Leadership That Gets Results

by Daniel Goleman

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New research suggests that the most effective executives use a collection of distinct leadership styles – each in the right measure, at just the right time. Such flexibility is tough to put into action, but it pays off in performance. And better yet, it can be learned.

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ASK ANY GROUP of businesspeople the question "What do effective leaders do?" and you'll hear a sweep of answers. Leaders set strategy; they motivate; they create a mission; they build a culture. Then ask "What *should* leaders do?" If the group is seasoned, you'll likely hear one response: the leader's singular job is to get results.

But how? 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 executives, all in pursuit of creating businesspeople who can turn bold objectives – be they strategic, financial, organizational, or all three – into reality.

Still, effective leadership eludes many people and organizations. One reason is that until recently, virtually no quantitative research has demonstrated which precise leadership behaviors yield positive results. Leadership experts proffer advice based on inference, experience, and instinct. Sometimes that advice is right on target; sometimes it's not.

But new research by the consulting firm Hay/McBer, which draws on a random sample of 3,871 executives selected from a database of more than 20,000 executives worldwide, takes much of the mystery out of effective leadership. The research found six distinct leadership styles, each springing from different components of emotional intelligence. The styles, taken individually, appear to have a direct and unique impact on the working atmosphere of a company, division, or team, and in turn, on its financial performance. And perhaps most important, the research indicates that leaders with the best results 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

ARTWORK BY C. F. PAYNE

Emotional Intelligence: A Primer

Emotional intelligence – the ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively – consists of four fundamental capabilities: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skill. Each capability, in turn, is composed of specific sets of competencies. Below is a list of the capabilities and their corresponding traits.

Self-Awareness

- *Emotional self-awareness:* the ability to read and understand your emotions as well as recognize their impact on work performance, relationships, and the like.
- *Accurate self-assessment:* a realistic evaluation of your strengths and limitations.
- *Self-confidence:* a strong and positive sense of self-worth.

Self-Management

- *Self-control:* the ability to keep disruptive emotions and impulses under control.
- *Trustworthiness:* a consistent display of honesty and integrity.
- *Conscientiousness:* the ability to manage yourself and your responsibilities.
- *Adaptability:* skill at adjusting to changing situations and overcoming obstacles.
- *Achievement orientation:* the drive to meet an internal standard of excellence.
- *Initiative:* a readiness to seize opportunities.

Social Awareness

- *Empathy:* skill at sensing other people's emotions, understanding their perspective, and taking an active interest in their concerns.
- *Organizational awareness:* the ability to read the currents of organizational life, build decision networks, and navigate politics.
- *Service orientation:* the ability to recognize and meet customers' needs.

Social Skill

- *Visionary leadership:* the ability to take charge and inspire with a compelling vision.
- *Influence:* the ability to wield a range of persuasive tactics.
- *Developing others:* the propensity to bolster the abilities of others through feedback and guidance.
- *Communication:* skill at listening and at sending clear, convincing, and well-tuned messages.
- *Change catalyst:* proficiency in initiating new ideas and leading people in a new direction.
- *Conflict management:* the ability to de-escalate disagreements and orchestrate resolutions.
- *Building bonds:* proficiency at cultivating and maintaining a web of relationships.
- *Teamwork and collaboration:* competence at promoting cooperation and building teams.

business situation. Imagine the styles, then, as the array of clubs in a golf pro's bag. Over the course of a game, the pro picks and chooses clubs based on the demands of the shot. Sometimes he has to ponder his selection, but usually it is automatic. The pro senses the challenge ahead, swiftly pulls out the right tool, and elegantly puts it to work. That's how high-impact leaders operate, too.

What are the six styles of leadership? None will shock workplace veterans. Indeed, each style, by name and brief description alone, will likely resonate with anyone who leads, is led, or as is the case with most of us, does both. *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. *Pacesetting leaders* expect excellence and self-direction. And *coaching leaders* develop people for the future.

Close your eyes and you can surely imagine a colleague who uses any one of these styles. You most likely use at least one yourself. What is new in this research, then, is its implications for action. First, it offers a fine-grained understanding of how different leadership styles affect performance and results. Second, it offers clear guidance on when a manager should switch between them. It also strongly suggests that switching flexibly is well advised. New, too, is the research's finding that each leadership style springs from different components of emotional intelligence.

Measuring Leadership's Impact

It has been more than a decade since research first linked aspects of emotional intelligence to business results. The late David McClelland, a noted Harvard University psychologist, found that leaders with strengths in a critical mass of six or more emotional intelligence competencies were far more effective than peers who lacked such strengths. For

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instance, when he analyzed the performance of division heads at a global food and beverage company, he found that among leaders with this critical mass of competence, 87% placed in the top third for annual salary bonuses based on their business performance. More telling, their divisions on average outperformed yearly revenue targets by 15% to 20%. Those executives who lacked emotional intelligence were rarely rated as outstanding in their annual performance reviews, and their divisions underperformed by an average of almost 20%.

Our research set out to gain a more molecular view of the links among leadership and emotional intelligence, and climate and performance. A team of McClelland's colleagues headed by Mary Fontaine and Ruth Jacobs from Hay/McBer studied data about or observed thousands of executives, noting specific behaviors and their impact on climate.[1] How did each individual motivate direct reports? Manage change initiatives? Handle crises? It was in a later phase of the research that we identified which emotional intelligence capabilities drive the six leadership styles. How does he rate in terms of self-control and social skill? Does a leader show high or low levels of empathy?

The team tested each executive's immediate sphere of influence for its climate. "Climate" is not an amorphous term. First defined by psychologists George Litwin and Richard Stringer and later refined by McClelland and his colleagues, it refers to six key factors that influence an organization's working environment: its *flexibility* – that is, how free employees feel to innovate unencumbered by red tape; their sense of *responsibility* to the organization; the level of *standards* that people set; the sense of accuracy about performance feedback and aptness of *rewards*; the *clarity* people have about mission and values; and finally, the level of *commitment* to a common purpose.

We found that all six leadership styles have a measurable effect on each aspect of climate. (For details, see the exhibit "Getting Molecular: The Impact of Leadership Styles on Drivers of Climate.") Further, when we looked at the impact of climate on financial results – such as return on sales, revenue growth, efficiency, and profitability – we found a direct correlation between the two. Leaders who used styles that positively affected the climate had decidedly better financial results than those who did not. That is not to say that organizational climate is the only driver of performance. Economic conditions

Getting Molecular: The Impact of Leadership Styles on Drivers of Climate

Our research investigated how each leadership style affected the six drivers of climate, or working atmosphere. The figures below show the correlation between each leadership style and each aspect of climate. So, for instance, if we look at the climate driver of flexibility, we see that the coercive style has a -.28 correlation while the democratic style has a .28 correlation, equally strong in the opposite direction. Focusing on the authoritative leadership style, we find that it has a .54 correlation with rewards – strongly positive – and a .21 correlation with responsibility – positive, but not as strong. In other words, the style's correlation with rewards was more than twice that with responsibility.

According to the data, the authoritative leadership style has the most positive effect on climate, but three others – affiliative, democratic, and coaching – follow close behind. That said, the research indicates that no style should be relied on exclusively, and all have at least short-term uses.

	Coercive	Authoritative	Affiliative	Democratic	Pacesetting	Coaching
Flexibility	-.28	.32	.27	.28	-.07	.17
Responsibility	-.37	.21	.16	.23	.04	.08
Standards	.02	.38	.31	.22	-.27	.39
Rewards	-.18	.54	.48	.42	-.29	.43
Clarity	-.11	.44	.37	.35	-.28	.38
Commitment	-.13	.35	.34	.26	-.20	.27
Overall impact on climate	**-.26**	**.54**	**.46**	**.43**	**-.25**	**.42**

The Six Leadership Styles at a Glance

Our research found that leaders use six styles, each springing from different components of emotional intelligence. Here is a summary of the styles, their origin, when they work best, and their impact on an organization's climate and thus its performance.

	Coercive	Authoritative
The leader's modus operandi	Demands immediate compliance	Mobilizes people toward a vision
The style in a phrase	"Do what I tell you."	"Come with me."
Underlying emotional intelligence competencies	Drive to achieve, initiative, self-control	Self-confidence, empathy, change catalyst
When the style works best	In a crisis, to kick start a turnaround, or with problem employees	When changes require a new vision, or when a clear direction is needed
Overall impact on climate	Negative	Most strongly positive

and competitive dynamics matter enormously. But our analysis strongly suggests that climate accounts for nearly a third of results. And that's simply too much of an impact to ignore.

The Styles in Detail

Executives use six leadership styles, but only four of the six consistently have a positive effect on climate and results. Let's look then at each style of leadership in detail. (For a summary of the material that follows, see the chart "The Six Leadership Styles at a Glance.")

The Coercive Style. The computer company was in crisis mode – its sales and profits were falling, its stock was losing value precipitously, and its shareholders were in an uproar. The board brought in a new CEO with a reputation as a turnaround artist. He set to work chopping jobs, selling off divisions, and making the tough decisions that should have been executed years before. The company was saved, at least in the short-term.

From the start, though, the CEO created a reign of terror, bullying and demeaning his executives, roaring his displeasure at the slightest misstep. The company's top echelons were decimated not just by his erratic firings but also by defections. The CEO's direct reports, frightened by his tendency to blame the bearer of bad news, stopped bringing him any news at all. Morale was at an all-time low – a fact reflected in another downturn in the business after the short-term recovery. The CEO was eventually fired by the board of directors.

It's easy to understand why of all the leadership styles, the coercive one is the least effective in most situations. Consider what the style does to an organization's climate. Flexibility is the hardest hit. The leader's extreme top-down decision making kills new ideas on the vine. People feel so disrespected that they think, "I won't even bring my ideas up – they'll only be shot down." Likewise, people's sense of responsibility evaporates: unable to act on their own initiative, they lose their sense of ownership and feel little accountability for their performance. Some become so resentful they adopt the attitude, "I'm not going to help this bastard."

Coercive leadership also has a damaging effect on the rewards system. Most high-performing workers are motivated by more than money – they seek the satisfaction of work well done. The coercive style erodes such pride. And finally, the style undermines one of the leader's prime tools – motivating people by showing them how their job fits into a grand, shared mission. Such a loss, measured in terms of diminished clarity and commitment, leaves people alienated from their own jobs, wondering, "How does any of this matter?"

Given the impact of the coercive style, you might assume it should never be applied. Our research, however, uncovered a few occasions when it worked masterfully. Take the case of a division president who was brought in to change the direction of a food company that was losing money. His first act was to have the executive conference room demolished. To him, the room – with its long marble table that looked like "the deck of the Starship Enterprise" – symbolized the tradition-bound formality that was paralyzing the company. The destruction of the room, and the subsequent move to a smaller, more informal setting, sent a message no one could

Affiliative	Democratic	Pacesetting	Coaching
Creates harmony and builds emotional bonds	Forges consensus through participation	Sets high standards for performance	Develops people for the future
"People come first."	"What do you think?"	"Do as I do, now."	"Try this."
Empathy, building relationships, communication	Collaboration, team leadership, communication	Conscientiousness, drive to achieve, initiative	Developing others, empathy, self-awareness
To heal rifts in a team or to motivate people during stressful circumstances	To build buy-in or consensus, or to get input from valuable employees	To get quick results from a highly motivated and competent team	To help an employee improve performance or develop long-term strengths
Positive	Positive	Negative	Positive

miss, and the division's culture changed quickly in its wake.

That said, the coercive style should be used only with extreme caution and in the few situations when it is absolutely imperative, such as during a turnaround or when a hostile takeover is looming. In those cases, the coercive style can break failed business habits and shock people into new ways of working. It is always appropriate during a genuine emergency, like in the aftermath of an earthquake or a fire. And it can work with problem employees with whom all else has failed. But if a leader relies solely on this style or continues to use it once the emergency passes, the long-term impact of his insensitivity to the morale and feelings of those he leads will be ruinous.

The Authoritative Style. Tom was the vice president of marketing at a floundering national restaurant chain that specialized in pizza. Needless to say, the company's poor performance troubled the senior managers, but they were at a loss for what to do. Every Monday, they met to review recent sales, struggling to come up with fixes. To Tom, the approach didn't make sense. "We were always trying to figure out why our sales were down last week. We had the whole company looking backward instead of figuring out what we had to do tomorrow."

Tom saw an opportunity to change people's way of thinking at an off-site strategy meeting. There, the conversation began with stale truisms: the company had to drive up shareholder wealth and increase return on assets. Tom believed those concepts didn't have the power to inspire a restaurant manager to be innovative or to do better than a good-enough job.

So Tom made a bold move. In the middle of a meeting, he made an impassioned plea for his colleagues to think from the customer's perspective. Customers want convenience, he said. The company was not in the restaurant business, it was in the business of distributing high-quality, convenient-to-get pizza. That notion – and nothing else – should drive everything the company did.

With his vibrant enthusiasm and clear vision – the hallmarks of the authoritative style – Tom filled a leadership vacuum at the company. Indeed, his concept became the core of the new mission statement. But this conceptual breakthrough was just the beginning. Tom made sure that the mission statement was built into the company's strategic planning process as the designated driver of growth. And he ensured that the vision was articulated so that local restaurant managers understood they were the key to the company's success and were free to find new ways to distribute pizza.

Changes came quickly. Within weeks, many local managers started guaranteeing fast, new delivery times. Even better, they started to act like entrepreneurs, finding ingenious locations to open new branches: kiosks on busy street corners and in bus and train stations, even from carts in airports and hotel lobbies.

Tom's success was no fluke. Our research indicates that of the six leadership styles, the authoritative one is most effective, driving up every aspect of climate. Take clarity. 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.

Authoritative leadership also maximizes commitment to the organization's goals and strategy. By framing the individual tasks within a grand vision, the authoritative leader defines standards that revolve around that vision. When he gives performance feedback – whether positive or negative – the singular criterion is whether or not that performance furthers the vision. The standards for success are clear to all, as are the rewards. Finally, consider the style's impact on flexibility. 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.

Because of its positive impact, the authoritative style works well in almost any business situation. But it is particularly effective when a business is adrift. An authoritative leader charts a new course and sells his people on a fresh long-term vision.

The authoritative style, powerful though it may be, will not work in every situation. The approach fails, for instance, 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: if a manager trying to be authoritative becomes overbearing, he can undermine the egalitarian spirit of an effective team. Yet even with such caveats, leaders would be wise to grab for the authoritative "club" more often than not. It may not guarantee a hole in one, but it certainly helps with the long drive.

