



The Yin and Yang of Leadership

Presented for the IABC by

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When asked to give this talk I wondered how to present the issue of leadership to people who help other people communicate. How do we do that when we are often not in position of being the “leader”?

But as communicators, isn't it our job to “lead” people to do the right thing when it comes to communications. To help them express the right kind of messages. To present themselves in a manner appropriate for themselves and their business?

I started thinking about that and in discussion with my business partner, came up with the title for this talk of the “Yin and Yang of Leadership.” Because leadership comes in many forms and is continually changing.

On the one side, there's the image of a leader in front of a crowd, an army, whatever... for me it's the image Mel Gibson shouting at a horde of blue faced men “Do you want to be free” and they throw themselves into battle behind him. That's the Yang kind of leader. Frequently based on personality and charisma. There's some kind of higher cause to be followed.

In organizations we seldom have that driving force and need another form of leadership, the Yin. This style of leadership is based on presence, persuasion. It's more a process of “herding” than leading a charge. It's an adaptive process of keeping a team on a path and moving forward while dealing with obstacles and changes in your environment.

How does one do that and do it well?

Leadership is a Dance



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I like to think of leadership in terms of the dance...

One person leads ...

The other person must be aware of the basics of the dance

Understand the rhythm of the music and the meaning of the dance

Know what kind of steps to expect

Even though one person leads, it's really a partnership.

Each dancer must respect the others space

Must be aware of subtle signals that lead to a change of direction or avoiding other dancers

Most of all the "partner" has to learn to trust the leader... especially when it comes to the lifts and dips!

Framework

- Members of a chapter of a larger organization
- Issues of leadership on a local level
- Integrating that within the context of a larger organization



Similar to being a business unit within a corporation... need to energize a local team and stay in step with the larger organization.

Key Traits of Leadership

- Vision
- Articulation
- Action Plans
- Accountability
- Presence
- Emotional Intelligence
- Communication
- Humanity



My philosophy of leadership ... gleaned from books, listening to other speakers and my own experience.

Reflects our approach to building a brand – because a brand can provide the leadership, the focus, and the “cause” to energize an organization.

A Leader has Vision

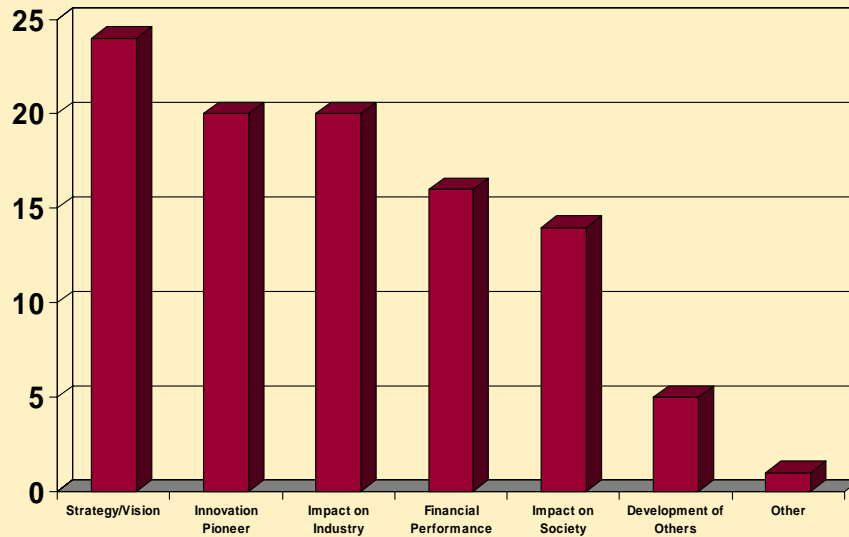
- Sees the big picture
- Sets direction and purpose
- Inspires people to want to achieve it
- Reflect the unique strengths, culture, values, beliefs of the organization
- Encourages people feel like they are part of something special



It is about being able to both see the bigger picture and make decisions under fire – to “get out on the balcony so you can see the dance floor”

Classic vision statement: John F. Kennedy Send a man to the moon by the end of the decade and bring him back.

Reasons Cited for Greatness



From a Book, *In Their Time*, about a large number of business leaders from each decade of the 20th century. Response to a survey question: “*What makes a business leader great?*”

A Leader Articulates that Vision

- If you are going to lead – you need to tell people where you are going.
- Otherwise you might find yourself out in front, alone!
- Or you might find that the herd has scattered.



