you must don your own mask first so you have the oxygen to survive and help others. Your first instinct

might be to leap into rescue mode, but you're of no use to anyone if you can't breathe.

Leadership is no different. You need to put yourself first. You need to be selfish.

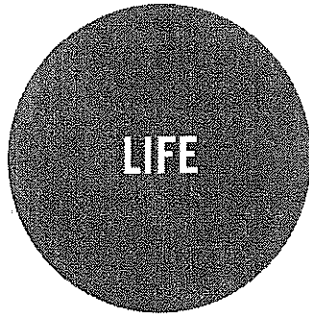
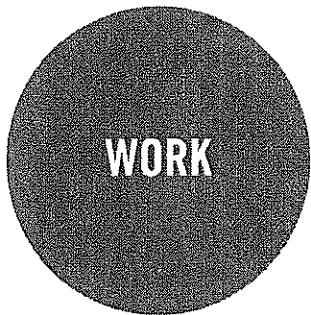
Now, you need to know I don't define selfishness as manipulating every situation to your own benefit.

This is about giving yourself permission to put yourself first. It's about making your needs an unwavering priority, so you are strong and resilient enough to be of service to others.

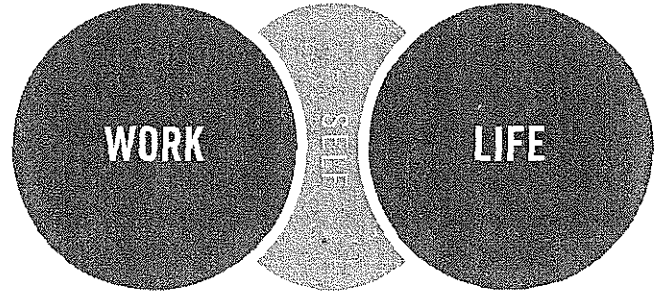
It may seem like you can expend every ounce of your energy on your business and the people you care about, but this short-sighted view is the exact reason so many leaders crash and burn.

You're Getting Squeezed Out

Most leaders see the world in two categories of 'work' and 'life', with 'life' being a catch-all for everything that isn't business. 'Life' usually represents all of the people and causes outside of work that matter to you.



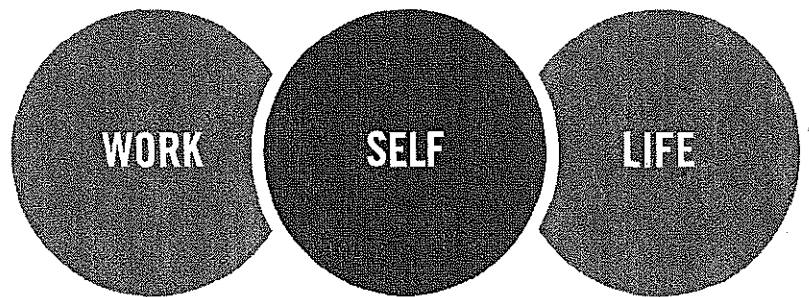
But hang on. Something crucial is totally getting squeezed out...what is it? Ah yes, *you*. *You're* getting squeezed out.



Remember when you were in your teens and early 20s? You probably had a ton of time and energy to spend on things that mattered just to you and you alone. To explore your fascinations. To do the things you love.

Then adulthood happened. Leadership happened. Family happened. And 'self' started to feel like a dirty word because of those other priorities. So it got relegated to the background. You were conditioned to believe that's what mature, responsible people do.

The reality is, you can only shut out your 'self' for so long until the self-neglect suffocates you. It affects your business performance, your family life...everything.



The only solution is to add that extremely crucial 'self' category back into your reality.

If you ignore your own well-being, the smartest business strategy on the planet can't save you.

But if you learn the proper tools for coping with the massive life you've chosen, your potential is unending.

How to Use This Book

This book can be used in different ways, depending on your personality. You might choose to read it all the way through, and then go back to work through the habits and exercises, chapter by chapter, or in order of personal priority.