The Affiliative Style. If the coercive leader demands, "Do what I say," and the authoritative urges, "Come with me," the affiliative leader says, "People come first." This leadership style revolves around people – its proponents value individuals and their emotions more than tasks and goals. The affiliative leader strives to keep employees happy and to create harmony among them. He manages by building strong emotional bonds and then reaping the benefits of such an approach, namely fierce loyalty. The style also has a markedly positive effect on communication. People who like one another a lot talk a lot. They share ideas; they share inspiration. And the style drives up flexibility; friends trust one another, allowing habitual innovation and risk taking. Flexibility also rises because the affiliative leader, like a parent who adjusts household rules for a maturing adolescent, doesn't impose unnecessary strictures on how employees get their work done. They give people the freedom to do their job in the way they think is most effective.

> An authoritative leader states the end but gives people plenty of leeway to devise their own means.

As for a sense of recognition and reward for work well done, the affiliative leader offers ample positive feedback. Such feedback has special potency in the workplace because it is all too rare: outside of an annual review, most people usually get no feedback on their day-to-day efforts – or only negative feedback. That makes the affiliative leader's positive words all the more motivating. Finally, affiliative leaders are masters at building a sense of belonging. They are, for instance, likely to take their direct reports out for a meal or a drink, one-on-one, to see how they're doing. They will bring in a cake to celebrate a group accomplishment. They are natural relationship builders.

Joe Torre, the heart and soul of the New York Yankees, is a classic affiliative leader. During the 1999 World Series, Torre tended ably to the psyches of his players as they endured the emotional pressure cooker of a pennant race. All season long, he made a special point to praise Scott Brosius, whose father had died during the season, for staying committed even as he mourned. At the celebration party after the team's final game, Torre specifically sought out right fielder Paul O'Neill. Although he had received the news of his father's death that morning, O'Neill chose to play in the decisive game – and he burst into tears the moment it ended. Torre made a point of acknowledging O'Neill's personal struggle, calling him a "warrior." Torre also used the spotlight of the victory celebration to praise two players whose return the following year was threatened by contract disputes. In doing so, he sent a clear message to the team and to the club's owner that he valued the players immensely – too much to lose them.

Along with ministering to the emotions of his people, an affiliative leader may also tend to his own emotions openly. The year Torre's brother was near death awaiting a heart transplant, he shared his worries with his players. He also spoke candidly with the team about his treatment for prostate cancer.

The affiliative style's generally positive impact makes it a good all-weather approach, but leaders should employ it particularly when trying to build team harmony, increase morale, improve communication, or repair broken trust. For instance, one executive in our study was hired to replace a ruth-less team leader. The former leader had taken credit for his employees' work and had attempted to pit them against one another. His efforts ultimately failed, but the team he left behind was suspicious and weary. The new executive managed to mend the situation by unstintingly showing emotional honesty and rebuilding ties. Several months in, her leadership had created a renewed sense of commitment and energy.

Despite its benefits, the affiliative style should not be used alone. Its exclusive focus on praise can allow poor performance to go uncorrected; employees may perceive that mediocrity is tolerated. And because affiliative leaders rarely offer constructive advice on how to improve, employees must figure out how to do so on their own. When people need clear directives to navigate through complex challenges, the affiliative style leaves them rudderless. Indeed, if overly relied on, this style can actually steer a group to failure. Perhaps that is why many affiliative leaders, including Torre, use this style in close conjunction with the authoritative style. Authoritative leaders state a vision, set standards, and let people know how their work is furthering the group's goals. Alternate that with the caring, nurturing approach of the affiliative leader, and you have a potent combination.

The Democratic Style. Sister Mary ran a Catholic school system in a large metropolitan area. One of the schools – the only private school in an impoverished neighborhood – had been losing money for years, and the archdiocese could no longer afford to keep it open. When Sister Mary eventually got the order to shut it down, she didn't just lock the doors. She called a meeting of all the teachers and staff at the school and explained to them the details of the financial crisis – the first time anyone working at the school had been included in the business side of the institution. She asked for their ideas on ways to keep the school open and on how to handle the closing, should it come to that. Sister Mary spent much of her time at the meeting just listening.

She did the same at later meetings for school parents and for the community and during a successive series of meetings for the school's teachers and staff. After two months of meetings, the consensus was clear: the school would have to close. A plan was made to transfer students to other schools in the Catholic system.

The final outcome was no different than if Sister Mary had gone ahead and closed the school the day she was told to. But by allowing the school's constituents to reach that decision collectively, Sister Mary received none of the backlash that would have accompanied such a move. People mourned the loss of the school, but they understood its inevitability. Virtually no one objected.

Compare that with the experiences of a priest in our research who headed another Catholic school. He, too, was told to shut it down. And he did – by fiat. The result was disastrous: parents filed lawsuits, teachers and parents picketed, and local newspapers ran editorials attacking his decision. It took a year to resolve the disputes before he could finally go ahead and close the school.

Sister Mary exemplifies the democratic style in action – and its benefits. By spending time getting people's ideas and buy-in, a leader builds trust, respect, and commitment. By letting workers themselves have a say in decisions that affect their goals and how they do their work, the democratic leader drives up flexibility and responsibility. And by listening to employees' concerns, the democratic leader learns what to do to keep morale high. Finally, because they have a say in setting their goals and the standards for evaluating success, people operating in a democratic system tend to be very realistic about what can and cannot be accomplished.

However, the democratic style has its drawbacks, which is why its impact on climate is not as high as some of the other styles. One of its more exasperating consequences can be endless meetings where ideas are mulled over, consensus remains elusive, and the only visible result is scheduling more meetings. Some democratic leaders use the style to put off making crucial decisions, hoping that enough thrashing things out will eventually yield a blinding insight. In reality, their people end up feeling confused and leaderless. Such an approach can even escalate conflicts.

When does the style work best? This approach is ideal when a leader is himself uncertain about the best direction to take and needs ideas and guidance from able employees. And even if a leader has a strong vision, the democratic style works well to generate fresh ideas for executing that vision.

The democratic style, of course, makes much less sense when employees are not competent or informed enough to offer sound advice. And it almost goes without saying that building consensus is wrongheaded in times of crisis. Take the case of a CEO whose computer company was severely threatened by changes in the market. He always sought consensus about what to do. As competitors stole customers and customers' needs changed, he kept appointing committees to consider the situation. When the market made a sudden shift because of a new technology, the CEO froze in his tracks. The board replaced him before he could appoint yet another task force to consider the situation. The new CEO, while occasionally democratic and affiliative, relied heavily on the authoritative style, especially in his first months.

The Pacesetting Style. Like the coercive style, the pacesetting style has its place in the leader's repertory, but it should be used sparingly. That's not what we expected to find. After all, the hallmarks of the pacesetting style sound admirable. The leader sets extremely 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. You would think such an approach would improve results, but it doesn't.

In fact, the pacesetting style destroys climate. 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. Flexibility and responsibility evaporate; work becomes so task focused and routinized it's boring.

As for rewards, the pacesetter either gives no feedback on how people are doing or jumps in to take over when he thinks they're lagging. And if the leader should leave, people feel directionless – they're so used to "the expert" setting the rules. Finally, commitment dwindles under the regime of a pacesetting leader because people have no sense of how their personal efforts fit into the big picture.

For an example of the pacesetting style, take the case of Sam, a biochemist in R&D at a large pharmaceutical company. Sam's superb technical expertise made him an early star: he was the one everyone turned to when they needed help. Soon he was promoted to head of a team developing a new product. The other scientists on the team were as competent and self-motivated as Sam; his métier as team leader became offering himself as a model of how to do first-class scientific work under tremendous deadline pressure, pitching in when needed. His team completed its task in record time.

But then came a new assignment: Sam was put in charge of R&D for his entire division. As his tasks expanded and he had to articulate a vision, coordinate projects, delegate responsibility, and help develop others, Sam began to slip. Not trusting that his subordinates were as capable as he was, he became a micromanager, obsessed with details and taking over for others when their performance slackened. Instead of trusting them to improve with guidance and development, Sam found himself working nights and weekends after stepping in to take over for the head of a floundering research team. Finally, his own boss suggested, to his relief, that he return to his old job as head of a product development team.

Although Sam faltered, 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 – for example, it can work for leaders of highly skilled and self-motivated professionals, like R&D groups or legal teams. And, given a talented team to lead, pacesetting does exactly that: gets work done on time or even ahead of schedule. Yet like any leadership style, pacesetting should never be used by itself.

The Coaching Style. A product unit at a global computer company had seen sales plummet from twice as much as its competitors to only half as much. So Lawrence, the president of the manufacturing division, decided to close the unit and reassign its people and products. Upon hearing the news, James, the head of the doomed unit, decided to go over his boss's head and plead his case to the CEO.

What did Lawrence do? Instead of blowing up at James, he sat down with his rebellious direct report and talked over not just the decision to close the division but also James's future. He explained to James how moving to another division would help him develop new skills. It would make him a better leader and teach him more about the company's business.

Lawrence acted more like a counselor than a traditional boss. He listened to James's concerns and hopes, and he shared his own. He said he believed James had grown stale in his current job; it was, after all, the only place he'd worked in the company. He predicted that James would blossom in a new role.

The conversation then took a practical turn. James had not yet had his meeting with the CEO – the one he had impetuously demanded when he heard of his division's closing. Knowing this – and also knowing that the CEO unwaveringly supported the closing – Lawrence took the time to coach James on how to present his case in that meeting. "You don't get an audience with the CEO very often," he noted, "let's make sure you impress him with your thoughtfulness." He advised James not to plead his personal case but to focus on the business unit: "If he thinks you're in there for your own glory, he'll throw you out faster than you walked through the door." And he urged him to put his ideas in writing; the CEO always appreciated that.

Lawrence's reason for coaching instead of scolding? "James is a good guy, very talented and promising," the executive explained to us, "and I don't want this to derail his career. I want him to stay with the company, I want him to work out, I want him to learn, I want him to benefit and grow. Just because he screwed up doesn't mean he's terrible."

Lawrence's actions illustrate the coaching style par excellence. Coaching leaders help employees identify their unique strengths and weaknesses and tie them to their personal and career aspirations. They encourage employees to establish long-term development goals and help them conceptualize a plan for attaining them. 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.

Of the six styles, our research found that the coaching style is used least often. Many leaders told us they don't have the time in this high-pressure economy for the slow and tedious work of teaching people and helping them grow. But after a first session, it takes little or no extra time. Leaders who ignore this style are passing up a powerful tool: its impact on climate and performance are markedly positive.

Admittedly, there is a paradox in coaching's positive effect on business performance because coaching focuses primarily on personal development, not on immediate work-related tasks. Even so, coaching improves results. The reason: it requires constant dialogue, and that dialogue has a way of pushing up every driver of climate. Take flexibility. When an employee knows his boss watches him and cares about what he does, he feels free to experiment. After all, he's sure to get quick and constructive feedback. Similarly, the ongoing dialogue of coaching guarantees that people know what is expected of them and how their work fits into a larger vision or strategy. That affects responsibility and clarity. As for commitment, coaching helps there, too, because the style's implicit message is, "I believe in you, I'm investing in you, and I expect your best efforts." Employees very often rise to that challenge with their heart, mind, and soul.

The coaching style works well in many business situations, but it is perhaps most effective when people on the receiving end are "up for it." For instance, the coaching style works particularly well when employees are already aware of their weaknesses and would like to improve their performance. Similarly, the style works well when employees realize how cultivating new abilities can help them advance. In short, it works best with employees who want to be coached.

Leaders who have mastered four or more – especially the authoritative, democratic, affiliative, and coaching styles – have the best climate and business performance.

By contrast, the coaching style makes little sense when employees, for whatever reason, are resistant to learning or changing their ways. And it flops if the leader lacks the expertise to help the employee along. The fact is, many managers are unfamiliar with or simply inept at coaching, particularly when it comes to giving ongoing performance feedback that motivates rather than creates fear or apathy. Some companies have realized the positive impact of the style and are trying to make it a core competence. At some companies, a significant portion of annual bonuses are tied to an executive's development of his or her direct reports. But many organizations have yet to take full advantage of this leadership style. Although the coaching style may not scream "bottom-line results," it delivers them.

Leaders Need Many Styles

Many studies, including this one, have shown that the more styles a leader exhibits, the better. Leaders who have mastered four or more – especially the authoritative, democratic, affiliative, and coaching styles – have the very best climate and business performance. And the most effective leaders switch flexibly among the leadership styles as needed. Although that may sound daunting, we witnessed it more often than you might guess, at both large corporations and tiny start-ups, by seasoned veterans who could explain exactly how and why they lead and by entrepreneurs who claim to lead by gut alone.

Such leaders don't mechanically match their style to fit a checklist of situations – they are far more fluid. They are exquisitely sensitive to the impact they are having on others and seamlessly adjust their style to get the best results. These are leaders, for example, who can read in the first minutes of conversation that a talented but underperforming employee has been demoralized by an unsympathetic, do-it-the-way-I-tell-you manager and needs to be inspired through a reminder of why her work matters. Or that leader might choose to reenergize the employee by asking her about her dreams and aspirations and finding ways to make her job more challenging. Or that initial conversation might signal that the employee needs an ultimatum: improve or leave.

For an example of fluid leadership in action, consider Joan, the general manager of a major division at a global food and beverage company. Joan was appointed to her job while the division was in a deep crisis. It had not made its profit targets for six years; in the most recent year, it had missed by $50 million. Morale among the top management team was miserable; mistrust and resentments were rampant. Joan's directive from above was clear: turn the division around.

Joan did so with a nimbleness in switching among leadership styles that is rare. From the start, she realized she had a short window to demonstrate effective leadership and to establish rapport and trust. She also knew that she urgently needed to be informed about what was not working, so her first task was to listen to key people.

Her first week on the job she had lunch and dinner meetings with each member of the management team. Joan sought to get each person's understanding of the current situation. But her focus was not so much on learning how each person diagnosed the problem as on getting to know each manager as a person. Here Joan employed the affiliative style: she explored their lives, dreams, and aspirations.

She also stepped into the coaching role, looking for ways she could help the team members achieve what they wanted in their careers. For instance, one manager who had been getting feedback that he was a poor team player confided his worries to her. He thought he was a good team member, but he was plagued by persistent complaints. Recognizing that he was a talented executive and a valuable asset to the company, Joan made an agreement with him to point out (in private) when his actions undermined his goal of being seen as a team player.

She followed the one-on-one conversations with a three-day off-site meeting. Her goal here was team building, so that everyone would own whatever solution for the business problems emerged. Her initial stance at the off-site meeting was that of a democratic leader. She encouraged everyone to express freely their frustrations and complaints.

Growing Your Emotional Intelligence

Unlike IQ, which is largely genetic – it changes little from childhood – the skills of emotional intelligence can be learned at any age. It's not easy, however. Growing your emotional intelligence takes practice and commitment. But the payoffs are well worth the investment.

