

**Utah Valley University**

---

**From the Selected Works of R. Jeffery Maxfield, Ed.D.**

---

2015

# The Leadership LEAP: A New Approach for Homeland Security

R. Jeffery Maxfield, *Utah Valley University*

Rodger Broome, *Utah Valley University*

John R Fisher, *Utah Valley University*



Available at: [https://works.bepress.com/dr\\_r\\_jeffery\\_maxfield/17/](https://works.bepress.com/dr_r_jeffery_maxfield/17/)

# **The Leadership *LEAP*: A New Approach for Homeland Security**

*R. Jeffery Maxfield, Rodger Broomé & John R. Fisher*

*Almost every significant breakthrough is a result of a courageous break with traditional ways of thinking.<sup>1</sup>*

Stephen R. Covey

## **Introduction**

The world is in chaos, and unfortunately, this most likely will continue. Recent news reports are replete with stories of crises. These events demonstrate the implicit and explicit need for leadership. We believe these crises and their accompanying uncertainty are the reasons people have sought strong leaders – to bring order and sanity to an otherwise uncontrollable world. This is particularly true in homeland security and the emergency services.

Crisis leadership is something that has been lightly explored, but usually in the context of business or political events. Leadership in the context we present is central to human and community existence. Robin Kielkowski states:

“Leadership during crisis is essential. It is often believed to be the sole responsibility of an individual who takes command and has every answer. However, the reality is often quite different. Successful crisis response is the result of proven leadership developed through an ongoing team effort in planning long before an emergency occurs.”<sup>2</sup>

This idea became very evident through our nation’s experience with the events of September 11, 2001. We looked to members of law enforcement, fire, and emergency medical

services and later, the federal government to step into a chaotic situation and lead us out of that chaos. In fact, we as a society have venerated these services. This has also affected the emergency services' communities by creating uncertainty and confusion as to how to best prepare for and respond to incidents, hence, we have become involved in too many areas of response without the matching resources. This creates issues of safety, not only for the responders, but also for the citizens they are to protect. However, the reality is that while these public servants put their lives on the line and respond to dangerous situations, they are really only managing events. We contend that along with this response it is the actions taken on either side of a chaotic situation – the preparation, mitigation, and recovery – where true leadership is displayed. However, the collective morale of the country appears to have little regard or confidence in our present leaders.

Dr. Barbara Kellerman (2013), in her book *The End of Leadership*, contends that,

“while the leadership industry has been thriving growing and prospering beyond anyone’s early imaginings—leaders by and large are performing poorly, worse in many ways than before, miserably disappointing in any case to those among us who once believed the experts held the keys to the kingdom.”<sup>3</sup>

Her premise is that because of technology such as the Internet, cell phones, social networking, etc., followers are finding ways to make traditional leaders, using traditional methods, less effective. In some ways, we agree with this phenomenon. However, we also see something more serious and alarming with regard to contemporary leadership.

The question is, “Why are our leaders so ineffective?” Dr. Kellerman may be right in her assertion that technology has changed the role and function of leaders. However, we feel there

may be a much simpler explanation. If our premise is correct, it will take much effort from scholars, those in positions of authority, and most importantly, parents and teachers to educate and implement a shift in thinking.

Our modern world operates largely on the background of scientific and technological advancement. Martin C. Dillon points out that the underlying goal of science evolved from seeking truth to seeking certainty.<sup>4</sup> Many people do not see these goals as different things. However, seeking certainty through science means that all accepted knowledge that is posited as ‘scientific’ is based on empirical proof, or in other words something that can be seen or based on physical evidence and mathematically measured.

The principal founder of behavioral science, James Watson declared the scientific study of psychology (and by extension, sociology and other social sciences) as an empirical science based on behavior and not consciousness.<sup>5</sup> In other words, psychology was no longer research on the mind directly but a study of human behavior that would provide ‘the knowledgeable’ with the ability to predict and control human behavior. From this point, psychology and the social sciences based their values on the principles of the natural sciences and thereby regarded human beings as subjects or things under study and opened up a horizon for a whole new ‘means to ends’ project.

However, leadership is holistic, not prescriptive. This may be where people have gone wrong in their thinking. As Dr. Kellerman asserts in her book, the leadership-training trend is somewhat nascent and based on the belief that anyone can become a leader if they take a few classes and apply a few principles. But as she points out, this does not seem to be necessarily

true.<sup>6</sup> Max Van Manen, an educator/scholar, argues that the prescribed method for human science, in contrast to natural science involves description, interpretations, and self-reflective or critical analysis. In other words, we explain nature, but we must understand human life.<sup>7</sup>

Scholarly work on leadership, in a relative sense, may be misdirected. We feel that the Newtonian approach to the study of leadership has been one of the reasons. Scientists have used the approach that if leadership can be broken down to its most basic unit or atomized, it can be rebuilt it in a step-by-step method, thereby creating a prescription for building great leaders. Yet, because we are dealing with the dynamics of being human, leadership is a *subjective*, not an objective experience. Therefore, we subscribe more to an Einsteinian approach.<sup>8</sup> The Einsteinian view *infers* a reality based on the analysis of the relationship between the observed and the observer. It is easy to study, survey, quantify, and statistically analyze the formative and summative results of various leadership strategies to find what works. However, it does not tell us how it works; or how one leader is able to get results that another leader does not, while using the same strategies. Applying strategies or theories is only part of the leadership equation.