You may prefer to take each chapter as it comes, reading it, absorbing it, doing the exercises, taking the time to incorporate the habit into your life.

There is no right or wrong.

One thing is universal: mastering the habits in this book is a lifelong journey. You can perpetually take each one deeper and deeper.

I encourage you to use this book as an ongoing resource for your evolution as a leader. Revisit the chapters as new challenges arise in your life.

Here are five things to know:

1. Don't be overwhelmed. This is a concise book but it packs a punch and covers a lot of territory. You're not meant to absorb and understand everything in one reading.

2. Each chapter presents one habit and offers a set of steps to help you understand and adopt the habit. You must actually *do* these steps to get any results. They aren't just ideas to contemplate.
3. Pay close attention to the 'Gut Check' section at the end of each chapter where you rate your abilities. Even if you give yourself a '10', do the steps in the chapter anyway. You can only get stronger.
4. You can access a free *Your Oxygen Mask First* toolkit at: lawrenceandco.com/books
5. Stay tuned for a list of resources and my top book recommendations at the end of the book.

There's More Where This Came From: Sign Up

If this book speaks to you, you can receive succinct, hard-hitting insights on a weekly basis via my newsletter. It's tailor-made for CEOs, executives and high-achievers like you.

Send an email to kevin@lawrenceandco.com and put 'newsletter' in the subject line. Let me know where you're based and what industry you're in.

One Last Thought Before You Get Started

Yes, your development as a leader is serious business. But let yourself have fun as you work through the book. This is chance to learn about yourself, grow as a leader, and build an amazing life. Approach it with levity and an open mind. That'll take you far.

All the stories in this book are based on real-life people and situations but, in most cases, names have been changed for personal privacy.

STORY

When I first met Nigel, he was getting pummelled by life.

Although his business was seriously booming, he went to work every day with dread in the pit of his gut. Here was a guy who should have been plotting a huge, glorious future—but instead resisted the urge to vomit whenever he reached for his office door.

I talked Nigel out of his plan to ditch his company and run off to Tahiti, and we worked together to radically shift his mindset. His business—and his industry—had evolved over the years, and he hadn't kept up. He needed completely different tools to handle the intensity of life as a CEO.

So we met one morning a month to walk Vancouver's beautiful seawall (always good to get out of the office to get a fresh perspective), and talk through his issues. Ultimately, Nigel needed to deal with his emotional junk to manage his mental health, make more time for himself, teach his team to meet his standards, and make himself useless in his business. We put an action plan in place to deal with each of these issues head on, one by one.

Today, Nigel lives every business owner's fantasy. He sets the vision for his company, and has a partner who handles day-to-day operations. Much of Nigel's time is spent on personal passions—building homes for people in need, travelling with his family, and creating great experiences everywhere he goes.

Nigel is the perfect example of a leader who thought he needed to back down in order to survive success. He thought his booming business was too much for him, but there was never a need to succumb. He just needed a smarter way to push through.

Today his company is bigger than ever, and Nigel has reached an elusive state most leaders seek but never find: freedom.

You can read more about Nigel's story in his book, *An Entrepreneur's Ride Through the Universe*.

1

Live an Amazing Life

*"Life is a great big canvas, and you should throw
all the paint on it you can."*

DANNY KAYE, actor

Let me ask you this: Would you want someone you love to spend a lifetime living exactly as you are right now?

If your answer is not an enthusiastic, unqualified, 'Heck yeah', you've got work to do, my friend.

Life is meant to be a grand adventure. No one comes into this world only to have a booming business or legendary career. A truly great life is not just achievement...it's *enjoyment* of your achievement. It's enjoyment of life.

If you're not shouting from the mountaintops about your life, don't kid yourself into thinking you'll suddenly feel deep joy when your business reaches a certain pinnacle. That's not how life works.

It's easy to get addicted to success. Business achievement is a high that consumes many leaders—but it is not the *only* purpose in life.

You deserve, and can have, a much larger sense of fulfillment; a sense that all aspects of your life are rewarding and satisfying. As a leader, it's easy to lose sense of the bigger picture: to see nothing beyond hitting your next big goal.