Consider the case of a marketing director for a division of a global food company. Jack, as I'll call him, was a classic pacesetter: high-energy, always striving to find better ways to get things done, and too eager to step in and take over when, say, someone seemed about to miss a deadline. Worse, Jack was prone to pounce on anyone who didn't seem to meet his standards, flying off the handle if a person merely deviated from completing a job in the order Jack thought best.

Jack's leadership style had a predictably disastrous impact on climate and business results. After two years of stagnant performance, Jack's boss suggested he seek out a coach. Jack wasn't pleased but, realizing his own job was on the line, he complied.

The coach, an expert in teaching people how to increase their emotional intelligence, began with a 360-degree evaluation of Jack. A diagnosis from multiple viewpoints is essential in improving emotional intelligence because those who need the most help usually have blind spots. In fact, our research found that top-performing leaders overestimate their strengths on, at most, one emotional intelligence ability, whereas poor performers overrate themselves on four or more. Jack was not that far off, but he did rate himself more glowingly than his direct reports, who gave him especially low grades on emotional self-control and empathy.

Initially, Jack had some trouble accepting the feedback data. But when his coach showed him how those weaknesses were tied to his inability to display leadership styles dependent on those competencies – especially the authoritative, affiliative, and coaching styles – Jack realized he had to improve if he wanted to advance in the company. Making such a connection is essential. The reason: improving emotional intelligence isn't done in a weekend or during a seminar – it takes diligent practice on the job, over several months. If people do not see the value of the change, they will not make that effort.

Once Jack zeroed in on areas for improvement and committed himself to making the effort, he and his coach worked up a plan to turn his

The next day, Joan had the group focus on solutions: each person made three specific proposals about what needed to be done. As Joan clustered the suggestions, a natural consensus emerged about priorities for the business, such as cutting costs. As the group came up with specific action plans, Joan got the commitment and buy-in she sought.

With that vision in place, Joan shifted into the authoritative style, assigning accountability for each follow-up step to specific executives and holding them responsible for their accomplishment. For example, the division had been dropping prices on products without increasing its volume. One obvious solution was to raise prices, but the previous VP of sales had dithered and had let the problem fester. The new VP of sales now had responsibility to adjust the price points to fix the problem.

Over the following months, Joan's main stance was authoritative. She continually articulated the group's new vision in a way that reminded each member of how his or her role was crucial to achieving these goals. And, especially during the first few weeks of the plan's implementation, Joan felt that the urgency of the business crisis justified an occasional shift into the coercive style should someone fail to meet his or her responsibility. As she put it, "I had to be brutal about this follow-up and make sure this stuff happened. It was going to take discipline and focus."

The results? Every aspect of climate improved. People were innovating. They were talking about the division's vision and crowing about their commitment to new, clear goals. The ultimate proof of Joan's fluid leadership style is written in black ink: after only seven months, her division exceeded its yearly profit target by $5 million.

Expanding Your Repertory

Few leaders, of course, have all six styles in their repertory, and even fewer know when and how to use them. In fact, as we have brought the findings of our research into many organizations, the most common responses have been, "But I have only two of those!" and, "I can't use all those styles. It wouldn't be natural."

Such feelings are understandable, and in some cases, the antidote is relatively simple. The leader can build a team with members who employ styles she lacks. Take the case of a VP for manufacturing. She successfully ran a global factory system largely by using the affiliative style. She

day-to-day job into a learning laboratory. For instance, Jack discovered he was empathetic when things were calm, but in a crisis, he tuned out others. This tendency hampered his ability to listen to what people were telling him in the very moments he most needed to do so. Jack's plan required him to focus on his behavior during tough situations. As soon as he felt himself tensing up, his job was to immediately step back, let the other person speak, and then ask clarifying questions. The point was to not act judgmental or hostile under pressure.

The change didn't come easily, but with practice Jack learned to defuse his flare-ups by entering into a dialogue instead of launching a harangue. Although he didn't always agree with them, at least he gave people a chance to make their case. At the same time, Jack also practiced giving his direct reports more positive feedback and reminding them of how their work contributed to the group's mission. And he restrained himself from micromanaging them.

Jack met with his coach every week or two to review his progress and get advice on specific problems. For instance, occasionally Jack would find himself falling back on his old pacesetting tactics – cutting people off, jumping in to take over, and blowing up in a rage. Almost immediately, he would regret it. So he and his coach dissected those relapses to figure out what triggered the old ways and what to do the next time a similar moment arose. Such "relapse prevention" measures inoculate people against future lapses or just giving up. Over a six-month period, Jack made real improvement. His own records showed he had reduced the number of flare-ups from one or more a day at the beginning to just one or two a month. The climate had improved sharply, and the division's numbers were starting to creep upward.

Why does improving an emotional intelligence competence take months rather than days? Because the emotional centers of the brain, not just the neocortex, are involved. The neocortex, the thinking brain that learns technical skills and purely cognitive abilities, gains knowledge very quickly, but the emotional brain does not. To master a new behavior, the emotional centers need repetition and practice. Improving your emotional intelligence, then, is akin to changing your habits. Brain circuits that carry leadership habits have to unlearn the old ones and replace them with the new. The more often a behavioral sequence is repeated, the stronger the underlying brain circuits become. At some point, the new neural pathways become the brain's default option. When that happened, Jack was able to go through the paces of leadership effortlessly, using styles that worked for him – and the whole company.

was on the road constantly, meeting with plant managers, attending to their pressing concerns, and letting them know how much she cared about them personally. She left the division's strategy – extreme efficiency – to a trusted lieutenant with a keen understanding of technology, and she delegated its performance standards to a colleague who was adept at the authoritative approach. She also had a pacesetter on her team who always visited the plants with her.

An alternative approach, and one I would recommend more, is for leaders to expand their own style repertories. To do so, leaders must first understand which emotional intelligence competencies underlie the leadership styles they are lacking. They can then work assiduously to increase their quotient of them.

For instance, an affiliative leader has strengths in three emotional intelligence competencies: in empathy, in building relationships, and in communication. Empathy – sensing how people are feeling in the moment – allows the affiliative leader to respond to employees in a way that is highly congruent with that person's emotions, thus building rapport. The affiliative leader also displays a natural ease in forming new relationships, getting to know someone as a person, and cultivating a bond. Finally, the outstanding affiliative leader has mastered the art of interpersonal communication, particularly in saying just the right thing or making the apt symbolic gesture at just the right moment.

So if you are primarily a pacesetting leader who wants to be able to use the affiliative style more often, you would need to improve your level of empathy and, perhaps, your skills at building relationships or communicating effectively. As another example, an authoritative leader who wants to add the democratic style to his repertory might need to work on the capabilities of collaboration and communication. Such advice about adding capabilities may seem simplistic – "Go change yourself" – but enhancing emotional intelligence is entirely possible with practice. (For more on how to improve emotional intelligence, see the sidebar "Growing Your Emotional Intelligence.")

More Science, Less Art

Like parenthood, leadership will never be an exact science. But neither should it be a complete mystery to those who practice it. In recent years, research has helped parents understand the genetic, psychological, and behavioral components that affect their "job performance." With our new research, leaders, too, can get a clearer picture of what it takes to lead effectively. And perhaps as important, they can see how they can make that happen.

The business environment is continually changing, and a leader must respond in kind. Hour to hour, day to day, week to week, executives must play their leadership styles like a pro – using the right one at just the right time and in the right measure. The payoff is in the results.

1. Daniel Goleman consults with Hay/McBer on leadership development.

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Harvard Business Review

Leadership

Managers and Leaders: Are They Different?

by Abraham Zaleznik

From the Magazine (January 2004)

egon69/Getty Images

Summary. Managers and leaders are two very different types of people. Managers' goals arise out of necessities rather than desires; they excel at defusing conflicts between individuals or departments, placating all sides while ensuring that an organization's day-to-day... **more**

The traditional view of management, back in 1977 when Abraham Zaleznik wrote this article, centered on organizational structure and processes. Managerial development at the time focused exclusively on building competence, control, and the appropriate *balance of power. That view, Zaleznik argued, omitted the essential* leadership *elements of inspiration, vision, and human passion—which drive corporate success.*

The difference between managers and leaders, he wrote, lies in the conceptions they hold, deep in their psyches, of chaos and order. Managers embrace process, seek stability and control, and instinctively try to resolve problems quickly—sometimes before they fully understand a problem's significance. Leaders, in contrast, tolerate chaos and lack of structure and are willing to delay closure in order to understand the issues more fully. In this way, Zaleznik argued, business leaders have much more in common with artists, scientists, and other creative thinkers than they do with managers. Organizations need both managers and leaders to succeed, but developing both requires a reduced focus on logic and strategic exercises in favor of an environment where creativity and imagination are permitted to flourish.

What is the ideal way to develop leadership? Every society provides its own answer to this question, and each, in groping for answers, defines its deepest concerns about the purposes, distributions, and uses of power. Business has contributed its answer to the leadership question by evolving a new breed called the manager. Simultaneously, business has established a new power ethic that favors collective over individual leadership, the cult of the group over that of personality. While ensuring the competence, control, and the balance of power among groups with the potential for rivalry, managerial leadership unfortunately does not necessarily ensure imagination, creativity, or ethical behavior in guiding the destinies of corporate enterprises.

Leadership inevitably requires using power to influence the thoughts and actions of other people. Power in the hands of an individual entails human risks: first, the risk of equating power with the ability to get immediate results; second, the risk of ignoring the many different ways people can legitimately accumulate power; and third, the risk of losing self-control in the desire for power. The need to hedge these risks accounts in part for the development of collective leadership and the managerial ethic. Consequently, an inherent conservatism dominates the culture of large organizations. In *The Second American Revolution,* John D. Rockefeller III describes the conservatism of organizations:

> An organization is a system, with a logic of its own, and all the weight of tradition and inertia. The deck is stacked in favor of the tried and proven way of doing things and against the taking of risks and striking out in new directions.

Out of this conservatism and inertia, organizations provide succession to power through the development of managers rather than individual leaders. Ironically, this ethic fosters a bureaucratic culture in business, supposedly the last bastion protecting us from the encroachments and controls of bureaucracy in government and education.

Manager vs. Leader Personality

A managerial culture emphasizes rationality and control. Whether his or her energies are directed toward goals, resources, organization structures, or people, a manager is a problem solver. The manager asks: "What problems have to be solved, and what are the best ways to achieve results so that people will continue to contribute to this organization?" From this perspective, leadership is simply a practical effort to direct affairs; and to fulfill his or her task, a manager requires that many people operate efficiently at different levels of status and responsibility. It takes neither genius nor heroism to be a manager, but rather persistence, tough-mindedness, hard work, intelligence, analytical ability, and perhaps most important, tolerance and goodwill.

Another conception of leadership, however, attaches almost mystical beliefs to what a leader is and assumes that only great people are worthy of the drama of power and politics. Here leadership is a psychodrama in which a brilliant, lonely person must gain control of himself or herself as a precondition for controlling others. Such an expectation of leadership contrasts sharply with the mundane, practical, and yet important conception that leadership is really managing work that other people do.

Three questions come to mind. Is this leadership mystique merely a holdover from our childhood—from a sense of dependency and a longing for good and heroic parents? Or is it true that no matter how competent managers are, their leadership stagnates because of their limitations in visualizing purposes and generating value in work? Driven by narrow purposes, without an imaginative capacity and the ability to communicate, do managers then perpetuate group conflicts instead of reforming them into broader desires and goals?

If indeed problems demand greatness, then judging by past performance, the selection and development of leaders leave a great deal to chance. There are no known ways to train "great" leaders. Further, beyond what we leave to chance, there is a deeper issue in the relationship between the need for competent managers and the longing for great leaders.

What it takes to ensure a supply of people who will assume practical responsibility may inhibit the development of great leaders. On the other hand, the presence of great leaders may undermine the development of managers who typically become very anxious in the relative disorder that leaders seem to generate.

It is easy enough to dismiss the dilemma of training managers, though we may need new leaders or leaders at the expense of managers, by saying that the need is for people who can be both. But just as a managerial culture differs from the entrepreneurial culture that develops when leaders appear in organizations, managers and leaders are very different kinds of people. They differ in motivation, personal history, and in how they think and act.

Attitudes Toward Goals

Managers tend to adopt impersonal, if not passive, attitudes toward goals. Managerial goals arise out of necessities rather than desires and, therefore, are deeply embedded in their organization's history and culture.

Frederic G. Donner, chairman and chief executive officer of General Motors from 1958 to 1967, expressed this kind of attitude toward goals in defining GM's position on product development:

> To meet the challenge of the marketplace, we must recognize changes in customer needs and desires far enough ahead to have the right products in the right places at the right time and in the right quantity.
>
> We must balance trends in preference against the many compromises that are necessary to make a final product that is both reliable and good looking, that performs well and that sells at a competitive price in the necessary volume. We must design not just the cars we would like to build but, more important, the cars that our customers want to buy.

Nowhere in this statement is there a notion that consumer tastes and preferences arise in part as a result of what manufacturers do. In reality, through product design, advertising, and promotion, consumers learn to like what they then say they need. Few would argue that people who enjoy taking snapshots need a camera that also develops pictures. But in response to a need for novelty, convenience, and a shorter interval between acting (snapping the picture) and gaining pleasure (seeing the shot), the Polaroid camera succeeded in the marketplace. It is inconceivable that Edwin Land responded to impressions of consumer need. Instead, he translated a technology (polarization of light) into a product, which proliferated and stimulated consumers' desires.

The example of Polaroid and Land suggests how leaders think about goals. They are active instead of reactive, shaping ideas instead of responding to them. Leaders adopt a personal and active attitude toward goals. The influence a leader exerts in altering moods, evoking images and expectations, and in establishing specific desires and objectives determines the direction a business takes. The net result of this influence changes the way people think about what is desirable, possible, and necessary.

Conceptions of Work

Managers tend to view work as an enabling process involving some combination of people and ideas interacting to establish strategies and make decisions. They help the process along by calculating the interests in opposition, planning when controversial issues should surface, and reducing tensions. In this enabling process, managers' tactics appear flexible: On one hand, they negotiate and bargain; on the other, they use rewards, punishments, and other forms of coercion.

Alfred P. Sloan's actions at General Motors illustrate how this process works in situations of conflict. The time was the early 1920s, when Ford Motor Company still dominated the automobile industry using, as did General Motors, the conventional water-cooled engine. With the full backing of Pierre du Pont, Charles Kettering dedicated himself to the design of an air-cooled copper engine, which, if successful, would be a great technical and marketing coup for GM. Kettering believed in his product, but the manufacturing division heads opposed the new design on two grounds: First, it was technically unreliable, and second, the corporation was putting all its eggs in one basket by investing in a new product instead of attending to the current marketing situation.