For many decades, if not centuries, scientific inquiry has been developed around mechanistic or Newtonian physics. Newtonian physics takes a somewhat deterministic or a linear view of cause and effect.<sup>9</sup> In other words, if one looks at a situation, (we will call it situation #3) one should then be able to determine the evolution of situation #3 by looking backward to situation #2. Hence, situation #2 was a result of situation #1. The logical conclusion then, is that if one knows situations 1, 2, and 3, one can reasonably predict the results of situation 4 and so on.

In large measure, this is how the study of leadership has been undertaken and why there are so many differing theories. Researchers have identified successful leaders and tried to break down the individual components (traits, attributes, characteristics, etc.) to develop a strategy or recipe for creating other successful leaders. This approach is understandable because scientific inquiry is a strategy of trying to break things down to the smallest components in order to understand, quantify, and validate hypotheses/theories. Yet, is this the best method for studying the dynamics of human interaction?

Leadership and management require different strategies and competencies contingent upon the situations and their demands.<sup>10</sup> The question is, what competencies are needed for catastrophic or disaster crises? The term crisis denotes events that a) threaten high priority values of people, organizations, or communities, b) exist in time pressures, and c) is unexpected. This existential event(s) brings to bear good leadership or exacerbates the effects of poor leadership. It is for this reason a deeper look at leadership is needed.

First of all, what is the main function of management? If one really breaks it down to the most basic level, management is the process of controlling and compressing (to the best of one's ability) the events of one's environment in order to ensure efficiency and desired outcomes. In other words, it focuses on the processes or means by which outcomes are reached. It seeks to eliminate chaos or to tone-down any disruptive noise, which may affect the processes and ultimately the outcome (or so that is the implied reason). However, doesn't that tend to make the focus on means and processes? Isn't that why there are policies and strict procedures for job performance? In fact, aren't we expected to be busy at all times so that our process and productivity can be measured? Aren't we most often compensated for our efficiency and output?

Leadership on the other hand is expansive and nurturing. Leaders try not to be bound by firm policies, rules, and procedures because they may inhibit the ability to move toward a vision. Leadership's main role is to keep the vision (end) as the focus and foster a sense of community in seeking the vision.

Based on the above presentation, there is a distinction we offer. Management, while an important function in any operation, is very different from leadership. We posit that management is the controlling activities of systems and things; leadership is the influence of relationships among people. In other words, we manage things, but we lead people. Since people are the real resource for getting things accomplished, we feel the need to focus more on leadership, particularly in the context of crises events.

Management and organizational rules do not bring worlds together. Because worlds are constituted of people, groups of people look for leaders in whom they can trust, follow, and will provide direction for the group. People identify with their leaders, and groups iconize such figures to represent their paradigms and intended actions. Leadership therefore, is essentially attached to meaning through vision, mission, principle, justice, duty, care, love, providence, expertise, and other values through which human beings transcend our biological limitations.

Before we introduce our LEAP model of leadership, which is a slightly different approach to developing leaders, we feel it relevant to give our definition of leadership. We posit that leadership is *a process and state where an individual influences a group, and the group agrees to the influence of the individual in order to reach a desired ideal or vision*. Notice the distinction from most definitions – *the group agrees to the influence of the individual in order to*

*reach a desired ideal or vision.* We feel this an important concept to look at and one of the reasons why there is a lack of trust or support for leaders today. In a general sense, our leaders have taken a narcissistic approach to leadership, forgetting that the followers have to agree to their leadership. While the leader may enjoy a period of power with this view, their influence wanes very quickly and their leadership tenure is short-lived.

### **The LEAP Model**

In light of the above information, we feel it relevant here to introduce a new leadership model. This model, designated by the acronym *L-E-A-P*, provides a guide for developing and assessing effective leadership and can be an effective tool in crisis leadership (or for that matter, any other discipline). We want to state up front, this is a model of leadership and not a leadership theory as such.

The LEAP model is comprised of the four leader traits or characteristics we believe through our observations and experience to be most important. Therefore, a leader is: (1) *Legitimate* – a leader has legitimate (authentic) power, knowledge, skill and ability developed through his or her work, experience, education, and attention to detail; (2) *Ethical*—a good leader has strong character, strong values, and makes ethical decisions when confronted with choices and/or dilemmas; (3) *Affective* – a good leader has the ability to instill, trust, confidence, emotion, passion, and create vision with others; and, (4) *Persistent* – a good leader does not give up when times are tough or there is resistance to a righteous idea or plan, but rather shows determination in achieving goals and objectives.