Key Point

If you don't make time to enjoy what you achieve, your life might look great, but it won't feel great.

Too many successful people think they'll take better care of their health...later. They'll spend more time with their kids...later. They'll learn to sail...later.

Someday they'll do wildly generous things. *Someday* they'll finally enjoy everything they've achieved.

The problem is, you're already forming lifelong habits. The way you live right now is pretty much how you can expect to live in the future. Sure, you may have different possessions and assets, but you'll exist in a fundamentally similar way.

So if you're a 'maybe someday' sort of person, you're missing out. Stop delaying your life.

It is well within your power to enjoy every aspect of your life. You just need to make a clear decision to actually experience enjoyment, and stop procrastinating.

If you're like most leaders, you're used to planning for *achievement*—or what I like to call 'head success'. But this is only

half of the equation. Head success is about reaching goals you set like revenue growth, profit, market share, personal wealth, possessions and vacations.

If you want a sense of satisfaction, you need to plan for *enjoyment* and *fulfillment*—aka 'heart success'. This requires defining how you want to feel about yourself and your life when you wake up every day.

Everyone has their own definition of heart success. You may want to feel energized, influential and connected to people you love. You may want to feel like you are making a profound difference in the world, and evolving as a human being.

However you define it, you need to sort out what heart success is to you so it can be part of your game plan.

If you play your cards right, you'll be able to look back, decades from now, with zero regrets. This is the true test of an amazing life.

Simple Summary

Success isn't *only* what you achieve or possess. It's how you *feel* about your life.

STORY

By the time he was 36, Robert had made more money than any other person in the history of his family. He built his business from the ground up, and it could reasonably be called an empire.

For much of his career, Robert had an unstoppable focus on work, with the goal of accumulating wealth and security for his loved ones.

Trouble is, all Robert knew how to do was make money, and save money. His financial position was ridiculously solid, but he couldn't bring himself to spend beyond the essentials—at all.

He dreamed of taking his family on vacations. He imagined buying pricey gifts for his kids. He longed for the day he would buy his hardworking, rough-and-tumble dad a new set of pipes for his Harley.

Robert had a generous heart, but he was so hard-wired to build wealth that, despite his best intentions, he couldn't part with his cash.

Finally the day came when his father's health faded, and it was clear he didn't have long to live. And it changed everything. Robert spent \$5,000 to buy that set of exhaust pipes, and his dad's Harley never sounded louder, or felt more satisfying.

His dad rode that upgraded bike only once before he died, but the joy he experienced gave Robert a whole new take on money. He finally understood he needed to expand his definition of success.

His whole life he had seen success through one lens: his wealth goals. All decisions were based on maximizing his financial position. He learned to methodically weigh enjoyment of life as part of his decision-making criteria. This may sound simple and obvious, but for many driven people like Robert, it's a revelation.

Now, in addition to building wealth, Robert makes a concerted effort to create joy for himself and others. He bought the waterfront home he and his wife always wanted. He took his family on a trip around the world, and proudly owns a membership at a private track for car racing.

Sometimes that old perspective creeps up again, wanting Robert to pinch pennies and limit his enjoyment of life. When it does, he remembers his dad's Harley, and switches to a broader perspective.

Six Steps to Mastery

1. Figure out what makes your life amazing so far

We could sip a cappuccino and have a charming conversation about what's important to you, and what your ideal life would be. But this would be an intellectual exercise, generating only what's in your head.

Memories of your life's highlights are a sure-fire way to cut through the head success, and find out what heart success really is to you.

Action

Fill out the 1st column of Amazing Memories grid.

AMAZING MEMORIES GRID

AMAZING MEMORY	HEAD SUCCESS (ACHIEVEMENT) & WHY	HEART SUCCESS (ENJOYMENT) & WHY
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

2. Notice which successes mean the most

Sometimes success only strikes a chord with your head, not your heart. At other times you've probably managed to achieve both head and heart success simultaneously.