Three Differences Between Managers and Leaders

In the summer of 1923, after a series of false starts and after its decision to recall the copper-engine Chevrolets from dealers and customers, GM management scrapped the project. When it dawned on Kettering that the company had rejected the engine, he was deeply discouraged and wrote to Sloan that, without the "organized resistance" against the project, it would have succeeded and that, unless the project were saved, he would leave the company.

Alfred Sloan was all too aware that Kettering was unhappy and indeed intended to leave General Motors. Sloan was also aware that, while the manufacturing divisions strongly opposed the new engine, Pierre du Pont supported Kettering. Further, Sloan had himself gone on record in a letter to Kettering less than two years earlier expressing full confidence in him. The problem Sloan had was how to make his decision stick, keep Kettering in the organization (he was much too valuable to lose), avoid alienating du Pont, and encourage the division heads to continue developing product lines using conventional water-cooled engines.

Sloan's actions in the face of this conflict reveal much about how managers work. First, he tried to reassure Kettering by presenting the problem in a very ambiguous fashion, suggesting that he and the executive committee sided with Kettering, but that it would not be practical to force the divisions to do what they were opposed to. He presented the problem as being a question of the people, not the product. Second, he proposed to reorganize around the problem by consolidating all functions in a new division that would be responsible for the design, production, and marketing of the new engine. This solution appeared as ambiguous as his efforts to placate Kettering. Sloan wrote: “My plan was to create an independent pilot operation under the sole jurisdiction of Mr. Kettering, a kind of copper-cooled car division. Mr. Kettering would designate his own chief engineer and his production staff to solve the technical problems of manufacture.”

Sloan did not discuss the practical value of this solution, which included saddling an inventor with management responsibility, but in effect, he used this plan to limit his conflict with Pierre du Pont.

Essentially, the managerial solution that Sloan arranged limited the options available to others. The structural solution narrowed choices, even limiting emotional reactions to the point where the key people could do nothing but go along. It allowed Sloan to say in his memorandum to du Pont, “We have discussed the matter with Mr. Kettering at some length this morning, and he agrees with us absolutely on every point we made. He appears to receive the suggestion enthusiastically and has every confidence that it can be put across along these lines.”

Sloan placated people who opposed his views by developing a structural solution that appeared to give something but in reality only limited options. He could then authorize the car division’s general manager, with whom he basically agreed, to move quickly in designing water-cooled cars for the immediate market demand.

Is the leadership mystique merely a holdover from our childhood—from a

sense of dependency and a longing for good and heroic parents?

Years later, Sloan wrote, evidently with tongue in cheek, “The copper-cooled car never came up again in a big way. It just died out; I don’t know why.”

To get people to accept solutions to problems, managers continually need to coordinate and balance opposing views. Interestingly enough, this type of work has much in common with what diplomats and mediators do, with Henry Kissinger apparently an outstanding practitioner. Managers aim to shift balances of power toward solutions acceptable as compromises among conflicting values.

Leaders work in the opposite direction. Where managers act to limit choices, leaders develop fresh approaches to long-standing problems and open issues to new options. To be effective, leaders must project their ideas onto images that excite people and only then develop choices that give those images substance.

John F. Kennedy’s brief presidency shows both the strengths and weaknesses connected with the excitement leaders generate in their work. In his inaugural address he said, “Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty.”

This much-quoted statement forced people to react beyond immediate concerns and to identify with Kennedy and with important shared ideals. On closer scrutiny, however, the statement is absurd because it promises a position, which, if adopted, as in the Vietnam War, could produce disastrous results. Yet unless expectations are aroused and mobilized, with all the dangers of frustration inherent in heightened desire, new thinking and new choice can never come to light.

Leaders work from high-risk positions; indeed, they are often temperamentally disposed to seek out risk and danger, especially where the chance of opportunity and reward appears promising. From my observations, the reason one individual seeks risks while another approaches problems conservatively depends more on his or her personality and less on conscious choice. For those who become managers, a survival instinct dominates the need for risk, and with that instinct comes an ability to tolerate mundane, practical work. Leaders sometimes react to mundane work as to an affliction.

Relations with Others

Managers prefer to work with people; they avoid solitary activity because it makes them anxious. Several years ago, I directed studies on the psychological aspects of careers. The need to seek out others with whom to work and collaborate seemed to stand out as an important characteristic of managers. When asked, for example, to write imaginative stories in response to a picture showing a single figure (a boy contemplating a violin or a man silhouetted in a state of reflection), managers populated their stories with people. The following is an example of a manager's imaginative story about the young boy contemplating a violin:

Mom and Dad insisted that their son take music lessons so that someday he can become a concert musician. His instrument was ordered and had just arrived. The boy is weighing the alternatives of playing football with the other kids or playing with the squeak box. He can't understand how his parents could think a violin is better than a touchdown.

After four months of practicing the violin, the boy has had more than enough, Dad is going out of his mind, and Mom is willing to give in reluctantly to their wishes. Football season is now over, but a good third baseman will take the field next spring.

This story illustrates two themes that clarify managerial attitudes toward human relations. The first, as I have suggested, is to seek out activity with other people (that is, the football team), and the second is to maintain a low level of emotional involvement in those relationships. Low emotional involvement appears in the writer's use of conventional metaphors, even clichés, and in the depiction of the ready transformation of potential conflict into harmonious decisions. In this case, the boy, Mom, and Dad agree to give up the violin for sports.

These two themes may seem paradoxical, but their coexistence supports what a manager does, including reconciling differences, seeking compromises, and establishing a balance of power. The story further demonstrates that managers may lack empathy, or the capacity to sense intuitively the thoughts and feelings of others. Consider another story written to the same stimulus picture by someone thought of as a leader by his peers:

This little boy has the appearance of being a sincere artist, one who is deeply affected by the violin, and has an intense desire to master the instrument.

He seems to have just completed his normal practice session and appears to be somewhat crestfallen at his inability to produce the sounds that he is sure lie within the violin.

He appears to be in the process of making a vow to himself to expend the necessary time and effort to play this instrument until he satisfies himself that he is able to bring forth the qualities of music that he feels within himself.

With this type of determination and carry-through, this boy became one of the great violinists of his day.

Empathy is not simply a matter of paying attention to other people. It is also the capacity to take in emotional signals and make them meaningful in a relationship. People who describe another person as “deeply affected,” with “intense desire,” “crestfallen,” and as one who can “vow to himself” would seem to have an inner perceptiveness that they can use in their relationships with others.

Managers relate to people according to the role they play in a sequence of events or in a decision-making process, while leaders, who are concerned with ideas, relate in more intuitive and empathetic ways. The distinction is simply between a manager’s attention to *how* things get done and a leader’s to *what* the events and decisions mean to participants.

In recent years, managers have adopted from game theory the notion that decision-making events can be one of two types: the win-lose situation (or zero-sum game) or the win-win situation in which everybody in the action comes out ahead. Managers strive to convert win-lose into win-win situations as part of the process of reconciling differences among people and maintaining balances of power.

> **For those who become managers, a survival instinct dominates the need for risk, and with that instinct comes an ability to tolerate mundane, practical work.**

As an illustration, take the decision of how to allocate capital resources among operating divisions in a large, decentralized organization. On the surface, the dollars available for distribution are limited at any given time. Presumably, therefore, the more one division gets, the less is available for other divisions.

Managers tend to view this situation (as it affects human relations) as a conversion issue: how to make what seems like a win-lose problem into a win-win problem. From that perspective, several solutions come to mind. First, the manager focuses others' attention on procedure and not on substance. Here the players become engrossed in the bigger problem of *how* to make decisions, not *what* decisions to make. Once committed to the bigger problem, these people have to support the outcome since they were involved in formulating the decision-making rules. Because they believe in the rules they formulated, they will accept present losses, believing that next time they will win.

Second, the manager communicates to subordinates indirectly, using "signals" instead of "messages." A signal holds a number of implicit positions, while a message clearly states a position. Signals are inconclusive and subject to reinterpretation should people become upset and angry; messages involve the direct consequence that some people will indeed not like what they hear. The nature of messages heightens emotional response and makes managers anxious. With signals, the question of who wins and who loses often becomes obscured.

Third, the manager plays for time. Managers seem to recognize that with the passage of time and the delay of major decisions, compromises emerge that take the sting out of win-lose situations, and the original "game" will be superseded by additional situations. Compromises mean that one may win and lose simultaneously, depending on which of the games one evaluates.

There are undoubtedly many other tactical moves managers use to change human situations from win-lose to win-win. But the point is that such tactics focus on the decision-making process itself, and that process interests managers rather than leaders. Tactical interests involve costs as well as benefits; they make organizations fatter in bureaucratic and political intrigue and leaner in direct, hard activity and warm human relationships. Consequently, one often hears subordinates characterize managers as inscrutable, detached, and manipulative. These adjectives arise from the subordinates' perception that they are linked together in a process whose purpose is to maintain a controlled as well as rational and equitable structure.

In contrast, one often hears leaders referred to with adjectives rich in emotional content. Leaders attract strong feelings of identity and difference or of love and hate. Human relations in leader-dominated structures often appear turbulent, intense, and at times even disorganized. Such an atmosphere intensifies individual motivation and often produces unanticipated outcomes.

Senses of Self

In *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* William James describes two basic personality types, "once-born" and "twice-born." People of the former personality type are those for whom adjustments to life have been straightforward and whose lives have been more or less a peaceful flow since birth. Twice-borns, on the other hand, have not had an easy time of it. Their lives are marked by a continual struggle to attain some sense of order. Unlike once-borns, they cannot take things for granted. According to James, these personalities have equally different worldviews. For a once-born personality, the sense of self as a guide to conduct and attitude derives from a feeling of being at home and in harmony with one's environment. For a twice-born, the sense of self derives from a feeling of profound separateness.

A sense of belonging or of being separate has a practical significance for the kinds of investments managers and leaders make in their careers. Managers see themselves as conservators and regulators of an existing order of affairs with which they personally identify and from which they gain rewards. A manager's sense of self-worth is enhanced by perpetuating and strengthening existing institutions: He or she is performing in a role that harmonizes with ideals of duty and responsibility. William James had this harmony in mind—this sense of self as flowing easily to and from the outer world—in defining a once-born personality.

Leaders tend to be twice-born personalities, people who feel separate from their environment. They may work in organizations, but they never belong to them. Their sense of who they are does not depend on memberships, work roles, or other social indicators of identity. And that perception of identity may form the theoretical basis for explaining why certain individuals seek opportunities for change. The methods to bring about change may be technological, political, or ideological, but the object is the same: to profoundly alter human, economic, and political relationships.

In considering the development of leadership, we have to examine two different courses of life history: (1) development through socialization, which prepares the individual to guide institutions and to maintain the existing balance of social relations; and (2) development through personal mastery, which impels an individual to struggle for psychological and social change. Society produces its managerial talent through the first line of development; leaders emerge through the second.

Development of Leadership

Every person's development begins with family. Each person experiences the traumas associated with separating from his or her parents, as well as the pain that follows such a wrench. In the same vein, all individuals face the difficulties of achieving self-regulation and self-control. But for some, perhaps a majority, the fortunes of childhood provide adequate gratifications and sufficient opportunities to find substitutes for rewards no longer available. Such individuals, the "once-borns," make moderate identifications with parents and find a harmony between what they expect and what they are able to realize from life.

But suppose the pains of separation are amplified by a combination of parental demands and individual needs to the degree that a sense of isolation, of being special, or of wariness disrupts the bonds that attach children to parents and other authority figures? Given a special aptitude under such conditions, the person becomes deeply involved in his or her inner world at the expense of interest in the outer world. For such a person, self-esteem no longer depends solely on positive attachments and real rewards. A form of self-reliance takes hold along with expectations of performance and achievement, and perhaps even the desire to do great works.

Such self-perceptions can come to nothing if the individual's talents are negligible. Even with strong talents, there are no guarantees that achievement will follow, let alone that the end result will be for good rather than evil. Other factors enter into development as well. For one, leaders are like artists and other gifted people who often struggle with neuroses; their ability to function varies considerably even over the short run, and some potential leaders lose the struggle altogether. Also, beyond early childhood, the development patterns that affect managers and leaders involve the selective influence of particular people. Managerial personalities form moderate and widely distributed attachments. Leaders, on the other hand, establish, and also break off, intensive one-to-one relationships.

It is a common observation that people with great talents are often indifferent students. No one, for example, could have predicted Einstein's great achievements on the basis of his mediocre record in school. The reason for mediocrity is obviously not the absence of ability. It may result, instead, from self-absorption and the inability to pay attention to the ordinary tasks at hand. The only sure way an individual can interrupt reverie-like preoccupation and self-absorption is to form a deep attachment to a great teacher or other person who understands and has the ability to communicate with the gifted individual.

Whether gifted individuals find what they need in one-to-one relationships depends on the availability of teachers, possibly parental surrogates, whose strengths lie in cultivating talent. Fortunately, when generations meet and the self-selections occur, we learn more about how to develop leaders and how talented people of different generations influence each other.

While apparently destined for mediocre careers, people who form important one-to-one apprenticeship relationships often are able to accelerate and intensify their development. The psychological readiness of an individual to benefit from such a relationship depends on some experience in life that forces that person to turn inward.

Consider Dwight Eisenhower, whose early career in the army foreshadowed very little about his future development. During World War I, while some of his West Point classmates were already experiencing the war firsthand in France, Eisenhower felt "embedded in the monotony and unsought safety of the

Zone of the Interior...that was intolerable punishment."

Shortly after World War I, Eisenhower, then a young officer somewhat pessimistic about his career chances, asked for a transfer to Panama to work under General Fox Connor, a senior officer whom he admired. The army turned down his request. This setback was very much on Eisenhower's mind when Ikey, his first born son, succumbed to influenza. Through some sense of responsibility for its own, the army then transferred Eisenhower to Panama, where he took up his duties under General Connor with the shadow of his lost son very much upon him.

In a relationship with the kind of father he would have wanted to be, Eisenhower reverted to being the son he had lost. And in this highly charged situation, he began to learn from his teacher. General Connor offered, and Eisenhower gladly took, a magnificent tutorial on the military. The effects of this relationship on Eisenhower cannot be measured quantitatively, but in examining his career path from that point, one cannot overestimate its significance.

As Eisenhower wrote later about Connor, "Life with General Connor was a sort of graduate school in military affairs and the humanities, leavened by a man who was experienced in his knowledge of men and their conduct. I can never adequately express my gratitude to this one gentleman.... In a lifetime of association with great and good men, he is the one more or less invisible figure to whom I owe an incalculable debt."