## Legitimate

Legitimacy is a social dynamic, which means that it is not a *thing* but a *relation* within a group of people. Importantly, each person's legitimacy requires at least one other to legitimize him or her in a social role. In fact, it is questionable as to whether or not an individual has any role at all, if there were no 'others' for whom to play such roles. Roles are sometimes more concretely defined or else more situational in nature. Nonetheless, roles are legitimized by the others and ultimately are not an individual effort. In short, the leader is made legitimate by his or her followers and the followers acquiesce to the leader's power/influence. There is a relation between leaders and followers that may not be a thing, but is nonetheless a reality for all of those within the relating group.

Leadership and management are two sides of the same coin and can be seen logically producing social outcomes. Søren Kierkegaard describes two antitheses of *possibility* and *necessity* that become synthesized in freedom. Possibility is the horizon of human potential and when used in this frame, we see that leadership is a cooperative intention of the group toward a goal or the horizon. On the other hand, management can be seen as the necessity or limitations on the group. Such limitations in organization can be economical, behavioral, communicative, etc. In other words, the rules, policies, and regulations in an organization are the confines of human interaction that make it predictable, sensible and under control. Seen this way, it logically follows that a legitimate leader must have both expansive and creative qualities, as well as, practical and mechanical sensibilities. The synergy of these qualities allows for a leader who is forward thinking, but can keep the group's motion on a meaningful and powerful path toward change.<sup>11</sup>

One of the attributes of a legitimate leader is the desire and ability to mentor. Mentoring followers is probably one of the most important functions of a leader; but mentoring is a little different than ‘teaching.’ A legitimate leader recognizes that giving followers opportunities for growth and allowing them to develop those opportunities into successes or failures (without too much direction other than to prevent catastrophic results) creates future, legitimate leaders.

As you can see, a legitimate leader recognizes the value of success *and* failure. Failure, if it is not negligent or overly malignant to the organization or community is a natural process of legitimizing experience. The key is how one uses experience to become a legitimate leader in the eyes of others. Hence, mentoring and being mentored adds to legitimacy.

## **Ethical**

Ethical leaders have been throughout history and currently are in great demand. Unfortunately, we have never been a morally perfect people, nor have we always honored the moral exemplar. However, it appears that more honor of the exemplar can be found in the past than now. This may be somewhat due to the fact that we have become a society that honors fame and popularity more than virtue. In fact, this is apparent with the high salaries of our professional athletes, actors, musicians, etc. Dr. David K. Hart asserts that the nation began to lose touch with its exemplars after World War II. Due to the rise of the big, complex organizations, individual accomplishment faded in with the cloudy background of collective behavior (group behavior). Therefore, by the 1980s it appeared as though the moral exemplars had become extinct. The problem is not that the moral exemplars are non-existent; it is that we as a society have lost the

driving desire to find them and appreciate them when they are identified, which lessens their ability to influence.<sup>12</sup>

It is within Dr. Hart's assertion we find an interesting paradox of today's society. Good leaders act righteously. However, this goes much beyond making choices based on a code of conduct or a code of ethics. It is actually a consistent demonstration of moral character; leaders act rightly in most, if not all they do.<sup>13</sup>

One of the things that made the United States such a successful enterprise was the concept of individual liberty. Each person was free to employ his or her talents and abilities to create the life he or she desired. While achieving this desired lifestyle may not have been easy, the liberty to pursue happiness was individual, not collective.

The majority of society has held those who accomplish laudable or virtuous things in high esteem and while their success was created as a part of a community (and their accomplishments were in part, aided by that community) it was through individual hard work and dedication that they were able to accomplish their goals. For this reason, many of our ancestors left everything they had to immigrate to the United States – to build a life for themselves and their families, where in large measure, they were in control of their destinies.

Yet, somewhere along the line, we have lost this concept. Individualism has taken a back seat to collectivism and we look at those who have accomplished laudable things differently than before. While we give surface praise to those who accomplish virtuous and laudable things, we more often than not try to find ways to denigrate their success or legislate ways to make them

share with us the rewards of their work. We seek to elect leaders who promise to give us more and more without us having to earn it.

While collective sharing has emotional appeal, especially when applied to those who are in legitimate need, it is taking away from individual liberty and accomplishment. We have all heard the adage, “*Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.*” We all inherently understand the principle. To put it in another way, many of us seek to take the poor person(s) out of the ghetto. Doesn’t it make more sense to take the ‘ghetto’ out of the person? Shouldn’t we be finding ways to educate and uplift these individuals so they might employ their talents and abilities in ways that not only reward them, but also reward society?