Action

Fill out the 2nd and 3rd columns on Amazing Memories grid. For each amazing memory note if it gave you a deep sense of enjoyment (heart success) or a sense of achievement (head success)—or both. Note why.

3. Discover what you would do if you had complete choice and freedom

Let your mind wander beyond the parameters of your current life by imagining the following scenario: You receive news that a long-lost relative has left you a \$50 million inheritance. There are two strings attached:

- You must continue to work at least 30 hours a week, and be a contributing member of society.
- Your overall enjoyment of work and life must average at least eight out of 10, or the money vaporizes.

Action

What activities and pursuits would you start doing (or do more often)?

What activities and pursuits would you stop doing (or do less often)? Fill out the 1st row on the Amazing Life Grid.

AMAZING LIFE GRID

	START DOING (OR DO MORE) & WHY	STOP DOING (OR DO LESS) & WHY
\$50 MILLION INHERITANCE		
12-YEAR-OLD WISDOM		
82-YEAR-OLD WISDOM		
GAME-OVER WISDOM		

4. Get advice from Young You, Old You and Game-Over You

12-Year-Old Wisdom: Imagine describing your life so far to a 12-year old version of yourself.

What changes would that child want you to make right now? Fill out the 2nd row on the Amazing Life Grid.

82-Year-Old Wisdom: Imagine describing your life so far to an 82-year old version of yourself.

What changes would that 82-year old want you to make right now? Fill out the 3rd row on the Amazing Life Grid.

Game-Over Wisdom: Nothing is quite as clarifying as mortality. If you knew this is your final year on this great planet, how you spend your days? What would you stop doing? Fill out the 4th row on the Amazing Life Grid.

5. Put it all together: Your Amazing Life Plan

Take what you've learned from the previous exercises. What themes or patterns do you notice?

Action

Based on what you learned from the previous exercises, fill out the Amazing Life Plan. Choose your top three "achievement" *and* top three "enjoyment" goals for the next 12 months.

Tip

Start with the 'Self' category.

AMAZING LIFE PLAN

	ACHIEVEMENT	ENJOYMENT
WORK		
SELF		
LIFE		

6. Build a better plan, and plan ahead – *well ahead*

An amazing life takes commitment and organization. You will only have a great life if you schedule things that make it great and stick to those commitments.

This is why my wife and I start each year knowing where we'll take our vacations. We make our bookings for the coming year in December, if not earlier.

Whatever your favourite activities are, start planning them. Book the concerts, brunches and dinner parties. Commit to your date nights. Schedule your volunteer time.

Of course, if you're the rare person who can be spontaneous with all your personal activities *and* run a booming business, my hat is off to you. But most of us need sound planning to make it happen.

Tip

Use birthdays and holidays to your advantage. These are great triggers for scheduling special events and get-togethers.

Action

What key things do you need to schedule for the coming 12 to 18 months?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Tip

Think of your life as a massive R&D project. Keep experimenting, notice what works and what doesn't, and adjust at you go. An amazing life is an evolving life.

You Need to Work on This if...

1. You rate your current enjoyment of life less than nine out of 10.
2. You would not feel you had used your life well, if it ended today.
3. You tend to use up your passion for work, and have little left for the rest of your life.
4. It's not normal for you to look forward to things in your life.
5. You often find yourself thinking or saying "woulda, coulda, shoulda".

Gut Check

Be brutally honest – how good are you at enjoying life in tandem with your head success?

On a scale of 0 (low) to 10 (high): _____



2

Forget Work-Life Balance

"You don't go to the amusement park roller coaster and say, 'I want to be balanced'. No, you want to be as unbalanced as possible, because that's the thrill of the ride."

NEIL DEGRASSE TYSON, Astrophysicist

Work-life balance is a lovely notion. It may even work beautifully for people less ambitious than you. But it is *absolutely* inconsistent with the life you've chosen, so you need to chuck it.

Balance is *not* for driven people.

You are fuelled to pursue wild, crazy, gigantic goals—and as wonderful as this is, it is not the making of a simple, balanced life.