Some time after his tour of duty with General Connor, Eisenhower's breakthrough occurred. He received orders to attend the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, one of the most competitive schools in the army. It was a coveted appointment, and Eisenhower took advantage of the opportunity. Unlike his performance in high school and West Point, his work at the Command School was excellent; he was graduated first in his class.

Psychological biographies of gifted people repeatedly demonstrate the important part a teacher plays in developing an individual. Andrew Carnegie owed much to his senior, Thomas A. Scott. As head of the Western Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad, Scott recognized talent and the desire to learn in the young telegrapher assigned to him. By giving Carnegie increasing responsibility and by providing him with the opportunity to learn through close personal observation, Scott added to Carnegie's self-confidence and sense of achievement. Because of his own personal strength and achievement, Scott did not fear Carnegie's aggressiveness. Rather, he gave it full play in encouraging Carnegie's initiative.

Great teachers take risks. They bet initially on talent they perceive in younger people. And they risk emotional involvement in working closely with their juniors. The risks do not always pay off, but the willingness to take them appears to be crucial in developing leaders.

Can Organizations Develop Leaders?

A myth about how people learn and develop that seems to have taken hold in American culture also dominates thinking in business. The myth is that people learn best from their peers. Supposedly, the threat of evaluation and even humiliation recedes in peer relations because of the tendency for mutual identification and the social restraints on authoritarian behavior among equals. Peer training in organizations occurs in various forms. The use, for example, of task forces made up of peers from several interested occupational groups (sales, production, research, and finance) supposedly removes the restraints of authority on the individual's willingness to assert and exchange ideas. As a result, so the theory goes, people interact more freely, listen more objectively to criticism and other points of view, and, finally, learn from this healthy interchange.

Another application of peer training exists in some large corporations, such as Philips N.V. in Holland, where organizational structure is built on the principle of joint responsibility of two peers, one representing the commercial end of the business and the other the technical. Formally, both hold equal responsibility for geographic operations or product groups, as the case may be. As a practical matter, it may turn out that one or the other of the peers dominates the management. Nevertheless, the main interaction is between two or more equals.

> **Leaders tend to feel separate from their environment. They may work in organizations, but they never belong to them.**

The principal question I raise about such arrangements is whether they perpetuate the managerial orientation and preclude the formation of one-to-one relationships between senior people and potential leaders.

Aware of the possible stifling effects of peer relationships on aggressiveness and individual initiative, another company, much smaller than Philips, utilizes joint responsibility of peers for operating units, with one important difference. The chief executive of this company encourages competition and rivalry among peers, ultimately rewarding the one who comes out on top with increased responsibility. These hybrid arrangements produce some unintended consequences that can be disastrous. There is no easy way to limit rivalry. Instead, it permeates all levels of the operation and opens the way for the formation of cliques in an atmosphere of intrigue.

One large, integrated oil company has accepted the importance of developing leaders through the direct influence of senior on junior executives. The chairman and chief executive officer regularly selects one talented university graduate whom he appoints his special assistant, and with whom he will work closely for a year. At the end of the year, the junior executive becomes available for assignment to one of the operating divisions, where he or she will be assigned to a responsible post rather than a training position. This apprenticeship acquaints the junior executive firsthand with the use of power and with the important antidotes to the power disease called *hubris*—performance and integrity.

Working in one-to-one relationships, where there is a formal and recognized difference in the power of the players, takes a great deal of tolerance for emotional interchange. This interchange, inevitable in close working arrangements, probably accounts for the reluctance of many executives to become involved in such relationships. *Fortune* carried an interesting story on the departure of a key executive, John W. Hanley, from the top management of Procter & Gamble to the chief executive officer position at Monsanto. According to this account, the chief executive and chairman of P&G passed over Hanley for appointment to the presidency, instead naming another executive vice president to this post.

The chairman evidently felt he could not work well with Hanley who, by his own acknowledgment, was aggressive, eager to experiment and change practices, and constantly challenged his superior. A chief executive officer naturally has the right to select people with whom he feels congenial. But I wonder whether a greater capacity on the part of senior officers to tolerate the competitive impulses and behavior of their subordinates might not be healthy for corporations. At least a greater tolerance for interchange would not favor the managerial team player at the expense of the individual who might become a leader.

I am constantly surprised at the frequency with which chief executives feel threatened by open challenges to their ideas, as though the source of their authority, rather than their specific ideas, was at issue. In one case, a chief executive officer, who was troubled by the aggressiveness and sometimes outright rudeness of one of his talented vice presidents, used various indirect methods such as group meetings and hints from outside directors to avoid dealing with his subordinate. I advised the executive to deal head-on with what irritated him. I suggested that by direct, face-to-face confrontation, both he and his subordinate would learn to validate the distinction between the authority to be preserved and the issues to be debated.

The ability to confront is also the ability to tolerate aggressive interchange. And that skill not only has the net effect of stripping away the veils of ambiguity and signaling so characteristic of managerial cultures, but also it encourages the emotional relationships leaders need if they are to survive.

A version of this article appeared in the January 2004 issue of *Harvard Business Review*.

AZ

Abraham Zaleznik was the Konosuke Matsushita Professor of Leadership Emeritus at Harvard Business School in Boston.

Spotlight

ARTWORK Jessica Snow
Curly Words, 2011, acrylic on paper
17" x 21"

Amy J.C. Cuddy is an associate professor of business administration at Harvard Business School. **Matthew Kohut** and **John Neffinger** are the authors of *Compelling People: The Hidden Qualities That Make Us Influential* (Hudson Street Press, August 2013) and principals at KNP Communications.

Connect, Then Lead

To exert influence, you must balance competence with warmth. *by Amy J.C. Cuddy, Matthew Kohut, and John Neffinger*

Is it better to be loved or feared?

Niccolò Machiavelli pondered that timeless conundrum 500 years ago and hedged his bets. "It may be answered that one should wish to be both," he acknowledged, "but because it is difficult to unite them in one person, it is much safer to be feared than loved."

Now behavioral science is weighing in with research showing that Machiavelli had it partly right: When we judge others—especially our leaders—we look first at two characteristics: how lovable they are (their warmth, communion, or trustworthiness) and how fearsome they are (their strength, agency, or competence). Although there is some disagreement about the proper labels for the traits, researchers agree that they are the two primary dimensions of social judgment.

Why are these traits so important? Because they answer two critical questions: "What are this person's intentions toward me?" and "Is he or she capable of acting on those intentions?" Together, these assessments underlie our emotional and behavioral reactions to other people, groups, and even brands and companies. Research by one of us, Amy Cuddy, and colleagues Susan Fiske, of Princeton, and Peter Glick, of Lawrence University, shows that people judged to be competent but lacking in warmth often elicit envy in others, an emotion involving both respect and resentment that cuts both ways. When we respect someone, we want to cooperate or affiliate ourselves with him or her, but resentment can make that person vulnerable to harsh reprisal (think of disgraced Tyco CEO Dennis Kozlowski, whose extravagance made him an unsympathetic public figure). On the other hand, people judged as warm but incompetent tend to elicit pity, which also involves a mix of emotions: Compassion moves us to help those we pity, but our lack of respect leads us ultimately to neglect them (think of workers who become marginalized as they near retirement or of an employee with outmoded skills in a rapidly evolving industry).

To be sure, we notice plenty of other traits in people, but they're nowhere near as influential as warmth and strength. Indeed, insights from the field of psychology show that these two dimensions account for more than 90% of the variance in our positive or negative impressions we form of the people around us.

So which is better, being lovable or being strong? Most leaders today tend to emphasize their strength, competence, and credentials in the workplace, but that is exactly the wrong approach. Leaders who project strength before establishing trust run the risk of eliciting fear, and along with it a host of dysfunctional behaviors. Fear can undermine cognitive potential, creativity, and problem solving, and cause employees to get stuck and even disengage. It's a "hot" emotion, with long-lasting effects. It burns into our memory in a way that cooler emotions don't. Research by Jack Zenger and Joseph Folkman drives this point home: In a study of 51,836 leaders, only 27 of them were rated in the bottom quartile in terms of likability and in the top quartile in terms of overall leadership effectiveness—in other words, the chances that a manager who is strongly disliked will be considered a good leader are only about one in 2,000.

A growing body of research suggests that the way to influence—and to lead—is to begin with warmth. Warmth is the conduit of influence: It facilitates trust and the communication and absorption of ideas. Even a few small nonverbal signals—a nod, a smile, an open gesture—can show people that you're pleased to be in their company and attentive to their concerns. Prioritizing warmth helps you connect immediately with those around you, demonstrating that you hear them, understand them, and can be trusted by them.

About the Spotlight Artist
Each month we illustrate our Spotlight package with a series of works from an accomplished artist. The lively and cerebral creations of these photographers, painters, and installation artists are meant to infuse our pages with additional energy and intelligence to amplify what are often complex and abstract concepts.

This month's artist is **Jessica Snow,** a San Francisco–based abstract painter. "The most interesting pieces are those in which something has been left unresolved," she says. "Its reason for being has not been entirely spelled out for the viewer or even for the artist." View the artist's work at **Artspace.com** and **galleriurbane.com**.

PHOTOGRAPHY: KLEA McKENNA

Idea in Brief

THE PROBLEM
Typically, leaders emphasize their strength or competence in the workplace, which can alienate colleagues and direct reports.

THE ARGUMENT
Decades of sociology and psychology research show that by first focusing on displaying warmth—and then blending in demonstrations of competence—leaders will find a clearer path to influence.

THE LESSONS
This is difficult to do but not impossible, depending on your chemical and dispositional makeup. The authors offer specific guidelines on how to project warmth and strength in various situations.

When Strength Comes First

Most of us work hard to demonstrate our competence. We want to see ourselves as strong—and want others to see us the same way. We focus on warding off challenges to our strength and providing abundant evidence of competence. We feel compelled to demonstrate that we're up to the job, by striving to present the most innovative ideas in meetings, being the first to tackle a challenge, and working the longest hours. We're sure of our own intentions and thus don't feel the need to prove that we're trustworthy—despite the fact that evidence of trustworthiness is the first thing we look for in others.

Organizational psychologists Andrea Abele, of the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, and Bogdan Wojciszke, of the University of Gdańsk, have documented this phenomenon across a variety of settings. In one experiment, when asked to choose between training programs focusing on competence-related skills (such as time management) and warmth-related ones (providing social support, for instance), most participants opted for competence-based training for themselves but soft-skills training for others. In another experiment, in which participants were asked to describe an event that shaped their self-image, most told stories about themselves that emphasized their own competence and self-determination ("I passed my pilot's license test on the first try"), whereas when they described a similar event for someone else, they focused on that person's warmth and generosity ("My friend tutored his neighbor's child in math and refused to accept any payment").

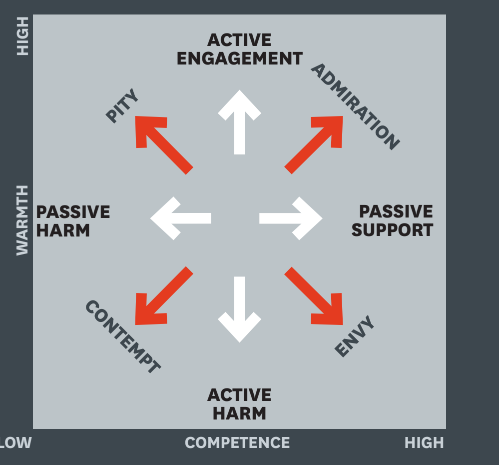
But putting competence first undermines leadership: Without a foundation of trust, people in the organization may comply outwardly with a leader's wishes, but they're much less likely to conform privately—to adopt the values, culture, and mission of the organization in a sincere, lasting way. Workplaces lacking in trust often have a culture of "every employee for himself," in which people feel that they must be vigilant about protecting their interests. Employees can become reluctant to help others because they're unsure of whether their efforts will be reciprocated or recognized. The result: Shared organizational resources fall victim to the tragedy of the commons.

When Warmth Comes First

Although most of us strive to demonstrate our strength, warmth contributes significantly more to others' evaluations of us—and it's judged before

HOW WILL PEOPLE REACT TO YOUR STYLE?

Research by Amy Cuddy, Susan Fiske, and Peter Glick suggests that the way others perceive your levels of warmth and competence determines the emotions you'll elicit and your ability to influence a situation. For example, if you're highly competent but show only moderate warmth, you'll get people to go along with you, but you won't earn their true engagement and support. And if you show no warmth, beware of those who may try to derail your efforts—and maybe your career.



competence. Princeton social psychologist Alex Todorov and colleagues study the cognitive and neural mechanisms that drive our "spontaneous trait inferences"—the snap judgments we make when briefly looking at faces. Their research shows that when making those judgments, people consistently pick up on warmth faster than on competence. This preference for warmth holds true in other areas as well. In a study led by Oscar Ybarra, of the University of Michigan, participants playing a word game identified warmth-related words (such as "friendly") significantly faster than competence-related ones (such as "skillful").

Behavioral economists, for their part, have shown that judgments of trustworthiness generally lead to significantly higher economic gains. For example, Mascha van 't Wout, of Brown University, and Alan Sanfey, of the University of Arizona, asked subjects to determine how an endowment should be allocated. Players invested more money, with no guarantee of return, in partners whom they perceived to be more trustworthy on the basis of a glance at their faces.

In management settings, trust increases information sharing, openness, fluidity, and cooperation. If coworkers can be trusted to do the right thing and live up to their commitments, planning, coordination, and execution are much easier. Trust also facilitates the exchange and acceptance of ideas—it allows people to hear others' message—and boosts the quantity and quality of the ideas that are produced within an organization. Most important, trust provides the opportunity to change people's attitudes and beliefs, not just their outward behavior. That's the sweet spot when it comes to influence and the ability to get people to fully accept your message.

The Happy Warrior

The best way to gain influence is to combine warmth and strength—as difficult as Machiavelli says that may be to do. The traits can actually be mutually reinforcing: Feeling a sense of personal strength helps us to be more open, less threatened, and less threatening in stressful situations. When we feel confident and calm, we project authenticity and warmth.

Understanding a little bit about our chemical makeup can shed some light on how this works. The neuropeptides oxytocin and arginine vasopressin, for instance, have been linked to our ability to form human attachments, to feel and express warmth, and to behave altruistically. Recent research also suggests that across the animal kingdom feelings of strength and power have close ties to two hormones: testosterone (associated with assertiveness, reduced fear, and willingness to compete and take risks) and cortisol (associated with stress and stress reactivity).