Case study:

J. Peterman company – catalog sales. Founder knew what specific qualities were required in each garment or accessory they sold for it to be successful. It had to be unique and authentic. It has to have a romantic and wondrous aura to it that inspired a journey. And above all it had to have excellent quality. The company became an icon – was parodied on “*Seinfeld*”.

What happened to them? They went out of business. Their merchandise starting losing the six qualities required for success. It no longer lived up to the dream, the journey, the quality.

Why? J. Peterman knew what defined the vision of the company. He never formalized it. Never wrote it down. When the company was small, the founder worked side by side with each new employee imparting his vision to them one on one. As the company grew, however, he could not continue to work with each new employee one on one. The vision was lost.

Case Study

All the thinking about the brand, the niche, the target market -- it was intuitive for a very long time. I wish now that we'd written down our ideas, our concept - in detail - at the start. ... Failing to make sure that everyone knows what you stand for and why -- that can come right back and ambush you much sooner than you realize.

John Peterman,
The Rise and Fall of the J Peterman Co,
Harvard Business Review
Sept-Oct 1999.



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The Rise and Fall of the J. Peterman Company
By John Peterman
Harvard Business Review, Reprint 99507

Storytelling Catalog

- Call to Action
- Communication Who You Are
- Communicating Who the Company is – Branding
- Transmitting Values
- Fostering Collaboration
- Taming the Grapevine
- Sharing Knowledge
- Leading People into the Future



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Leadership Through Storytelling, Stephen Denning

The best way to communicate the vision is to create a story about it, a “legend”. Makes an emotional connection with your audience. Makes it personal. Stories can be used in many ways depending on your vision and your mission.

Sparking Action: Leadership is, above all, about getting people to change

Communication Who You Are: For people to trust you, they have to know you. Who you are, where you’ve come from, and why you hold the views you do.

Communicating Who the Company is – Branding -- Once you have settled on the brand promise and made sure that the organization can deliver on it, communicating that to customers is most effectively done by the customers’ word of mouth.

Transmitting Values: Stories can be effective tools for ingraining values within an organization

Fostering Collaboration: Generate a common narrative around a group’s concerns and goals, beginning with a story told by one member of the group, then another, which sparks another. Group members develop a shared perspective, one that enables a sense of community to emerge naturally.

Taming the Grapevine: Harness the energy of the grapevine to defuse the rumor, to spread the story

Sharing Knowledge: Much of the intellectual capital of an organization is not written down anywhere but resides in the minds of the staff. Communicating this know-how across an organization and beyond typically occurs informally, through the sharing of stories

Leading People into the Future: An important part of a leader’s job is preparing others for what lies ahead, whether in the concrete terms of an actual scenario or the more conceptual terms of a vision.

Builds Action Plans

- Specific Deliverables
- Priorities
- Challenges
- Adjustments
- Rewards



Worked at large corporation leading team on corp web site redesign and rename

We had a specific **deliverable**: a date on which the new web site had to be “live”

From the beginning we developed a set of **priorities** of what was most important to be included when the new site first went on line. These lived on a white board in the developers office.

And there were **challenges**...

1. Time pressure – a date the new name would be announced.
2. It was a technology company that had invented parts of the internet, the technologists and researches knew how to build web sites, and did, and didn't want anyone telling them how to do it.
3. It was a company with diverse business units in “silos” i.e., they didn't talk to each other and somehow we, the web team, had to make all of the disparate information hang together.

How we dealt with **challenges** – assigned specific people to particular issues. Tracked them closely.

We were constantly making **adjustments**... what information was available? Where could we get it? If something was missing what could we substitute? As time started running out, what were the critical priorities and what could we drop?

That list on the white board changed and morphed, daily, toward the end of the project. For everything that got done and erased, two or three new things crept on to the list. At least that's what they accused me of. But by this point this “herd” was moving down the same path, in the same direction, anxious to complete the task.

The **rewards**? Sometimes just a pizza dinner at the end of a long week, or long day. Mostly the appreciation for a job well done ... frequently expressed.

Resonant leaders

- Amplify their abilities by “resonating” with their team.
- Blend financial, human, intellectual, environmental, and social capital into a potent recipe for effective performance in organizations.
- In other words, in addition to being great to work with, they get *results*.