It is here that we see the paradox. While we have been caught up in seeking to make everything fair and equal (which in and of itself is impossible), we have also recognized the need for a virtuous leader to provide the moral and principle-based guidance. We strive to find someone who will lead us to be better than we are. We want this to be universal in its application (collective), but it really is up to the individual. We are really looking for that courageous, virtuous human being who will exemplify the unique qualities we have heretofore held in such high esteem and help us to be better. However, the collective can only become better when the individual becomes better. This is what we believe everyone is secretly (or maybe even unconsciously) hoping for in a leader – someone who will lead us to be a better individuals.

So, what are the qualities of the ethical leader? Dr. Hart provides a great blueprint for the moral exemplar. He offers that the leader must be of good moral character, must be a constant

exemplar; it is not a sometime thing. Second, the exemplar must not be compelled. He or she must be free to act as he or she intends. Third, the leader must be relatively faultless; he or she need not be perfect, but must continually strive for virtue. Finally, the actions of the leader must produce benefit or something good, even in failure; a leader's actions must never be pointless.<sup>11</sup>

The attributes Dr. Hart has posited are timeless; they are not bounded by currency or locale. These characteristics have and will continue to be qualities of moral and ethical relevance. While modern moral issues may be different from past issues, these virtues and principles have, and can be anticipated to stand the test of time.

### **Affective**

The ability to affect, or to be 'affective,' is very important in leadership. In many ways, it is the most recognizable attribute or characteristic of leadership. Yet, what does it really mean to be affective and how can one recognize a truly *affective* leader. In the opinion of many, a leader who affects is one who demonstrates charisma. Who does not want to be around a person who is charismatic? Unfortunately, charisma alone is not a good indicator of leadership and many cases exist where people have put their trust in a charismatic person, only to be led to harm or destruction.

We are born into this world as individuals; individuals with unique talents, abilities, personalities, weaknesses and strengths. Most of what we do in life is to enhance ourselves individually. Yet, we as human beings are also very social. We seek to be accepted and interact with others. We are not only born with the ability to reason, we are also born with emotions and

therefore are dynamic and diverse in our needs and desires. A leader who has the ability to “affect” has the power to create and transcend. We seek a leader with the ability to affect us and help us to feel accepted and secure, while at the same time helping us to effectively achieve and grow.

### ***Effective vs. Affective***

Unfortunately, due to the desire to make the most profit or benefit at the least amount of cost, there is dominant pressure to be as effective as can be. From a management perspective, effectiveness is very important and helps keep things working well. It is by no means a bad thing. Yet, effect without affect soon crumbles. Let’s look at the difference between these two concepts.

*Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary* defines *effect* as: *Anything brought about by a cause; a result*. With this in mind, we can deduce that to be effective is to bring about a desired result. Of course, this is a very important concept in individual lives as well as organizations. Everyone wants to bring about desired results, especially when one is implementing changes, growth, or seeking to maintain current situations. When something is working well and bring desired results, we say that it is effective.

On the other hand, *Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary* defines *affect* as: *Influence, to stir the emotions of; to move*. Like with *effect*, we can also deduce that to be affective is to stir up one’s emotion or provide a means for personal motivation to achieve desired results. While there appears to be subtle difference in the definitions, we believe the difference is much greater.

One of the prominent experts on leadership, Peter Drucker has provided some insight with his assertion *that management is doing a thing right, while leadership is doing the right thing*.<sup>14</sup> While this is somewhat nebulous or leaves a lot of room for interpretation, we feel it helps define what being affective means.

As we presented earlier, Van Manen asserted that human science, in contrast to natural science, involves description, interpretations, and self-reflective or critical analysis;<sup>15</sup> we define nature, but we must understand human life. Leadership involves human will and performance. We can quantify the results of leadership, but we will always have difficulty trying to define or quantify the process of leadership because it involves human interaction. Why? The answer is quite obvious; no two human beings are exactly alike. What works for one may not necessarily work for another. Also, what works in one situation may not work in a different situation. So how is it that we have been able to work together at all to achieve what we have? We believe the answer lies in the concept of affectiveness.

### ***Vision***

There is an old anecdote about a steamship crossing the ocean. Down in the boiler room, the firemen (those assigned to shovel coal into the boiler furnace) were being supervised by an effective manager. He had them working as hard as he could in order to make the best time possible. Meanwhile, the ship's navigator had been calculating their position and desired course. Upon realizing that they had made an error and were quite possibly lost, the navigator got hold of the supervisor of the firemen and asked him to stop shoveling the coal for a while because the

navigator was not sure of where the ship was headed. The supervisor told the navigator to leave them alone because he didn't care where they were going, just that they were making good time.