One study, by Jennifer Lerner, Gary Sherman, Amy Cuddy, and colleagues, brought hundreds of people participating in Harvard executive-education programs into the lab and compared their levels of cortisol with the average levels of the general population. The leaders reported less stress and anxiety than did the general population, and their physiology backed that up: Their cortisol levels were significantly lower. Moreover, the higher their rank and the more subordinates they managed, the lower their cortisol level. Why? Most likely because the leaders had a heightened sense of control—a psychological factor known to have a powerful stress-buffering effect. According to research by Pranjal Mehta, of the University of Oregon, and Robert Josephs, of the University of Texas, the most effective leaders, regard-

Why Warmth Trumps Strength

The primacy of warmth manifests in many interrelated ways that powerfully underscore the importance of connecting with people before trying to lead them.

The Need to Affiliate

People have a need to be included, to feel a sense of belonging. In fact, some psychologists would argue that the drive to affiliate ranks among our primary needs as humans. Experiments by neuroscientist Naomi Eisenberger and colleagues suggest that the need is so strong that when we are ostracized—even by virtual strangers—we experience pain that is akin to strong physical pain.

"Us" Versus "Them"

In recent decades, few areas have received as much attention from social psychology researchers as group dynamics—and for good reason: The preference for the groups to which one belongs is so strong that even under extreme conditions—such as knowing that membership in a group was randomly assigned and that the groups themselves are arbitrary—people consistently prefer fellow group members to nonmembers.

As a leader, you must make sure you're a part of the key groups in your organization. In fact, you want to be the aspirational member of the group, the chosen representative of the group. As soon as you become one of "them"—the management, the leadership—you begin to lose people.

The Desire to Be Understood

People deeply desire to be heard and seen. Sadly, as important as perspective-taking is to good leadership, being in a position of power decreases people's understanding of others' points of view. When we have power over others, our ability to see them as individuals diminishes. So leaders need to consciously and consistently make the effort to imagine walking in the shoes of the people they are leading.

less of gender, have a unique physiological profile, with relatively high testosterone and relatively low cortisol.

Such leaders face troubles without being troubled. Their behavior is not relaxed, but they are relaxed emotionally. They're often viewed as "happy warriors," and the effect of their demeanor on those around them is compelling. Happy warriors reassure us that whatever challenges we may face, things will work out in the end. Ann Richards, the former governor of Texas, played the happy warrior by pairing her assertiveness and authority with a big smile and a quick wit that made it clear she did not let the rough-and-tumble of politics get her down.

During crises, these are the people who are able to keep that influence conduit open and may even expand it. Most people hate uncertainty, but they tolerate it much better when they can look to a leader who they believe has their back and is calm, clearheaded, and courageous. These are the people we trust. These are the people we listen to.

There are physical exercises that can help to summon self-confidence—and even alter your body's chemistry to be more like that of a happy warrior. Dana Carney, Amy Cuddy, and Andy Yap suggest that people adopt "power poses" associated with dominance and strength across the animal kingdom. These postures are open, expansive, and space-occupying (imagine Wonder Woman and Superman standing tall with their hands on their hips and feet spread apart). By adopting these postures for just two minutes prior to social encounters, their research shows, participants significantly increased their testosterone and decreased their cortisol levels.

Bear in mind that the signals we send can be ambiguous—we can see someone's reaction to our presence, but we may not be sure exactly what the person is reacting to. We may feel a leader's warmth but remain unsure whether it is directed at us; we sense her strength but need reassurance that it is squarely aimed at the shared challenge we face. And, as we noted earlier, judgments are often made quickly, on the basis of nonverbal cues. Especially when facing a high-pressure situation, it is useful for leaders to go through a brief warm-up routine beforehand to get in the right state of mind, practicing and adopting an attitude that will help them project positive nonverbal signals. We refer to this approach as "inside-out," in contrast to the "outside-in" strategy of trying to consciously execute specific nonverbal behaviors in the moment. Think of the difference between method acting and classical acting: In method acting, the actor experiences the emotions of the character and naturally produces an authentic performance, whereas in classical acting, actors learn to exercise precise control of their nonverbal signals. Generally speaking, an inside-out approach is more effective.

Before people decide what they think of your message, they decide what they think of *you.*

There are many tactics for projecting warmth and competence, and these can be dialed up or down as needed. Two of us, John Neffinger and Matt Kohut, work with leaders from many walks of life in mastering both nonverbal and verbal cues. Let's look now at some best practices.

How to Project Warmth

Efforts to appear warm and trustworthy by consciously controlling your nonverbal signals can backfire: All too often, you'll come off as wooden and inauthentic instead. Here are ways to avoid that trap.

Find the right level. When people want to project warmth, they sometimes amp up the enthusiasm in their voice, increasing their volume and dynamic range to convey delight. That can be effective in the right setting, but if those around you have done nothing in particular to earn your adulation, they'll assume either that you're faking it or that you fawn over everyone indiscriminately.

A better way to create vocal warmth is to speak with lower pitch and volume, as you would if you were comforting a friend. Aim for a tone that suggests that you're leveling with people—that you're sharing the straight scoop, with no pretense or emotional adornment. In doing so, you signal that you trust those you're talking with to handle things the right way. You might even occasionally share a personal story—one that feels private but not inappropriate—in a confiding tone of voice to demonstrate that you're being forthcoming and open. Suppose, for instance, that you want to establish a bond with new employees you're meeting for the first time. You might offer something personal right off the bat, such as recalling how you felt at a similar point in your career. That's often enough to set a congenial tone.

Validate feelings. Before people decide what they think of your message, they decide what they think of *you.* If you show your employees that you hold roughly the same worldview they do, you demonstrate not only empathy but, in their eyes, common sense—the ultimate qualification for being listened to. So if you want colleagues to listen and agree with you, first agree with them.

Are You Projecting Warmth?

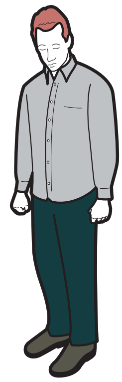
How you present yourself in workplace settings matters a great deal to how you're perceived by others. Even if you're not feeling particularly warm, practicing these approaches and using them in formal and informal situations can help clear your path to influence.

WARM

When standing, balance your weight primarily on one hip to avoid appearing rigid or tense.

Tilt your head slightly and keep your hands open and welcoming.

COLD



Avoid standing with your chin pointed down.

Don't pivot your body away from the person you're engaging with.

Avoid closed-hand positions and cutting motions.

Imagine, for instance, that your company is undergoing a major reorganization and your group is feeling deep anxiety over what the change could mean—for quality, innovation, job security. Acknowledge people's fear and concerns when you speak to them, whether in formal meetings or during watercooler chats. Look them in the eye and say, "I know everybody's feeling a lot of uncertainty right now, and it's unsettling." People will respect you for addressing the elephant in the room, and will be more open to hearing what you have to say.

Smile—and mean it. When we smile sincerely, the warmth becomes self-reinforcing: Feeling happy makes us smile, and smiling makes us happy. This facial feedback is also contagious. We tend to mirror one another's nonverbal expressions and emotions, so when we see someone beaming and emanating genuine warmth, we can't resist smiling ourselves.

Warmth is not easy to fake, of course, and a polite smile fools no one. To project warmth, you have to genuinely feel it. A natural smile, for instance, involves not only the muscles around the mouth but also those around the eyes—the crow's feet.

So how do you produce a natural smile? Find some reason to feel happy wherever you may be, even if you have to resort to laughing at your predicament. Introverts in social settings can single out one person to focus on. This can help you channel the sense of comfort you feel with close friends or family.

For example, KNP worked with a manager who was having trouble connecting with her employees. Having come up through the ranks as a highly analytic engineer, she projected competence and determination, but not much warmth. We noticed, however, that when she talked about where she grew up and what she learned about life from the tight-knit community in her neighborhood, her demeanor relaxed and she smiled broadly. By including a brief anecdote about her upbringing when she kicked off a meeting or made a presentation, she was able to show her colleagues a warm and relatable side of herself.

One thing to avoid: smiling with your eyebrows raised at anyone over the age of five. This suggests that you are overly eager to please and be liked. It also signals anxiety, which, like warmth, is contagious. It will cost you much more in strength than you will gain in warmth.

How to Project Strength

Strength or competence can be established by virtue of the position you hold, your reputation, and your actual performance. But your presence, or demeanor, always counts, too. The way you carry yourself doesn't establish your skill level, of course, but it is taken as strong evidence of your attitude—how serious you are and how determined to tackle a challenge—and that is an important component of overall strength. The trick is to cultivate a demeanor of strength without seeming menacing.

Feel in command. Warmth may be harder to fake, but confidence is harder to talk yourself into. Feeling like an impostor—that you don't belong in the position you're in and are going to be "found out"—is very common. But self-doubt completely undermines your ability to project confidence, enthusiasm, and passion, the qualities that make up presence. In fact, if you see yourself as an impostor, others will, too. Feeling in command and confident is about connecting with yourself. And when we are connected with ourselves, it is much easier to connect with others.

Holding your body in certain ways, as we discussed above, can help. Although we refer to these postures as power poses, they don't increase your dominance over others. They're about personal power—your agency and ability to self-regulate. Re-

ILLUSTRATION: COLIN HAYES

WARM

Lean inward in a nonaggressive manner to signal interest and engagement.

Place your hands comfortably on your knees or rest them on the table.

Aim for body language that feels professional but relaxed.

COLD

Try not to angle your body away from the person you're engaging.

Crossing your arms indicates coldness and a lack of receptivity.

Avoid sitting "at attention" or in an aggressive posture.

cent research led by Dacher Keltner, of the University of California, Berkeley, shows that feeling powerful in this way allows you to shed the fears and inhibitions that can prevent you from bringing your fullest, most authentic and enthusiastic self to a high-stakes professional situation, such as a pitch to investors or a speech to an influential audience.

Stand up straight. It is hard to overstate the importance of good posture in projecting authority and an intention to be taken seriously. As Maya Angelou wrote, "Stand up straight and realize who you are, that you tower over your circumstances." Good posture does not mean the exaggerated chest-out pose known in the military as standing at attention, or raising one's chin up high. It just means reaching your full height, using your muscles to straighten the S-curve in your spine rather than slouching. It sounds trivial, but maximizing the physical space your body takes up makes a substantial difference in how your audience reacts to you, regardless of your height.

Get ahold of yourself. When you move, move deliberately and precisely to a specific spot rather than casting your limbs about loose-jointedly. And when you are finished moving, be still. Twitching, fidgeting, or other visual static sends the signal that you're not in control. Stillness demonstrates calm. Combine that with good posture, and you'll achieve what's known as poise, which telegraphs equilibrium and stability, important aspects of credible leadership presence.

Standing tall is an especially good way to project strength because it doesn't interfere with warmth in the way that other signals of strength—cutting gestures, a furrowed brow, an elevated chin—often do. People who instruct their children to stand up straight and smile are on to something: This simple combination is perhaps the best way to project strength and warmth simultaneously.

IF YOU want to effectively lead others, you have to get the warmth-competence dynamic right. Projecting both traits at once is difficult, but the two can be mutually reinforcing—and the rewards substantial. Earning the trust and appreciation of those around you feels good. Feeling in command of a situation does, too. Doing both lets you influence people more effectively.

The strategies we suggest may seem awkward at first, but they will soon create a positive feedback loop. Being calm and confident creates space to be warm, open, and appreciative, to choose to act in ways that reflect and express your values and priorities. Once you establish your warmth, your strength is received as a welcome reassurance. Your leadership becomes not a threat but a gift. ⛉

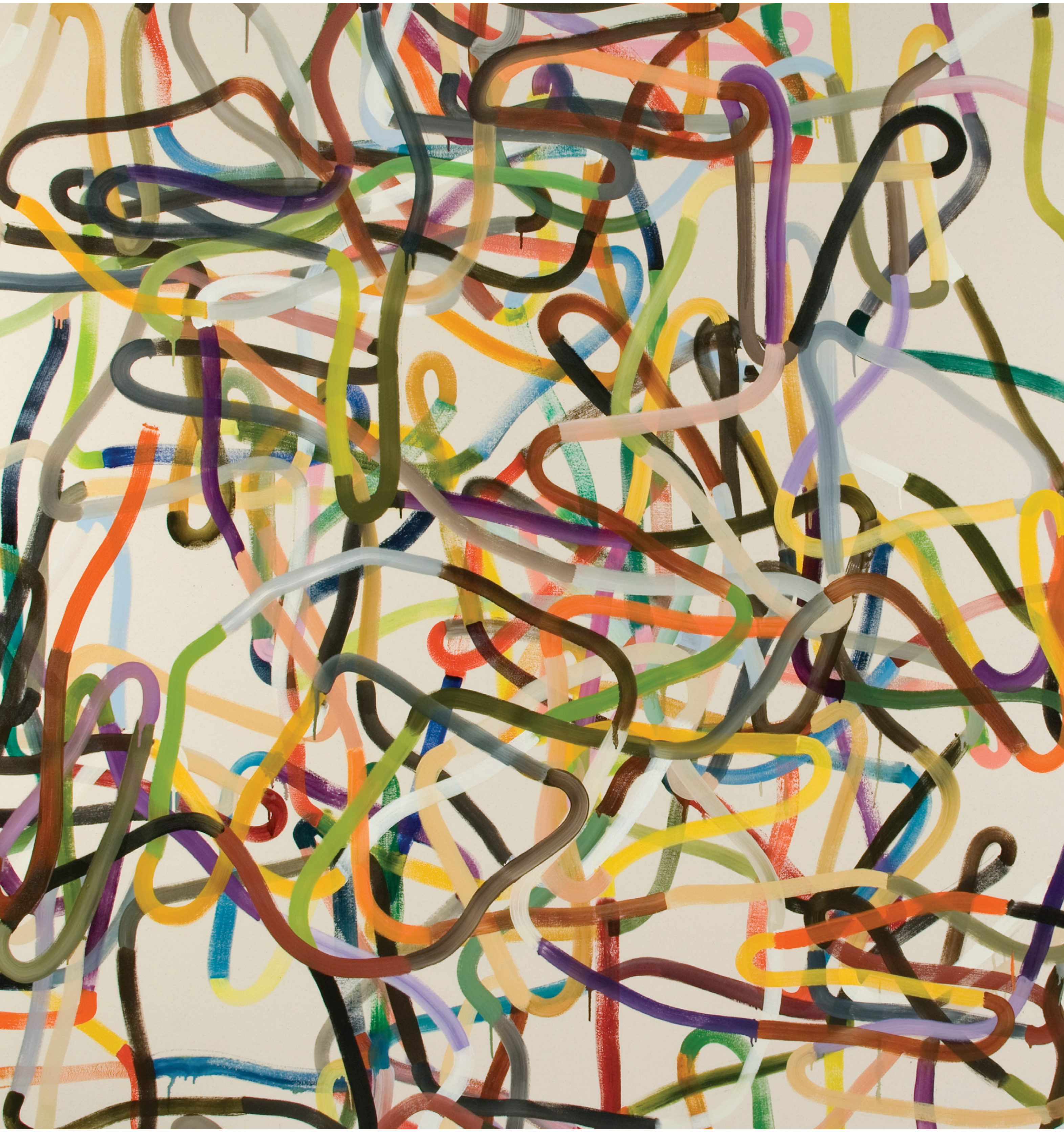
HBR Reprint R1307C

"For the plaintiff in this case, your honor, the product's bold assertion—'easy-opening lid'—was a cruel and vicious lie."