You need to accept who you are. You're not a nine-to-fiver. If you live with the idea that you are supposed to have a balanced life as you chase huge goals, you'll always be tortured by feelings of guilt and inadequacy.



Key Point

Dump the notion of work-life balance.
Focus on work-self-life passion instead.

Work-self-life passion is about fully experiencing enthusiasm in all aspects of your life.

It is having the time and energy to:

- Fully enjoy work
- Have time just for yourself and the things you most enjoy
- Have time for the people and personal causes you care about in life.

Yes, it's possible. It first requires clear thinking about the distinct categories of your life:

Work: Everything you do professionally, including social events that are related to work, clients and colleagues.

Self: Things you do just for yourself because they replenish and make you stronger. If you don't invest energy in the 'self' category, you diminish your capacity to invest passion in work and life. Most leaders frequently and dangerously ignore this mission-critical category.

Life: These are the people and causes that matter to you most outside of work – including family, friends, charitable activities and the like. The time and energy spent here has nothing to do with furthering your business interests. It's about other things you love.

Invest Your Passion Units

So, think of it this way. If you have 100 units of passion to spend every week, you won't feel great if you spend 99 of them at work. This is a sure-fire route to misery. Your relationships would suffer tremendously. You would feel depleted. You would lose perspective on your life and your business, seriously limiting your ability to make clear, smart decisions.

Too many leaders use all of their energy and enthusiasm at the office, and then wonder why their relationships and personal satisfaction suffer.

Work-self-life passion requires you to consciously choose how you allot your passion units. It ensures you invest some in yourself, and those you love every week, allowing you to recharge.

If you make conscious choices about how you invest your passion, your experience of life can improve dramatically.

Simple Summary

Invest passion units in yourself first, to be as giving and productive as you want to be in other aspects of your life.

INSIGHT

I keep track of my work-self-life passion by noticing the parts of my life where I initiate new and interesting activities. It's my personality to spearhead new projects and plan great experiences, so for me this is a clear indicator.

I know I bring enough passion to my personal life when I use creative headspace to plan cool events for myself,

and with friends and family. If I organize birthday parties, go-karting adventures, vacations, experiential activities, charitable events and the like, I'm investing a decent number of passion units outside of work.

When I have no energy left to plan personal experiences, it's a clear sign my passion units are off kilter.

Four Steps to Mastery

1. Do a reality check

Where are your passion units currently expended? Said differently, where do you put your creative thinking and discretionary energy?

Be brutally honest. Are you only investing passion at work, and you and your family get the scraps left over at the end of the week? Are you, and the people you care about most, getting a decent measure of your creative headspace?

Action

Look back over the past month. What percentage of your best energy and creativity did you use for work, self and life? Or did you do nothing with it at all?

My Current Passion Ratio

Work % _____ Self % _____ Life % _____

2. Pick your ideal split

To be clear, I'm not saying your passion should be divided a third for work, a third for self, and a third for life. And in fact, this won't work unless you have a lifestyle business, or you've decided to kick back professionally.

For some leaders, greatness might be 60% work, 30% self, 10% life. For others it may be 65%, 20%, 15%.

Figure out the weighting that works for you. Ultimately it doesn't matter what you choose – just set a clear intention.

As a leader you will certainly go through brief periods where 90% of your passion is invested at work. This is unavoidable. Just understand it isn't sustainable, and you need to quickly get back to a healthier ratio.

Action

Choose your ideal Passion Ratio. Start with the 'self' category, or you may find only a small percentage of passion left for you.

My Ideal Passion Ratio

Work % _____ Self % _____ Life % _____

3. Choose differently

Knowing your Passion Ratio is only the start, of course. You then need to make different choices about where your energy and creativity are invested.

Action

What do you need to start - or stop doing - to align to your Ideal Passion Ratio? Fill out the Passion Ratio Grid.