This little story helps demonstrate the difference between effectiveness and affectiveness. The boiler room supervisor knew his role was to provide the most efficient and effective way of producing speed and he was doing his job well. Unfortunately, he had not bought to the boiler room crew the vision of where they were going. The only thing that mattered was to get the ship moving as fast as possible. While this story provides a little humor and one may think that this isn't realistic, the truth is it happens many more times than one would believe and is many times the reason individuals, families, and/or organizations fail. Generally speaking, we get so involved in the processes of life/business, we often fail to realize that we have no vision of our preferred future or desired destination.

So, what is a vision? The word comes from the Latin *videre*, "to see." What will the future look like? What do I see when I picture success. A vision provides a clear sense of purpose for an individual, group, or organization and provides a clear sense of future appearance (what the individual, group, or organization will look like or be) once the vision is realized.

When a leader's vision is adopted or shared by the group, the group and individuals within the group tend to become empowered. Empowerment provides individuals with the capacity to believe, think, and act from a position of strength. The key element of empowerment is relationships, not accomplishments; relationships are more important. An empowered person will feel:

- Important, legitimate and significant;



- That his or her contribution and competence really matter;
- That his or her work is meaningful, exciting and challenging;
- That he or she has a sense of belonging to the group or organization.

A leader with a relevant vision can affect followers and create a pathway for individual and group success. In other words, an affective leader has his nose to the wind and his eyes on the horizon seeking to make things in the future more effective and efficient *through human interaction and relationships*.

### ***Inter-personal Skills and Communication***

Another attribute of the affective leader is his or her inter-personal skills and ability to communicate. In fact, we believe this is the major component or attribute that determines what many believe is charisma. Someone who can make others feel as though they are the only ones in the room has a great skill and we feel is the key to charismatic abilities. But, good communication is more than expressing one's vision and speaking with clarity. While these are definitely important and cannot be overlooked, communication is much, much more. As we have previously expressed, human relationships are more important than achievement or production for long-term success. Therefore, knowing and demonstrating how to interact with and communicate with individuals is extremely important. Even when one is speaking to a group, communication should be delivered as though speaking to an individual.

How can one become a better communicator – one who can *affect* others? The key is not in becoming more fluent and polished in one's speech (which is also important), but in becoming a better listener. An important thing to remember is that when one listens to others, one does not

have to take on the other person's problems or try to solve them; this is a mistake that can truly impede communication.

From a leadership perspective, the power of this principle comes from the fact that as you truly listen and validate the concerns and emotions of your followers, the followers then feel empowered to solve their own problems and are more willing to offer their time, talents, and abilities to the vision or mission of the group, whether in business, community, or family.

We would submit that listening involves four basic steps: (1) Listen – listen to what is being verbalized; listen to the emotions of the other person (anger, frustration, sadness, joy, etc.); (2) Understand – put yourself in their shoes to feel what they are feeling, understand what their needs are and why they are telling you these things; (3) Suspend all judgment – don't put your values or experiences in their situation, and, (4) Do not offer advice – most people already know how to solve their issues and are communicating for validation. If one offers advice and it is not what the person is planning, most likely he or she will dismiss it anyway. If the person accepts the advice and it does not work out successfully, then he or she will blame the advice giver. The best thing one can do is ask clarifying questions to assist the person in becoming clearer in his or her own strategy or approach.

If one is successful in incorporating these steps into communication, one will be much more successful as a leader, because followers will have confidence in the leader and will be empowered to accomplish more than they believe can.

Unfortunately, communicating as we have outlined in this chapter is not usually a natural thing. Therefore, it will take practice and effort to make listening and communicating more

natural. Yet, the practice and effort in making this a part of natural communication will be well worthwhile. In many respects, this will help one to *affect* people in a positive way. One should be able to communicate a vision(s) in ways that will make others want to come along and be part of an exciting opportunity. This allows connection with others and empowers them to give their best efforts to become valuable members of a team – whether that team is at work or family. A well-developed person (leader), whether as a boss, co-worker, or parent will have worked to become more *affective*, and is our definition of charisma. So, if one wants to be more successful at work or in relationships, learn how to communicate and practice it always. The results will speak for themselves.

### **Persistent**

Much of what it takes to lead one's self and others is the tenacity to persist when the plan or process of achieving a goal becomes overwhelmingly difficult or seemingly impossible. An important aspect of persistence is the understanding that physical and/or political conditions can bring plans and actions to a halt. However, persistence is pursuing the desired outcomes in spite of perceived conditions and knowing only those things that are beyond our control or influence should cause us difficulty. Moreover, the more one knows about conditions in relation to his or her limits, the more influence he or she will have to adjust one's path to success along the way.

Somewhat like the principle regarding orthopedic adaptations for increased bone strength, having pressure or withstanding impacts with sufficient times of recovery and rejuvenation results in strength and more resiliency. That means that effective leaders are more

likely to actually build a greater capacity to withstand adversity. Life's challenges come in variations of mental, physical, spiritual, and combination tests of one's strength and endurance.