CARTOON: NICK DOWNES

SPOTLIGHT

ARTWORK Jeff Perrott, *RW13 (Fair Game),* 2010
Oil on canvas; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



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The Secrets of Great Teamwork

Collaboration has become more complex, but success still depends on the fundamentals.

BY MARTINE HAAS AND MARK MORTENSEN

Today's teams are different from the teams of the past: They're far more diverse, dispersed, digital, and dynamic (with frequent changes in membership). But while teams face new hurdles, their success still hinges on a core set of fundamentals for group collaboration.

The basics of team effectiveness were identified by J. Richard Hackman, a pioneer in the field of organizational behavior who began studying teams in the 1970s. In more than 40 years of research, he uncovered a groundbreaking insight: What matters most to collaboration is not the personalities, attitudes, or behavioral styles of team members. Instead, what teams need to thrive are certain "enabling conditions." In our own studies (see the sidebar "About the Research"), we've found that three of Hackman's conditions—a compelling direction, a strong structure, and a supportive context—continue to be particularly critical to team success. In fact, today those three requirements demand more attention than ever. But we've also seen that modern teams are vulnerable to two corrosive problems—"us versus them" thinking and incomplete information. Overcoming those pitfalls requires a fourth critical condition: a shared mindset.

The key takeaway for leaders is this: Though teams face an increasingly complicated set of challenges, a relatively small number of factors have an outsized impact on their success. Managers can achieve big returns if they understand what those factors are and focus on getting them right.

The Enabling Conditions

Let's explore in greater detail how to create a climate that helps diverse, dispersed, digital, dynamic teams—what we like to call 4-D teams—attain high performance.

Compelling direction. The foundation of every great team is a direction that energizes, orients, and engages its members. Teams cannot be inspired if they don't know what they're working toward and don't have explicit goals. Those goals should be challenging (modest ones don't motivate) but not so difficult that the team becomes dispirited. They also must be consequential: People have to care about achieving a goal, whether because they stand to gain extrinsic rewards, like recognition, pay, and promotions; or intrinsic rewards, such as satisfaction and a sense of meaning.

On 4-D teams, direction is especially crucial because it's easy for far-flung members from dissimilar backgrounds to hold different views of the group's purpose. Consider one global team we studied. All the members agreed that serving their client was their goal, but what that meant varied across locations. Members in Norway equated it with providing a product of the absolute highest quality—no matter what the cost. Their colleagues in the UK, however, felt that if the client needed a solution that was only 75% accurate, the less precise solution would better serve that client. Solving this tension required a frank discussion to reach consensus on how the team as a whole defined its objectives.

Strong structure. Teams also need the right mix and number of members, optimally designed tasks and processes, and norms that discourage destructive behavior and promote positive dynamics.

High-performing teams include members with a balance of skills. Every individual doesn't have to possess superlative technical and social skills, but the team overall needs a healthy dose of both. Diversity in knowledge, views, and perspectives, as well as in age, gender, and race, can help teams be more creative and avoid groupthink.

This is one area where 4-D teams often have an advantage. In research we conducted at the World Bank, we found that teams benefited from having a blend of cosmopolitan and local members—that is, people who have lived in multiple countries and speak multiple languages, and people with deep roots in the area they're working in. Cosmopolitan members bring technical knowledge and skills and expertise that apply in many situations, while locals bring country knowledge and insight into an area's

It's easy for far-flung team members from diverse backgrounds to hold different views of a group's purpose.

Idea in Brief

THE PROBLEM
Teams are more diverse, dispersed, digital, and dynamic than ever before. These qualities make collaboration especially challenging.

THE ANALYSIS
Mixing new insights with a focus on the fundamentals of team effectiveness identified by organizational-behavior pioneer J. Richard Hackman, managers should work to establish the conditions that will enable teams to thrive.

THE SOLUTION
The right conditions are
- a compelling direction
- a strong structure
- a supportive context, and
- a shared mindset

Weaknesses in these areas make teams vulnerable to problems.

politics, culture, and tastes. In one of the bank's teams, this combination proved critical to the success of a project upgrading an urban slum in West Africa. A local member pointed out that a microcredit scheme might be necessary to help residents pay for the new water and sanitation services planned by the team, while a cosmopolitan member shared valuable information about problems faced in trying to implement such programs in other countries. Taking both perspectives into account, the team came up with a more sustainable design for its project.

Adding members is of course one way to ensure that a team has the requisite skills and diversity, but increased size comes with costs. Larger teams are more vulnerable to poor communication, fragmentation, and free riding (due to a lack of accountability). In the executive sessions we lead, we frequently hear managers lament that teams become bloated as global experts are pulled in and more members are recruited to increase buy-in from different locations, divisions, or functions. Team leaders must be vigilant about adding members only when necessary. The aim should be to include the minimum number—and no more. One manager told us that anytime she receives a request to add a team member, she asks what unique value that person will bring to the group and, in cases where the team is already at capacity, which current member will be released.

Team assignments should be designed with equal care. Not every task has to be highly creative or inspiring; many require a certain amount of drudgery. But leaders can make any task more motivating by ensuring that the team is responsible for a significant piece of work from beginning to end, that the team members have a lot of autonomy in managing that work, and that the team receives performance feedback on it.

With 4-D teams, people in different locations often handle different components of a task, which raises challenges. Consider a software design team based in Santa Clara, California, that sends chunks of code to its counterparts in Bangalore, India, to revise overnight. Such 24/7 development is common as firms seek to use time zone differences to their advantage. But in one such team we spoke with, that division of labor was demotivating, because it left the Indian team members with a poor sense of how the pieces of code fit together and with little control over what they did and how. Moreover, the developers in Bangalore got feedback only when what they sent back didn't fit. Repartitioning the work to give them ownership over an entire module dramatically increased their motivation and engagement and improved the quality, quantity, and efficiency of their work.

Destructive dynamics can also undermine collaborative efforts. We've all seen team members withhold information, pressure people to conform, avoid responsibility, cast blame, and so on. Teams can reduce the potential for dysfunction by establishing clear norms—rules that spell out a small number of things members must always do (such as arrive at meetings on time and give everyone a turn to speak) and a small number they must never do (such as interrupt). Instilling such norms is especially important when team members operate across different national, regional, or organizational cultures (and may not share the same view of, for example, the importance of punctuality). And in teams whose membership is fluid, explicitly reiterating norms at regular intervals is key.

Supportive context. Having the right support is the third condition that enables team effectiveness. This includes maintaining a reward system that reinforces good performance, an information

ABOUT THE RESEARCH
Over the past 15 years, we've studied teams and groups in a variety of contemporary settings. We've conducted nine large research projects in global organizations, undertaking more than 300 interviews and 4,200 surveys with team leaders and managers. The teams involved worked on projects in product development, sales, operations, finance, R&D, senior management, and more, in a wide range of industries, including software, professional services, manufacturing, natural resources, and consumer products. In addition, we have conducted executive education sessions on team effectiveness for thousands of team leaders and members; their stories and experiences have also shaped our thinking.

system that provides access to the data needed for the work, and an educational system that offers training, and last—but not least—securing the material resources required to do the job, such as funding and technological assistance. While no team ever gets everything it wants, leaders can head off a lot of problems by taking the time to get the essential pieces in place from the start.

Ensuring a supportive context is often difficult for teams that are geographically distributed and digitally dependent, because the resources available to members may vary a lot. Consider the experience of Jim, who led a new product-development team at General Mills that focused on consumer goods for the Mexican market. While Jim was based in the United States, in Minnesota, some members of his team were part of a wholly owned subsidiary in Mexico. The team struggled to meet its deadlines, which caused friction. But when Jim had the opportunity to visit his Mexican team members, he realized how poor their IT was and how strapped they were for both capital and people—particularly in comparison with the headquarters staff. In that one visit Jim's frustration turned to admiration for how much his Mexican colleagues were able to accomplish with so little, and he realized that the problems he'd assumed were due to a clash between cultures were actually the result of differences in resources.

Shared mindset. Establishing the first three enabling conditions will pave the way for team success, as Hackman and his colleagues showed. But our research indicates that today's teams need something more. Distance and diversity, as well as digital communication and changing membership, make them especially prone to the problems of "us versus them" thinking and incomplete information. The solution to both is developing a shared mindset among team members—something team leaders can do by fostering a common identity and common understanding.

In the past teams typically consisted of a stable set of fairly homogeneous members who worked face-to-face and tended to have a similar mindset. But that's no longer the case, and teams now often perceive themselves not as one cohesive group but as several smaller subgroups. This is a natural human response: Our brains use cognitive shortcuts to make sense of our increasingly complicated world, and one way to deal with the complexity of a 4-D team is to lump people into categories. But we also are inclined to view our own subgroup—whether it's our function, our unit, our region, or our culture—more positively than others, and that habit often creates tension and hinders collaboration.

This was the challenge facing Alec, the manager of an engineering team at ITT tasked with providing software solutions for high-end radio communications. His team was split between Texas and New Jersey, and the two groups viewed each other with skepticism and apprehension. Differing time zones, regional cultures, and even accents all reinforced their dissimilarities, and Alec struggled to keep all members up to speed on strategies, priorities, and roles. The situation got so bad that during a team visit to a customer, members from the two offices even opted to stay in separate hotels. In an effort to unite the team, Alec took everyone out to dinner, only to find the two groups sitting at opposite ends of the table.

Incomplete information is likewise more prevalent in 4-D teams. Very often, certain team members have important information that others do not, because they are experts in specialized areas or because members are geographically dispersed, new, or both. That information won't provide much value if it isn't communicated to the rest of the team. After all, shared knowledge is the cornerstone of

The problems that the team leader assumed were due to a culture clash were actually the result of differences in resources.

effective collaboration; it gives a group a frame of reference, allows the group to interpret situations and decisions correctly, helps people understand one another better, and greatly increases efficiency.

Digital dependence often impedes information exchange, however. In face-to-face teams, participants can rely on nonverbal and contextual cues to provide insight into what's going on. When we walk into an in-person meeting, for example, we can immediately sense the individual and collective moods of the people in the room—information that we use (consciously or not) to tailor subsequent interactions. Having to rely on digital communication erodes the transmission of this crucial type of intelligence.

Some effects of incomplete information came to light during a recent executive education session at Takeda Pharmaceuticals in Japan. The audience was split roughly 50/50 between employees based in Japan and those based in the United States. One of the U.S. managers took the opportunity to ask about something that had puzzled him. Takeda's "share the pain" strategy for dealing with time zone differences alternated the scheduling of conference calls between late nights in America and late nights in Asia, and he wondered why his Japanese colleagues seemed to take their late-night calls in the office, while he and his U.S. colleagues always took them at home. His Japanese colleagues' responses revealed a variety of motivations for this choice—desire for work/life separation, a need to run language questions by coworkers, and the lack of home office space in a typical Osaka apartment. But the result was the same: Though Takeda executives had intended to "share the pain," they had not. The Americans left the office at a normal hour, had dinner with their families, and held calls in the comfort of their homes, while their Japanese colleagues stayed in the office, missed time with their families, and hoped calls ended before the last train home. In this case, however, the incomplete information wasn't about the task; it was about something equally critical: how the Japanese members of the team experienced their work and their relationships with distant team members.

Fortunately, there are many ways team leaders can actively foster a shared identity and shared understanding and break down the barriers to cooperation and information exchange. One powerful approach is to ensure that each subgroup feels valued for its contributions toward the team's overall goals.

Does Your Team Measure Up?

To see how your team is doing, evaluate it on the three classic criteria of team effectiveness. Then look at how well it meets the four conditions that drive the success of teams in a diverse, dispersed, digital, dynamic business. Underperformance on the criteria and weaknesses in the conditions are usually linked. Understanding the connections between them can help your team identify ways to improve.

On a scale of 1 (worst) to 5 (best), rate your team on these criteria:

OUTPUT	COLLABORATIVE ABILITY	INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT
Are our customers happy with our output—with its quality, quantity, and delivery?	Do our team's dynamics help us work well together?	Are individual team members improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities?

Then score your team on the following aspects of the conditions for effectiveness:

COMPELLING DIRECTION	STRONG STRUCTURE	SUPPORTIVE CONTEXT	SHARED MINDSET
Do we have a common goal that is clear, challenging (but not impossible), and consequential?	Do we have the right number and mix of members? Are people responsible for tasks from beginning to end? Do we have clear norms for acceptable conduct?	Do we have the resources, information, and training we need? Are there appropriate rewards for success?	Do the team members have a strong common identity? Do we readily share information with one another and understand one another's constraints and context?

This assessment draws on the seminal research of the organizational-behavior expert J. Richard Hackman. You can find more of his insights in *Leading Teams: Setting the Stage for Great Performance* (Harvard Business School Publishing, 2002).

Returning to Alec, the manager of the team whose subgroups booked separate hotels: While his dinner started with the Texas colleagues at one end of the table and the New Jersey colleagues at the other, by its close signs had emerged that the team was chipping away at its internal wall. Over the following weeks, Alec stressed the important roles members from the two offices played in achieving the team's exciting and engaging goal—designing new software for remotely monitoring hardware. He emphasized that both subteams contributed necessary skills and pointed out that they depended on each other for success. To build more bridges, he brought the whole team together several more times over the next few months, creating shared experiences and common reference points and stories. Because of his persistent efforts, team members started to view the team not as "us and them" but as "we."

Even if you inherit an existing team, you can prime it for success by focusing on the four fundamentals.

Many participants in our field research and executive education sessions promote shared understanding through a practice called "structured unstructured time"—that is, time blocked off in the schedule to talk about matters not directly related to the task at hand. Often this is done by reserving the first 10 minutes of teamwide meetings for open discussion. The idea is to provide an opportunity for members to converse about whatever aspects of work or daily life they choose, such as office politics or family or personal events. This helps people develop a more complete picture of distant colleagues, their work, and their environment. However, team leaders must make the discussion's purpose and norms clear or else face 10 minutes of awkwardness as everyone waits for someone to speak.

