



FIVE NEEDS EVERY LEADER – AKA PERSON – SHOULD EMBRACE TO HELP THEMSELVES AND THEIR ORGANISATIONS TO OUTPERFORM

As a leader, to be and do one's best, to outperform, requires clear and informed thought processes and actions. With this foundation, leaders can minimise unnecessary and damaging costs to themselves, as well as the individuals and organisations for which they share responsibility.

THE NEED FOR TRANSPARENCY

There has been a movement toward transparency since the beginning of the technological advancement in every field. In my point of view, this movement represents the biggest revolution of all. Although technology will continue to bring more openness and transparency in our lives, communities, societies, corporations, and nations, the result may not be something that everyone desires. But we need to empower transparency for ourselves and as a member of society. If we are genuinely honest with ourselves, we can reach our own truths faster.

In the end, transparency will serve all stakeholders, including organisations as a whole; the more they

become transparent, the better and more effectively they will serve their shareholders, customers, and workforce. Unfortunately, all stakeholders do not empower, or believe in, this movement, with the opposite true in many organisations. For example, shareholders are not transparent with management, management is not transparent with employees, and employees are not transparent with management – yet alone with themselves. This non-transparency triggers huge hidden costs from wasted resources, finances, and time for all stakeholders – expenditures that many leadership teams might not be able to evaluate or recognise. But hidden or not, this cost in one that all of society continues to pay.

THE NEED TO UNCOVER POTENTIAL: e.g. UNEMPLOYED vs UNTAPPED

The term that defines the population who do not hold a job – “unemployed” – is very misguided, most likely coined originally by people with an archaic vision of modern economy and society (and, perhaps, explain why there has not been a newer version).



As defined in Investopedia,[1] “unemployment is a phenomenon that occurs when a person who is actively searching for employment is unable to find work. Unemployment is often used as a measure of the health of the economy. The most frequently measure of unemployment is the unemployment rate, which is the number of unemployed people divided by the number of people in the labour force.”

This explanation is, by far, the least insightful definition of unemployment, solely based on a single-minded and irresponsible view of the condition. The majority of people who fall into this category are totally capable individuals with their own convictions, passions, values, and meanings of life. It is just that the organisations (people) that employed them earlier did not know how to extract, or were not at all interested in extracting, the potential of these individuals.

The true term should be “untapped” rather than “unemployed” people. Organisations (people) that are unable or incompetent to tap into the potential of their workforce should be fined (or, perhaps, taxed) or left unemployed until they learn otherwise.

If not, we will continue to pay the cost for the very few who either remain ignorant or purposefully exploit society at large.

THE NEED TO CHOOSE

Margaret Lobenstine’s book[2] deals with the dilemma of wanting to follow multiple passions rather than confining oneself to only one. She contemplates that the people with this characteristic have “Renaissance Souls,” which is a more positive attribute of people who might consider themselves to be confused. Wanting to do many things or be as many persons as one might desire is not a problem. It just might require much more energy, ambition, and will power.

With the majority of people struggling to just find a single passion, I think her real message is that you do not need to limit yourself with one interest. But in the end, you still need to choose and focus on the area in which you shine most brightly. If your passions are multiple, stick with them. But make a choice so you do not go through the rest of your life wondering if you took the right path.



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THE NEED TO ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Being able to focus on whatever you do is probably one of the most critical, but underestimated and undervalued, aptitudes in many people's lives. It is not an easy skill to possess, as it requires discipline and practice. To paint a complete picture of ourselves, we must focus on the right things – be it at a personal or organisational level – by asking the right questions. The wrong questions will only waste time as you attempt to find the irrelevant answers to your challenges, which is one reason why some people or businesses struggle with their core.

Asking the right questions requires deep contextual understanding of what is it that you are trying to do – again, whether at the personal or organisational level – which may be why many organisations (people) are frequently tempted to answer only familiar questions. For example, when companies face with what I call the “efficiency disease” – a chronic inflammatory condition caused by forced price competition while constantly trying to find savings without the deep insights of the overall well-being of the organisation and all its stakeholders – they tend to focus on the easiest way out: cutting tangible costs.

This short-term solution can, and often does, result in a much deeper pain afterwards.

As Dr. John McDougall[3] states, “people love to hear good news about their bad habits.” They easily postpone unfelt pain through quick fixes of relief today, not caring about their future state. When challenged by potential future conditions, they dismiss compassion for the love of today's pleasure. It is this inability that needs to be developed and progressed, so we can improve the condition and well-being of individuals, families, communities, organisations, nations, and the environment.

THE NEED TO ACT

The joke about the person who hopes to win the lotto without actually playing a game has the expected moral of the story: You need to act if you want something to happen. I have met people in all corners of the world and organisation who share the same thought as in the joke, passing the expectation of action to someone else.

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They say they are not accountable for taking action, which requires energy and compassion, at the very least, for oneself.

But without action, one's life may not move forward. To begin, the first ingredient for action is compassion. To have compassion for oneself (and others, if you are a bit more progressive), you need to prepare the groundwork, which begins within the family. If you are fortunate enough to have compassion very early in life, thanks to your family environment, taking action might be much easier. However, not all of us are lucky, growing up in very diverse family scenarios, which delays our capacity for compassion. We also cannot expect everyone to be compassionate; if that were true, our world would be a much different and more advanced place.

The need to act to change things for the better and improve the lives of millions who are stuck in ignorance, or transform the minds of people who purposefully force others to remain in ignorance, is probably the most important mission we all must embark on. That need starts with each and every one of us.

ONE LAST WORD

Leadership – on a personal and organisational level – requires knowledge, clarity, confidence, compassion, courage, humility, and a host of other critical traits. Today's complex and chaotic world requires – or, rather, demands – genuine leaders in order to transform problems into solutions, and questions into answers. Together, sound thinking and action can create a ripple effect to enhance the well-being of every person they touch.

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