Richard Boyatzis, Annie McKee, Resonant Leadership, Harvard Business School Press

Holds People Accountable

- Clearly define achievable goals
- Get team members buy in
- Monitor progress
- Hold yourself to same standard



Case study: working with a team to deliver on a tight deadline.

Everybody on the team had assignments, deliverables with deadlines.

One member of the team repeatedly misses deadlines; delivers less than the others; has an level of activity significantly less than the rest of the team. The other members of the team are becoming annoyed. See themselves giving 120% effort and someone else getting by with 60% effort.

I get word of this through the grapevine. What do I do?

I monitor this person for a few days. Talk to him about his performance. Tried to find out if there were mitigating circumstances.

There weren't. Continued to monitor. Nothing changed. I learned how little he was contributing.

In this situation, I couldn't afford to let one person destroy team unity. I let him go.

Don't always have to fire a person, but have to take steps to remedy a situation. Deal with performance problems. Address communication issues. Clarify goals. But you must deal with it. The longer you let it go, the more detrimental to the team. One bad apple really can spoil the basket.

Personality Versus Presence

- Personality: charisma and traits of the individual personality
- Presence: one's capacity to be fully present, comprehend what is happening, hold steady in the field of action, and make choices regarding when and how to intervene



Presence ... the ability to see the big picture (the Vision); articulate it; put action plans in place to make it happen;

Emotional Intelligence

Personal Competence

Self Awareness

Self Management

Social Competence

Social Awareness

Relationship Management



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One of the things that distinguished good leaders (managers) is their level of Emotional Intelligence.

Personal Competence: These capabilities determine how we manage ourselves.

Self-awareness is about knowing our own emotions, strengths and limits, capabilities

Self-management is about how we behave --

Emotional self-control; honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness

Are we Adaptable in changing situations or overcoming obstacles. Do we take Initiative

What are our standards of excellence

Social competence: These capabilities determine how we manage relationships

Social Awareness

Empathy and sensitivity to other people

Organizational Awareness: Reading the currents, decision networks, and politics at the organizational level

Relationship management

Influence: using a range of tactics for persuasion

Developing others: Bolstering others' abilities through feedback and guidance

Conflict management: Resolving disagreements

Building bonds: Cultivation and maintaining a web of relationships

Teamwork and Collaboration: Fostering cooperation and team building

Understand Your Limitations

- Surround yourself with people who enhance your capability to get things done.
- Delegate appropriately
- Don't try to control the minutia



The Self Awareness/Management side

Contextual Intelligence

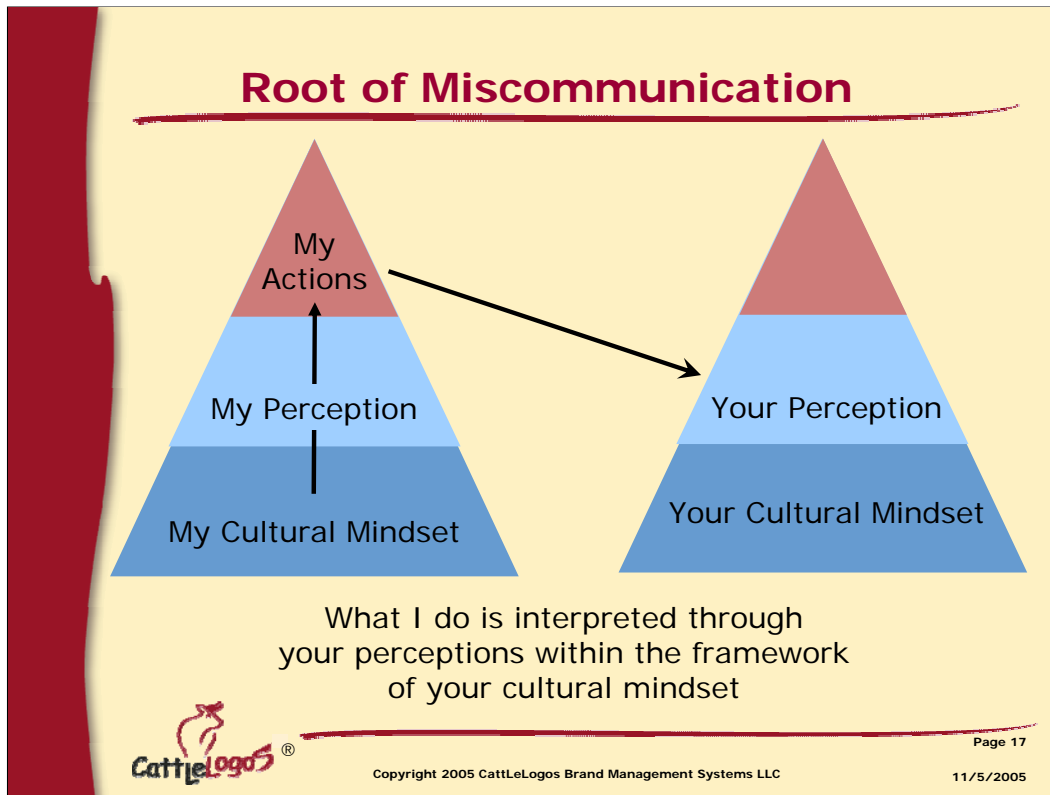
- CONTENT is specifics. Details. Features. Benefits. It's what's said.
- CONTEXT is more nebulous. It's what's assumed. Each of us perceives and interprets content relative to our own context.