One team we came across had a related tactic: Its members initially "met" over desktop video and gave one another virtual tours of their workspaces. By simply panning the camera around the room, they were able to show their remote colleagues their work environment—including things that were likely to distract or disrupt them, such as closely seated coworkers in an open-plan space or a nearby photocopier. After the tours the team members found that they were better able to interpret and understand distant colleagues' attitudes and behaviors.

Evaluating Your Team

Together the four enabling conditions form a recipe for building an effective team from scratch. But even if you inherit an existing team, you can set the stage for its success by focusing on the four fundamentals.

How will you know if your efforts are working? Hackman proposed evaluating team effectiveness on three criteria: output, collaborative ability, and members' individual development. We have found that these criteria apply as well as ever and advise that leaders use them to calibrate their teams over time. The ideal approach combines regular light-touch monitoring for preventive maintenance and less frequent but deeper checks when problems arise.

For ongoing monitoring, we recommend a simple and quick temperature check: Every few months, rate your team on each of the four enabling conditions and also on the three criteria of team effectiveness. (See the sidebar "Does Your Team Measure Up?") Look in particular at the lowest-scored condition and lowest-scored effectiveness criteria, and consider how they're connected. The results will show where your team is on track as well as where problems may be brewing.

If you need a deeper diagnosis—perhaps in the face of poor performance or a crisis—block out an hour or more to conduct an intervention assessment. Carefully examine the links between the lowest-rated conditions and team effectiveness criteria; managers who do this usually discover clear relationships between them, which suggest a path forward.

You can conduct both the quick check and the deeper intervention on your own or assess overall alignment by having all team members assign ratings separately. For a team-based check, you should compare results across the group. For a team-based intervention, you can increase the impact by holding a full-scale workshop, where all the members get together to discuss and compare results. Not only does this give you more-complete data—shining a light on potential blind spots—but it also reveals differences among viewpoints and opens up areas for discussion. We have found that it is frequently through the process of comparing assessments—a leader's with the team's, and the team members' with their peers'—that the deepest insights arise.

TEAMWORK HAS never been easy—but in recent years it has become much more complex. And the trends that make it more difficult seem likely to continue, as teams become increasingly global, virtual, and project-driven. Taking a systematic approach to analyzing how well your team is set up to succeed—and identifying where improvements are needed—can make all the difference.

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Spotlight: Interview with Robert Cialdini

The Uses (and Abuses) of Influence

ROBERT CIALDINI, considered the leading social scientist in the field of influence, was initially drawn to the topic because he saw how easily people could step over an ethical line into manipulation or even abuse. His 2001 book *Influence,* which laid out six principles of persuasion, was eloquent about the dangers of persuasive techniques in the wrong hands. A best-selling article he wrote for HBR the same year, "Harnessing the Science of Persuasion," looked at the positive side of persuasion: how managers could use those principles to run their organizations more effectively.

Cialdini is the Regents' Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Marketing at Arizona State University and the president of the consulting firm Influence at Work. In this edited interview with HBR executive editor Sarah Cliffe, he drills deeper into everyday uses of persuasion inside businesses and describes new research on the ethics of influence.

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK PETERMAN

HBR: I'm going to run a few scenarios by you to explore how people can influence others more effectively at work. First, imagine that you're an employee trying to behave entrepreneurially. You need resources to jump-start a great business idea. How do you get people to help?

Cialdini: It requires prework. People will help if they owe you for something you did in the past to advance *their* goals. That's the rule of reciprocity.

Get in the habit of helping people out, and—this part's really important—don't wave it away when people thank you. Don't say, "Oh, no big deal." We're given serious persuasive power immediately after someone thanks us. So say something like "Of course; it's what partners do *for each other*"—label what happened an act of partnership. With that prework done, a manager who subsequently needs support, who needs staffing, who maybe even needs a budget, will have significantly elevated the probability of success.

Adam Grant's work on the importance of giving inside organizations echoes that, doesn't it?

It does. Grant provides a brilliant analysis. Another fascinating study was done by Frank Flynn, formerly at Columbia, now at Stanford. He examined giving behaviors at a large telecom and found that two things happened when people helped their colleagues. One, the helpers were perceived by their fellow employees to be extremely valuable. Two—and here's where it gets complicated—they had lower productivity on their own projects. They were diverting a lot of time and energy to their colleagues' problems.

How do you manage that discrepancy between generosity and productivity?

Flynn found one thing that increased both the social value of the giver *and* that person's productivity. It wasn't the number of favors done. It was the number of favors *exchanged*.

If the initial giver creates a sense of reciprocity—a sense that there's a network of partners who are not just willing but eager to help—he will get a lot in return. He can increase the likelihood of a big ROI by characterizing his assistance as a two-way partnership.

Second situation: An executive needs to convince a group that a big change in direction is necessary. What would you advise?

Moving people under conditions of uncertainty is difficult—the first thing they do is freeze. They're scared of what they might lose. Therefore, it's good to tell people what they will lose if they *fail* to move. Daniel Kahneman won a Nobel Prize for showing that if you're trying to mobilize people under conditions of uncertainty, notions of loss are psychologically more powerful than notions of gain. Managers can take the wind in their faces and make it wind in their sails by speaking not just of what will be gained by moving but also of what will be lost or forgone if people fail to move.

A second thing that happens when people are uncertain is that they don't look inside themselves for answers—all they see is ambiguity and their own lack of confidence. Instead, they look outside for sources of information that can reduce their uncertainty. The first thing they look to is authority: What do the experts think about this topic?

That's not necessarily the boss. It could be the person who knows the subject best.

That's an important distinction. We're not talking about being *in* authority but about being *an* authority. The manager needs to marshal evidence from acknowledged experts—they could be outsiders—that aligns with the rationale for the initiative.

The other place people look is to peers. If a couple of people are hanging back in a team meeting, the manager shouldn't hammer those guys, trying to get them to fall in line. Instead, he or she should identify

Get in the habit of helping people out, and don't wave it away and say, "Oh, no big deal." We have serious persuasive power immediately after someone thanks us.

The Six Principles of Persuasion

Persuasion works by appealing to certain deeply rooted human responses. Experiments in social psychology by Robert Cialdini and others have identified six of those responses, which Cialdini initially described in his book *Influence*.

Liking
If people like you—because they sense that you like them, or because of things you have in common—they're more apt to say yes to you.

Reciprocity
People tend to return favors. If you help people, they'll help you. If you behave in a certain way (cooperatively, for example), they'll respond in kind.

Social proof
People will do things they see other people doing—especially if those people seem similar to them.

Commitment and consistency
People want to be consistent, or at least to appear to be. If they make a public, voluntary commitment, they'll try to follow through.

Authority
People defer to experts and to those in positions of authority (and typically underestimate their tendency to do so).

Scarcity
People value things more if they perceive them to be scarce.

a respected member of the group who agrees with the plan and ask that person to weigh in. Peers are often more convincing than executives when we're deciding what we should do.

Here's another scenario. I was recently at a conference where a group of CEOs were asked to cooperate on a task that was important in a civic sense—important to the world—but was not necessarily something their shareholders would applaud. The organizer was deeply respected but had no formal power. In that kind of situation, how do you get people to make commitments that last beyond the feel-good moment?
Two things strike me as important. The first is something I'm thinking about right now for a book I'm writing: the power of *we*. When people see themselves as part of a larger group that has a shared identity, they are willing to take steps they wouldn't take for their individual interests. The research on this is very clear. So the organizer needed to build that sense of shared purpose in the moment.

Once people disperse, they go back to their everyday *we*—in this case, the companies they run. So you need to lock in the change by getting people to make a public commitment while they're still together. You have to ask them what they will do and, if possible, get a written response.

Why does getting it in writing matter?
People live up to what they write down, for some reason; it seems to make the choice more conscious. They should also be asked to make commitments about next steps and to schedule another conversation, by which time they will be ready to describe the progress they've made. Bit by bit, the commitment becomes more concrete.

If you want to build up your informal networks, how do you go about it?
Here's where the internet helps us. We can find out a lot about people by checking their Facebook or LinkedIn pages. Look for things you have in common—maybe it's running, maybe it's knitting, maybe it's where you went to school. Finding something in common is powerful, because we like people who are like us; that's another principle of influence. If you use that similarity as a point of departure, and if you do it honestly, they'll like you, and you'll come to like them. Now you have people who are willing to be part of your network because of commonalities that were under the surface.

What advice can you give people who are reluctant to negotiate for themselves and need to get better at it? I'm thinking particularly about the research suggesting that women typically "don't ask."
I've done some work with Jeffrey Pfeffer, of Stanford, on whether you need someone to advance your case in a negotiation, and we've found that having an agent or advocate can be very helpful.

There are two benefits associated with having an agent when, say, you're being considered or recruited for a position. One is that you're perceived as more prestigious if someone is advocating for you. That's the authority principle in action.

The liking principle also comes into play. If you have to be a broker of information about yourself, you often appear self-aggrandizing, and it rubs people the wrong way. In the research we did, we found that if an advocate for a candidate makes demands that are based on the candidate's merits, it doesn't harm the candidate. But if the candidate argues the very same case, it does. The people on the receiving end just don't like that person, who comes off as a braggart.

This is especially relevant for women. We have done research showing that women who are anything less than modest about their accomplishments are harmed interpersonally. Men can also do themselves damage by being boastful, but we *expect* them to be aggressive. It hurts them far, far less than it hurts women.

Because of this bias, women will do better in organizations where managers are expected to advance the case for their people—where that's the cultural norm.

Any organization has minority groups—people who are "other" to some extent. Do they face difficulties when it comes to influencing those around them?

Yes, because of the similarity factor we talked about earlier. But there's a way around that. Those surface characteristics—race, ethnicity, foreign-born status—become irrelevant when there are commonalities in terms of values. We all want to work with people who share our sense of what's important—our priorities on the job, or even beyond the job. So one thing people can do is establish commonalities that aren't immediately visible. It usually takes a while for those things to be recognized; you can shorten the process by speaking about values more spontaneously.

So many businesses now are global—what kinds of difficulties do you run into cross-culturally with persuasion?

The good news is that the six principles of influence do seem to exist in all cultures. They're part of the human condition. The bad news is that their weights change from culture to culture.

In our research, we've found that in more collectivist, communal cultures, certain kinds of persuasive appeals are more successful. Social proof is very powerful. If a lot of your peers are doing something, that's a more powerful impetus for you than for people in more individualistic cultures, where one looks inside the self and doesn't use the group as the standard for deciding.

Moving people under conditions of uncertainty is difficult—they freeze. They're scared of what they might lose. It's good to tell people what they will lose if they *fail* to move.

For example, we did a study in the U.S. and in Poland, which has a more communal orientation than the U.S. We asked individuals if they would be willing to participate in a marketing survey. We also asked them whether they had done that sort of thing in the past and whether they thought their friends had. In the U.S. the issue that best correlated with whether people would participate was whether they themselves had previously done so. That's the principle of consistency in action. In Poland it was whether they perceived that their friends had done that sort of thing in the past.

One of the clichés in Western management literature is that the command-and-control organization is dead. When we print something like that in HBR, I'm never sure if it rings true globally.

There's some evidence in that regard. Citibank asked its managers in various countries the following question: Suppose a fellow manager's project is suffering, and he or she asks for help. Responding will take time and energy, maybe even resources and staffing. Under what circumstances would you feel most compelled to help? In Hong Kong and in China the answer was "I would ask myself, Is the requester connected to a senior person in my group?" Out of fealty, you have to say yes to someone who is above you. In Spain the answer was "I would ask myself, Is the requester connected to one of my friends?" There it's not fealty; it's loyalty. It's the liking principle. You have to know those shifts in emphasis across cultures in order to optimize your effectiveness.

One thing that has changed since you did your original work on influence is the extent to which the internet and social media have taken over our lives. When you're not in a face-to-face setting, how does influence change?

Social media have allowed us to access other sources of information than in the past, but I don't think they've changed our responses to influence appeals. One thing we're seeing, though, is that people are beginning to be influenced by their peers more than by experts.

If you look at TripAdvisor or Yelp, you find that it's not travel writers or restaurant critics who are influencing others' choices. It's people just like you and me, who can now report on their experiences.

That peer-influence effect reminds me of the work you've done on how hotels influence guests to reuse towels. Making an environmental argument was powerful, but what *really* moved the needle was hearing about the number of other guests who reused their towels.

Yes, and in follow-up studies we found that the most successful message was not the one that said the majority of people who've stayed in this hotel reused their towels. It was the one that said the majority of people who've stayed *in this room* reused their towels.

That's such an odd finding.

Isn't it? But one thing I've learned is that the most primitive techniques of influence are the most powerful ones. By "primitive," I don't mean anything derogatory. It's just clear that the more localized and personalized we can make a source of information, the more likely it is to move people in our direction.

What emerging themes in the field interest you?

One important issue is the durability of the change we create. The research typically hasn't looked at that. However, along with a company called Opower, we're now in our fourth year of giving people access to information about their neighbors' patterns of energy usage, and the latest study indicates that people continue to pay attention to that information and to adjust their own usage accordingly. We have to give people a reason to pay attention—in this case, it's evidence about what their neighbors are doing—so that their commitments will endure.

The other issue I've gotten interested in is the ethics of influence, which we haven't examined in a rigorous, scientific way. What are the consequences of being ethical or unethical? Of course, we know that a person's reputation—and her ability to influence—suffer damage if she is discovered to have been unethical, especially inside an organization. However, that fact doesn't necessarily constrain less-than-ethical behavior. Here's why: People don't expect to be found out. Especially at the highest levels of power, people feel that they're bulletproof.

So we're approaching ethics from another, more self-interested, angle: Is there a bottom-line argument for being scrupulously ethical in the way you deal with customers, clients, vendors, regulators, and so on? Our hypothesis is that if an organization allows or cultivates a culture of dishonesty with the world outside the firm, the people inside the organization who are uncomfortable with dishonesty will seek to leave, and they will remain uncomfortable and stressed until they do. Conversely, the people who are comfortable with dishonesty will stay. Eventually the organization will be full of people who are comfortable with cheating—and who will cheat the organization.

Along with Adriana Samper [of Arizona State University] and Jessica Li [of the University of Kansas], I've done some experimental work to test this hypothesis. First we set up project teams and gave some members reason to believe that their fellow team members had conspired to cheat. When those witnesses were then given a difficult problem to solve, they performed significantly worse than people who hadn't been exposed to cheating. They were stressed. They were preoccupied to the point where it affected their performance. In a related experiment, people who, when given a choice, were comfortable working with a dishonest team cheated 50% more often than anyone else did.

These are early data, but we suspect this is a decent proxy for what will happen inside an organization over time. If an organization chooses to be unethical with clients or suppliers, it will ultimately be cheated by people who are happy to work in a dishonest culture. Eventually the organization will pay for it on the bottom line. Count on it.

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