### ***Staying the Course***

Human beings have a paradoxical nature that has its nexus resting on anxiety. The anxiety we experience is grounded in the awareness of our own mortality. In other words, it is death anxiety that ultimately underlies our day-to-day worries, whether situational or general.<sup>16</sup> We understand that the old saying, "there are two things people have to do, die and pay taxes," is really only literally true for the first and not the second.

Persistence in a challenging situation or condition means that we have to manage ourselves in the dance with our circumstances. All too often, we think of 'fighting the challenge.' The metaphor of a physical fight or war with our adversity can add psychological strain to the experience. Persistence and tenacity are not necessarily forcing through a barrier, but rather navigating through a field to reach a goal/solution, while also understanding that persistence is a process and only can be understood with respect to a desired outcome. This is why we often use metaphors of space and distance to talk about persistence. Our understanding of persistence involves the forward movement or maintenance of position in terms of options. So in a sense, we can use persistence in terms of the metaphor of a war, or in terms of the metaphor of a journey.<sup>17</sup>

### ***Focus***

In the war metaphor, we end up dealing with issues like strategy, tactics, and destroying our obstacles. As a journey, life's challenging circumstance turn out to be obstacles, but we start

thinking about different paths to take rather than how to blow them up. So process is an important function toward outcome and is something we must attend to in terms of persisting in a task or project.

Susan Jackson and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi assert that the relationship between a task's difficulty and the performer's competency is a ratio when in adequate balance provides an experience of absorption.<sup>18</sup> In other words, this is when the subconscious takes over so the mind and body function in total harmony. People will not experience this flow when the task is too easy relative to their abilities, or when the task gets too difficult for their skill-sets. Therefore, we can see this generally in an individual's sense of self within the context of their situation. The principle applies whether it is an intellectual, physical, or spiritual challenge. When the task seems too big for the person, he or she will tend to find it overwhelming. When the task seems too small he or she will take it for granted. When tasks are small, we can string them together to synthesize a larger task and find much more appreciation for its completion. In a sense, what we are proposing here is that in order to persist in a project or through a challenge without getting overwhelmed, bored and/or losing focus, we have to mentally and emotionally 'size' the experience to our capabilities. This means we either have to expand or constrict our worlds into a manageable relation in order to stay motivated and capable of meeting the task.<sup>19</sup>

Within the journey of persistence, one must remain focused on solving the various problems arising rather than fixating on the problems themselves. Moreover, the hyper-vigilance for problem detection and identification can be a drain on mental and emotional resources. Jason Selk calls the approach *relentless solution focus* that successful people must practice in order to

see solutions to the problems rather than being *problem-focused*, which creates an overwhelming heap of problems. First of all, there are always challenges and problems that need to be navigated, but it is the spaces in-between that are pathways to the clearings and destination.<sup>20</sup>

When one is motivated by the outcome, without getting too focused on it, and is relentlessly solution-oriented rather than problem fixated, he or she can slalom through the barriers, obstacles, and uphill parts of the journey.<sup>21</sup> So the pathway to success through persistence is to be goal oriented with enough flexibility and process mindedness to find the way through to the end.

The synthesis therefore, is making the lived-world situation manageable in size by reducing it to its process; by remaining focused on solutions to each obstacle in an open way that is flexible and creative enough to innovate some solutions to the novel challenges; and, have the will to keep going toward the desired outcome until stopped by insurmountable conditions. That means, one doesn't quit but is stopped by only things beyond his or her control. One simply carries on with one choice, one action, and minding only those that are relevant to the process of the moment.

### **Summary**

So where do we go from here? As we have pondered this for several years, one thing has become apparent to us: Leadership curriculum and scholarly activity need to undergo a paradigmatic shift. As we stated earlier, leadership is not prescriptive. We cannot send people to a class and present them with theories and strategies, which they can then attempt to apply in the

real world. Leadership is a social, human science. We believe it to be counter-productive to atomize or break leadership down to its smallest components so that they can then be taught mechanically in leadership courses. Epistemology (what is known, theories, etc.) *is* important. However, the lived experience and human dynamic (ontology) is where true leadership flourishes.

Secondly, we believe a clearer distinction between leadership and management needs to be defined, studied, and put into curriculum. The model of director/teacher as leader has been used for years. Yet with newer technology and access to information, this model has apparently become less effective. While management skills are important and need to be continually taught, leadership is a differing concept and we may be obfuscating its importance by blending it with management. We think that the model of the teacher/student of the past has driven our acceptance of the leader/manager to be blended. If one is to look at business school curriculum at most universities, leadership is usually taught right alongside of management—often in the same course. It appears to be the assumption that when one rises to a position of management, that one is also a leader.