The Social awareness side.

CONTENT is relatively easy to control.

CONTEXT is elusive, hard to control.



Easy to understand this if you think of cross culture situation – for example a Japanese person and an American person. The differences in communication style are easier to see. Difficulties can be expected because of the language and cultural difference.

But it's also true of "You" and "Me" whoever we are, even if we have the same native language. The differences are more subtle. They are more dangerous because we "assume" they aren't there.

Listen to Your Team

- Do not assume that communication is successful
- Understand that people have different communication styles



Just because you've sent me an e-mail doesn't mean we've communicated. I may not have read it, I was out of the office for an afternoon and had 121 e-mails when I returned. Do you think I really read every one of them?

If I did read it, I may not understand, "Hmm. Let me think about that and I'll respond later."

OR

I may not agree with it! And just haven't responded yet.

Same for Voice mail.

Even face to face ... There was a phrase we learned in one of our many "Leadership through Quality" training sessions at Xerox... "Test for understanding". Are we using the same language? Even so does it convey the same meaning to both of us.

When I was at Hunt Manufacturing, we were designing a "cart" to be used with a piece of equipment we sold. Our UK office couldn't understand what we were talking about? Until they realized (or realised) that when we said "cart", we mean "trolley" in UK English. A "cart" in the UK is a horse drawn wagon. We are indeed two countries separated by a common language.

Jungian Mental Processes

- Gathering Information
 - Possibilities
 - Central Theme
 - Immediate environment
 - Experience
- Making Decisions
 - Feelings of Others
 - Aligns with Personal Values
 - Logical, orderly and clear
 - Precise, accurate and fair



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In addition to knowing and managing themselves well, emotionally intelligent leaders understand that there are multiple modes of communications. Jung said that once we understand and accept our natural preferences for communication, we can learn to get along better with others by understanding different communication styles.

Four processes for gathering information

- My partner Jane sees all the possible options for approaching any issue. She also sees all the risks. Sometimes she gets lost in all those possibilities. Has trouble getting started.
- I, on the other hand, look for the central theme – it gives me a clear focus. I move quickly that direction. It also can give me tunnel vision and I miss opportunities (or risks) on the periphery.
- We have learned that I have to help her sort out which possibility to follow. She has to help me see alternatives. Until we learned that, there was frequent butting of heads.

Similarly, there are four processes for making decisions.

Teams that include people representing all these different mental process, and respect each person's contribution, can be extremely effective.

For more information on communication styles using the 8 function model visit: www.thescgroup.net

Key Traits of Leadership

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Each of these has a component of Yin and of Yang. It's a balance. It's a dance.

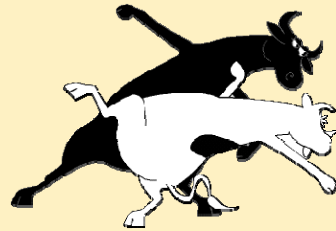
One person leads ... the others follow. But remember it's really a partnership.

Each dancer must respect the others space, be aware of subtle signals that lead to a change of direction or avoiding other dancers.

Most of all the "partner" has to learn to trust the leader...

What is Leadership

- Great leaders face the uncertainty of today's world with hope: they inspire through clarity of vision, optimism, and a profound belief in their, and their people's, ability to turn dreams into reality.



Vision
Optimism
Confidence
Humanity

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