PASSION RATIO GRID

	WORK	SELF	LIFE
CURRENT PASSION RATIO			
IDEAL PASSION RATIO			
START OR DO MORE OFTEN			
STOP OR DO LESS OFTEN			

4. Keep tweaking

Having energy and passion for all aspects of your life is a journey. Your Passion Ratio isn't a change you make once in your life, and never think about again.

It requires constant reflection. Are you living your ratio? How does it feel? What needs to change?

Action

Make sure you reflect on your Passion Ratio every time you do your annual and quarterly planning. Always do this in writing, noting your observations, and the tweaks that need to happen.

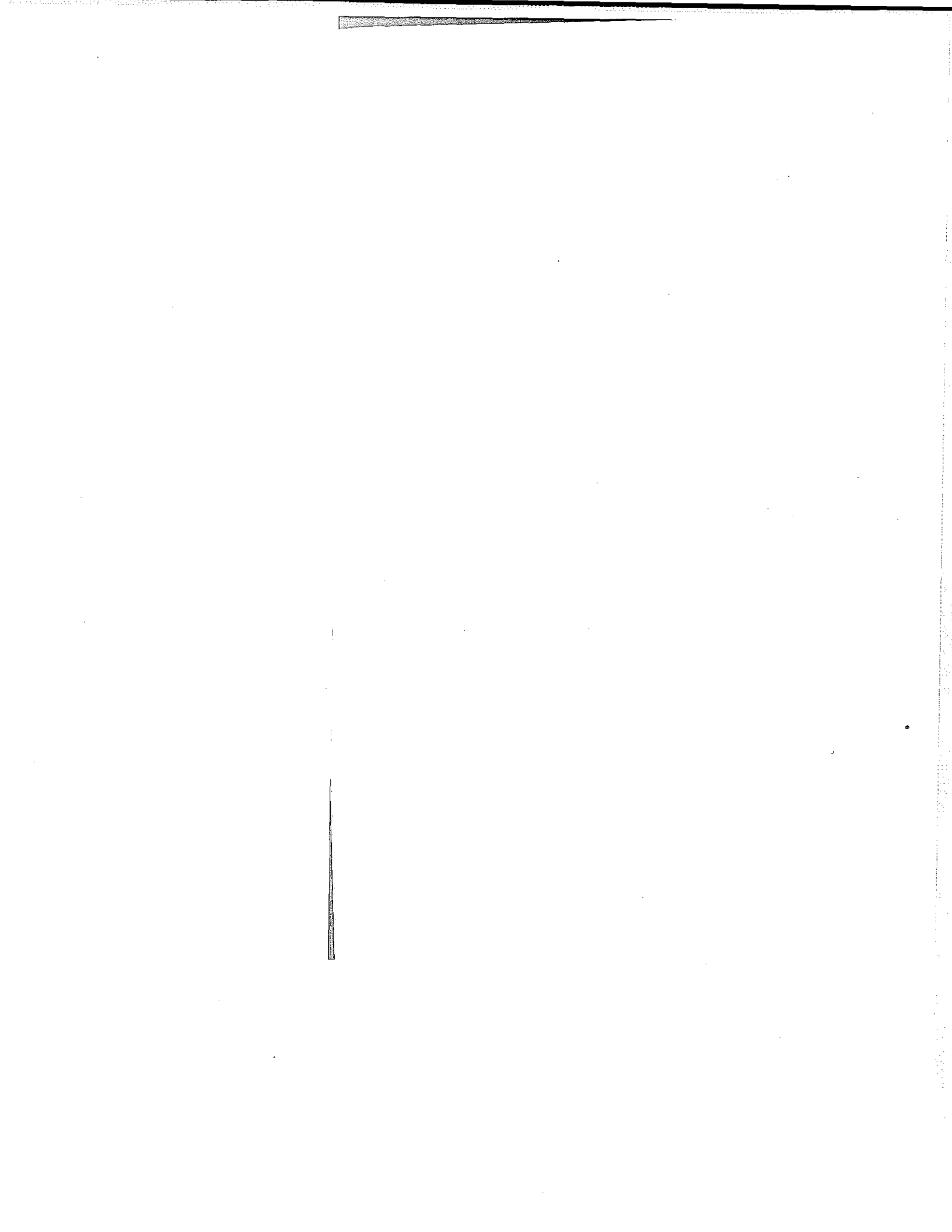
You Need to Work on This if...