We believe that at the least, the curriculum at our universities should shift from teaching components of leadership theory to preparing leaders who have extensive work in personal development and have been given real-world experience in becoming leaders. We also believe that in addition to the current epistemological or theoretical aspects of leadership, the LEAP model is an effective guide for development of the human factors side of leadership curriculum.

To support our assertion, an interesting article was written by Erhard, Jensen, and Granger, titled: “Creating Leaders: An Ontological Model.” They offered this in the abstract of their paper:

“The sole objective of our ontological approach to creating leaders is to leave students actually being leaders and exercising leadership effectively as their natural self-expression. By ‘natural self-expression’ we mean a way of being and acting in any leadership situation that is a spontaneous and intuitive effective response to what one is dealing with.

In creating leaders we employ the ontological discipline (from the Latin *ontologia* ‘science of being,’ see Heidegger (1927)). The ontological model of leader and leadership opens up and reveals the actual nature of being when one is being a leader and opens up and reveals the source of one’s actions when exercising leadership.”<sup>22</sup>

One interesting assertion they also make in this article points to what we have been saying throughout this book. They state:

“Yet, students being able to speak cogently about leader and leadership, and even with the ability to explain the style or characteristic, the principles and actions, and so forth that made or would have made this or that leader effective in this or that case, does not reliably leave students being leaders as their natural self-expression.”<sup>23</sup>

In other words, learning the theories and components of leadership (epistemology), do not make one an effective leader. One must become or live the role of leader (ontology). For the most part current curriculum does not allow for that lived experience. We feel this is what is needed, especially with regard to our nation’s security.

While it is obvious that formal education is not necessary to become a good leader or guarantee good leadership, it is in academia that most inroads or changes are researched and introduced. This is why we feel so strongly that a shift in paradigms be undertaken and new qualitative scholarly work done – we need to understand the human experience of leadership, not



just the mechanisms or prescriptions of human interaction. As we come to understand more about that human experience, we will be better able to develop curriculum and programs to develop better people, who will then use their experience and development to become natural leaders – whether at home, in the community, in business or in politics.

Therefore, we submit that the LEAP model is a good basis for which to begin development of leadership curriculum and experience. If one works to have *Legitimacy* – through authentic knowledge and experience –, one will be better prepared to assume a leadership role. This is not necessarily *just* in one’s discipline. We believe that a liberal education is not only desirable, but necessary and would promote the inclusion of a well-rounded liberal education in all institutions of higher learning (and even in secondary schools if possible). Therefore, we feel it incumbent that the well-developed future leader work to gain legitimacy through, education, knowledge, *and* experience. We also encourage all students to gain as much knowledge as possible through pursuit of a liberal education in conjunction with his or her preferred discipline.

*Ethical* and value based performance is vital to good leadership. Yet, this is not something that can be gleaned from reading books or learning ethical theories – it must be lived. In short, we feel very strongly that curriculum be developed that gives the student opportunities to use and reflect upon value-based and ethical decision-making. Only when one has explored in advance how one will most likely act or react in a critical situation can one be prepared to do the right thing. Curriculum that would allow for this is vital to the success of tomorrow’s leaders and our continued lifestyle. We need to prepare leaders to do the right thing, not the popular thing.

*Affective* leadership is vital. We need to develop leaders who not only can create a vision and effectively communicate that vision to others, but who can also facilitate the experience of others as being integral in the fulfillment of that vision. We need to distinguish more between management and leadership, teaching both as separate and distinct components, because both are vital to success but not necessarily equal or inter-related in all situations.

*Persistence* in leadership is irreplaceable. Nothing would ever be accomplished if at the first hint of resistance or the first barrier to a vision the leader gives up. Learning how to regroup and to move in parallel directions to accomplish a goal or preferred vision is a key to success. We need to teach future leaders how to think critically, to find solutions to problems or roadblocks, and to become intransigent in seeking the righteous cause. Presenting future leaders with dilemmas and helping them to find innovative ways to succeed through reflection and experience will achieve this.

The LEAP model was developed for everyone. By following the principles of this model, we believe everyone can enhance their personal experiences, their family life, and life in the community. The better developed that members of our society become, we will be able to foster better leadership. With more quality leadership, we will raise the quality of living and provide better protection for the homeland, no matter the crisis. We can train managers, but we must *develop* leaders!