1. Your life feels out of control, or you feel guilty about not having 'work-life balance'.
2. Life doesn't feel like you thought it would at your level of success.
3. You don't enjoy life outside of work as much as you'd like.
4. You rarely or never take time just for yourself. Or if you do, you feel guilty about it.
5. You've lost touch with people and causes outside of work you care about.

Gut Check

How adept are you at finding time and energy for all aspects of your life?

On a scale of 0 (low) to 10 (high): _____



3

Double Your Resilience

"A good half of the art of living is resilience."

ALAIN DE BOTTON, Swiss-born British author

You don't expect a thoroughbred racehorse to perform at its peak without proper care, so why expect this of yourself?

Yes, you are the kind of person who loves to push your limits, and take on big challenges. You have more drive, stamina and sheer willpower than most people dream of.

But you still need care and attention to perform at your best, or you will definitely crash and burn.

Whenever I see a leader collapse under the weight of responsibility and success, I know the collapse was both predictable and preventable.

Somewhere along the line that leader stopped doing the things that keep him or her healthy because life got busy. That leader dropped personal well-being to the bottom of the priority list.

With the huge, adventurous life you've chosen, your well-being must come first for you to have the strength to keep going and keep giving. You need to continually replenish your oxygen, your energy and your stamina.

Don't leave this to chance. You need a system for making sure you take care of yourself, even when there are a billion other urgent priorities.

Let me introduce you to the 'Resilience Rituals'. Your Resilience Rituals are your very own, unique combination of body, mind and spirit activities that put you at your very best.



Key Point

When you stay true to your Resilience Rituals, you set yourself up to win, no matter what life throws at you.

Your Resilience Rituals include three essential elements:

1. Things you do to take care of your **body**: going to the gym, yoga, trail running, soccer – whatever works for you.
2. Things you do to take care of your **mind**: activities that help you mentally re-centre. Journaling and meditation are your best options.
3. Things you do to take care of your **spirit**: activities that light you up inside more than anything else. They give you a sense that all your hard work is worth it; that your life has meaning. Only you can know what these are for you, and they may be anything.

Maybe your Resilience Rituals are karate, meditation and sunset walks with your spouse. Or maybe your combo is yoga, journaling and sailing the high seas.

When you commit to your Resilience Rituals, you breathe more deeply. Your worries are quieter. Your mind is at its sharpest. Your creativity is at its peak. And you rebound faster from setbacks.

Hear this: you *cannot* cheat and say, 'Oh running helps me in all three categories, so I'll just run.' Nope. That's a fail, for sure. At your elite level of performance, you need activities that specifically support you in each category.

The key is to know your Resilience Rituals and do them *all the time*. Make them a non-negotiable part of your normal routine, no matter what's happening at work or home.

Sound like a big commitment? Is breathing a big commitment? Your Resilience Rituals are life giving. Energy giving. They create time and space. So do them.

Simple Summary

When your strength and resilience are a priority, you'll have the stamina to give even more.

STORY

I learned the hard lesson of self-sustainability early in life.

I crashed and burned dramatically in the very first year, of my very first post-college job.

At the ripe age of 23, I placed first *and second* in our annual sales competition, winning a three-week trip to Europe. I did so while sitting on two volunteer boards, running several record-setting charity fundraisers, and generally wreaking havoc every weekend as a typical 20-something.

Everyone was in awe. My boss wanted to clone me.

But 12 months in I hit the wall. Hard. It took me more than a year to recover.

For driven people, our greatest strength is also our greatest downfall. Yes, ambition and capacity lead to cash and accolades. But it also makes us blind to our personal needs. It causes us to drive right off a cliff, and wonder how the heck that happened.

On the upside, I was forced to learn a lot about managing the intensity of life. As a result, my career as a coach was born (though my lessons about burnout were only beginning).