## Bibliography

- Becker, Ernest. *The Denial of Death*. New York: Free Press, 1997.
- Brainy Quotes. "Albert Einstein." Last accessed March 1, 2015.  
[http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/a/albert\\_einstein\\_8.html](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/a/albert_einstein_8.html).
- Covey, Stephen R. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. New York: Simon & Schuster (Free Press), 1989.
- Dillon, Martin C. "Reversibility and Ethics." *Bulletin de la Société Américaine de Philosophie de Langue Française* 10(2) (1998): 82-101.
- Drucker, Peter F. *The Essential Drucker*. New York: Harper Business, reissue edition, 2001.
- Erhard, Werner, Michael C. Jensen, and Kari L. Granger. "Creating Leaders: An Ontological/Phenomenological Model." In *The Handbook for Teaching Leadership*. Edited by Scott Snook, Nitin Nohria, and Rakesh Khurana. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications, 2012.
- Hart, David K. "The Moral Exemplar in an Organizational Society." In *Exemplary Public Administrators: Character and Leadership in Government*. Edited by Terry L. Cooper and N. Dale Wright. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 1992, 9-29.
- Jackson, Susan, and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. *Flow in Sports: The Keys to Optimal Experiences and Performance*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1999.
- Kellerman, Barbara. *The end of Leadership*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2012.
- Kierkegaard, Soren. *The Concept of Anxiety: A Simple Psychologically Orienting Deliberation on the Dogmatic Issue of Hereditary Sin*. Translated by R. Thomte and A.B. Anderson. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981.
- Lakoff, George, and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Okun, Barbara F. *Seeking Connections in Psychotherapy*. Holboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 1990.
- Porter, Kay. *The Mental Athlete: Inner Training for Peak Performance in All Sports*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 2003.
- Robin Kielkowski. "Leadership during Crisis." *Journal of Leadership Studies* 7(3) (2013): 62-65.
- Schneider, Kirk J. *The Paradoxical Self: Toward an Understanding of Our Contradictory Nature*. New York: Humanity Books, 1999.
- Selk, Jason. *10-Minute Toughness: The Mental Training Program for Winning before the Game Begins*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008.
- Selk, Jason. *Executive Toughness: The Mental-Training Program to Increase Your Leadership Performance*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2011.
- Van Manen, Max. *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1990.
- Van Wart, Montgomery, and Naim Kapucu. "Crisis Management Competencies: The case of Emergency Managers in the USA." *Routledge* 13 (2011): 489-511.
- Watson, James B. "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It." *Psychological Review* 20 (1913): 158-177.

**Endnotes**

- <sup>1</sup> Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* (New York: Simon & Schuster (Free Press), 1989).
- <sup>2</sup> Robin Kielkowski, "Leadership during Crisis," *Journal of Leadership Studies* 7(3) (2013): 62.
- <sup>3</sup> Barbara Kellerman, *The End of Leadership* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2012), xv.
- <sup>4</sup> Martin C. Dillon, "Reversibility and Ethics," *Bulletin de la Société Américaine de Philosophie de Langue Française* 10(2) (1998): 82-101.
- <sup>5</sup> James B. Watson, "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It," *Psychological Review* 20 (1913): 158-177.
- <sup>6</sup> Kellerman, *End of Leadership*.
- <sup>7</sup> Max Van Manen, *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990).
- <sup>8</sup> "Albert Einstein," *Brainy Quotes*, [http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/a/albert\\_einstein\\_8.html](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/a/albert_einstein_8.html).
- <sup>9</sup> Barbara F. Okun, *Seeking Connections in Psychotherapy* (Holboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass, 1990).
- <sup>10</sup> Montgomery Van Wart and Naim Kapucu, "Crisis Management Competencies: The Case of Emergency Managers in the USA." *Routledge* 13 (2011).
- <sup>11</sup> Soren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety: A Simple Psychologically Orienting Deliberation on the Dogmatic Issue of Hereditary Sin*, transl. R. Thomte and A.B. Anderson (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981).
- <sup>12</sup> David K. Hart, "The Moral Exemplar in an organizational Aociety," in *Exemplary Public Administrators: Character and Leadership in Government*, eds. Terry L. Cooper and N. Dale Wright (San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 1992).
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>14</sup> Peter F. Drucker, *The Essential Drucker* (New York: Harper Business, reissue edition, 2001).
- <sup>15</sup> Van Manen, *Researching Lived Experience*.
- <sup>16</sup> Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death* (New York: Free Press, 1997).
- <sup>17</sup> George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

- <sup>18</sup> Susan Jackson and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow in Sports: The Keys to Optimal Experiences and Performance* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 1999).
- <sup>19</sup> Kirk J. Schneider, *The Paradoxical Self: Toward an Understanding of Our Contradictory Nature* (New York: Humanity Books, 1999).
- <sup>20</sup> Jason Selk, *10-Minute Toughness: The mental training program for winning before the game begins*. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008); Jason Selk, *Executive Toughness: The Mental-Training Program to Increase Your Leadership Performance* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2011).
- <sup>21</sup> Kay Porter, *The Mental Athlete: Inner Training for Peak Performance in All Sports* (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 2003).
- <sup>22</sup> Werner Erhard, Michael C. Jensen, and Kari L. Granger, “Creating Leaders: An Ontological/Phenomenological Model,” in *The Handbook for Teaching Leadership*, ed. Scott Snook, Nitin Nohria and Rakesh Khurana (Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications, 2012).
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*