Whether you've hit the wall already in your life or not, you need to accept that human beings require care. You are not some magical exception.

Your body, mind and spirit need recharging. Constantly.

ADD/ADHD + LEADERSHIP

ADD and ADHD are incredibly common among leaders of high-growth companies.

And it's no wonder. People with these conditions have attributes well suited to leadership.

The gifts of ADD/ADHD are tons of energy and creativity, and a massive amount of drive. This unstoppable drive also means an even bigger risk than most of crashing and burning – self care is even more critical.

If you're someone with ADD or ADHD, your Resilience Rituals are not to be taken lightly. They are critical to keep you in a balanced, healthy state.

Five Steps to Mastery

1. Know your history

Think about the periods in your life when you felt fantastic and amazingly strong. I don't mean individual moments – I mean ongoing periods of time when you felt inspired, buoyant and invincible. What were you doing to take care of your body, mind and spirit?

Action

Fill out the When I Felt Strongest Grid.

WHEN I FELT STRONGEST GRID

TIME PERIOD	1.	2.	3.
BODY: HOW DID I KEEP MY BODY FEELING ENERGIZED AND/OR STRONG?			
MIND: HOW DID I KEEP MY MIND CLEAR AND/OR FOCUSED?			
SPIRIT: WHAT DID I FIND REWARDING AND/OR INSPIRING?			

2. Deepen your understanding

All three aspects of your Resilience Rituals (body, mind and spirit) are mission critical and interdependent. It's crucial to understand the importance of each one.

Body

A healthy sleep pattern and good nutrition are absolutely fundamental to your physical strength and resilience. But these alone are not nearly enough.

Most leaders spend hours on end sitting in a chair. It's essential to make some form of exercise a major priority to counteract this.

Exercise isn't just about fitness or physical health. It is a crucial way to release stress, change your perspective, and get endorphins surging through your body. You are pretty much guaranteed to feel better when you're active. Now, some people can decide to workout regularly, and do it without fail. Others need structure and support to make it happen.

Many of my clients have trainers for this purpose. A scheduled commitment to a trainer makes sticking to your workouts far easier. A good trainer will push you harder than you would push yourself.

Ultimately, there's no right way to be active. For you, it may be yoga or dance classes. For someone else, it may be a team sport, kickboxing, cycling or swimming.

What matters is that you choose something you enjoy, and that it is a non-negotiable part of your schedule, at least two or three times a week.

Mind

You need a way to calm your active mind, and take control of it. It is meant to support you, not drive you crazy. I can tell you after years of experimentation, there are two options I recommend above all others: journaling and meditation. But if you have another practice that clears and re-centers your mind, by all means go for it. If I'm feeling anxious, stressed or unclear about something, journaling puts me in a completely new headspace. I can go from frenzied to relaxed, or confused to clear, in 15 minutes flat.

I pour all of the seemingly random thoughts bouncing around in my brain onto the page. Pen to paper works magic every single time.

For others, a consistent meditation practice offers the same benefit. But whatever method you choose, you can't be haphazard about it. It can't be a last resort; it needs to be a steady part of your life.

It's absolutely crucial to understand that *you can't use distraction or denial to manage stress over the long term.* Your worried thoughts must somehow be evacuated from your brain, or they will keep recycling endlessly. No matter how you do it, you need to make your mind a tool that you control and direct.

So yes, you may have a calmer mind after your daily run or spin class, and this is helpful, but it is not the same as managing your mind. To be at your best, you need both physical and mental supports.

Spirit

Last, but definitely not least, you need to know what makes your spirit strong.

The best way I can describe this is to say that these are activities that feed you in a way that other things in life do not: things you do simply for the joy of it. Things that light you up inside. Things outside work that inspire and reward you.

Some people need time alone in nature, or quiet contemplation, relaxing on the back porch. Others may have a particular passion for learning about history or philosophy. For you it may be painting, sketching, volunteering, gardening, car racing or climbing the world's tallest peaks.

Action

Fill out the Resilience Ritual Brainstorming grid.