



LEADERSHIP

in the new “marketing verse”



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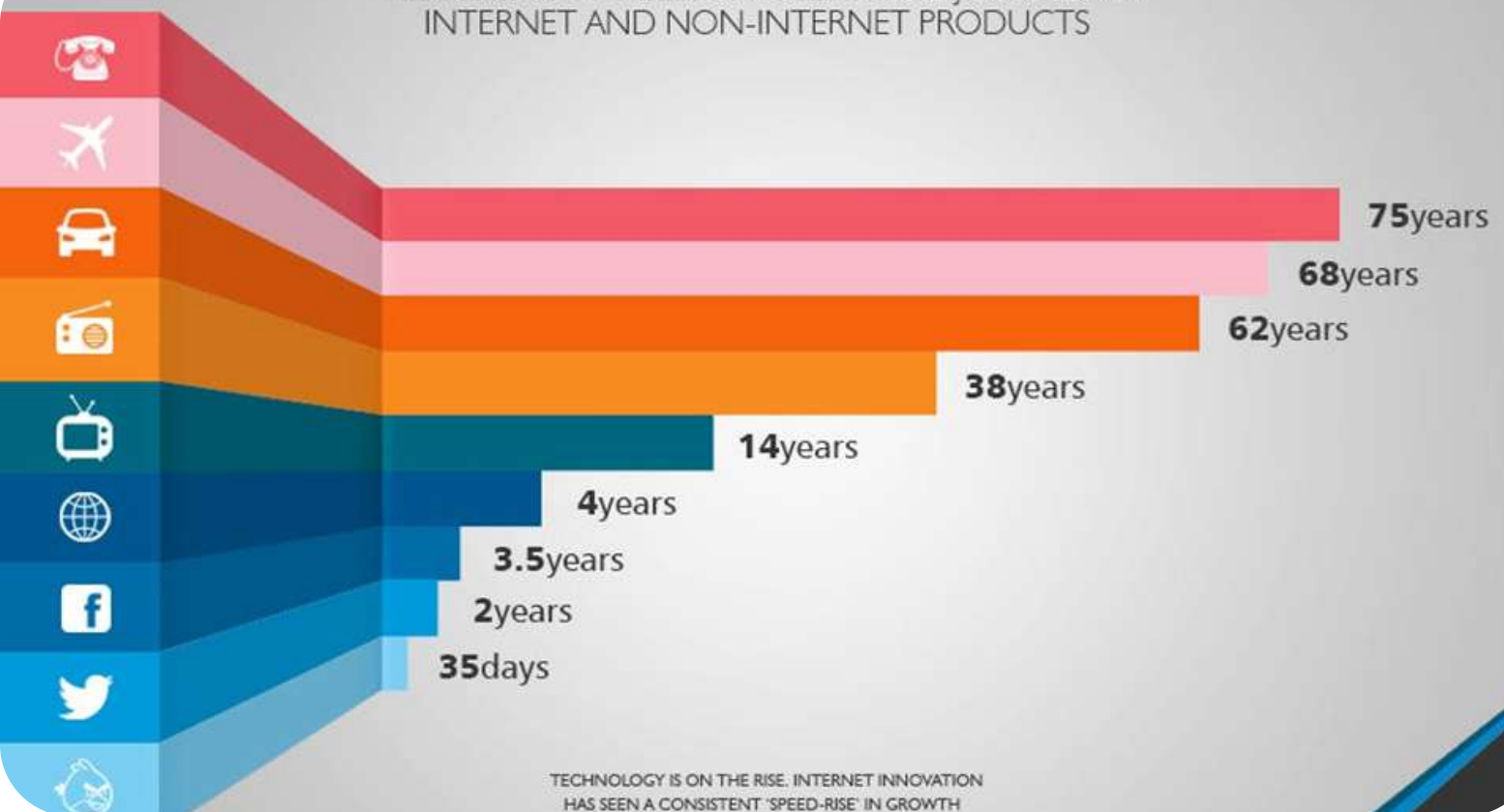
EMBRACING CHANGE

“The only permeanant thing in life is change”. This is a quote we often hear. In the context of organizations there are two types of changes we need to be aware of. Changes within the organization and those that take place in the operating environment. If the change in the operating environment is faster and significant than the changes within the organization, then extinction is inevitable. Business history is full of such instances. Thus, the phrase “you cannot see Dinosaurs dance”.

If one observes the changes that have taken place in the past few decades, it becomes very clear the speed of change and the intensity of the change in almost all areas of human existence had been Fast and Vast. Whether it is technology, other fields of sciences, political and economic dimensions, and even the climatic conditions have been changing dramatically and in shorter intervals. In every sphere the cycles of change have become shorter, and the intensity sharper.

THE ACCELERATION OF CHANGE IN THE MODERN WORLD

REACHING 50 MILLION USERS: THE JOURNEY OF INTERNET AND NON-INTERNET PRODUCTS



To illustrate this, we can take the time taken to reach 50 million users of various technologies pre internet and post. Even if the data are not 100% accurate we have observed these trends, as contemporary phenomena. These changes have impacted on the operating environment of businesses significantly.

TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION RATE

LEADERSHIP

In times of drastic change, leadership surpasses traditional management

When the changes are so severe, businesses cannot operate using the Management Paradigm alone. Managing according to rules can work well when there is predictability. When that is not there the organizations have to adapt very quickly to the changing environment and anticipate such changes and effect appropriate changes within the organization. This can be done only by Leading.

Over the last two decades Leadership has become a major area of study and training in the corporate world. According to a Forbes article published even in 2020 alone Leadership Development has been a \$366 Billion Industry across the world. The number of books written about Leadership too is testimony to this observation.

In a landmark study conducted by Prof Dave Ulrich, Norm Smallwood, and Kate Sweetman, offered a simplified formula known as the Leadership Code.



LEADERSHIP CODE

The Leadership Code is the result of extensive research done by the world-renowned HR Guru Dave Ulrich et al to synthesize the core capabilities of leaders based on all the significant research and practical work available up to that time. This helps anyone to cut through the concept clutter and identify what every leader at whatever level of the organization has to Do and to Be. Thus, the five leadership Roles are identified as – Strategist, Executor, Talent Manager, and Human Capital Developer with the core being Personal Proficiency.

Leadership Code helps every leader to link his or her results to these capabilities.



DECODING LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

The authors over the years have made some broad observations.

All leaders must excel at Personal Proficiency. Without the foundation of trust and credibility, you cannot ask others to follow you. While individuals may have different styles (introvert/extrovert, intuitive/sensing, etc.), any individual leader must be seen as having Personal Proficiency to engage followers.

This is probably the toughest of the five domains to train and some individuals are naturally more capable than others.

All leaders must have one towering strength. Most successful leaders have at least one of the other four roles in which they excel. Most are personally predisposed to one of the four areas. These are the signature strengths of your leaders.

All leaders must be at least average in his or her “weaker” leadership domains. It is possible to train someone to learn how to be strategic, execute, manage talent, and develop future talent. There are behaviors and skills in each domain that can be identified, developed, and mastered.

The higher up the organization that the leader rises, the more he or she needs to develop excellence in more than one of the four domains.



In the current context of an ever-increasing digitized civilization, I feel leaders need to pay more attention to three of the many proficiencies identified under Personal Proficiency.

They are **Ability to Cope**, **Think Creatively** and **Enhanced ability to Sense**.

Ability to Cope

In times of frequent and dramatic changes, leaders face heightened uncertainty. Failing to navigate these uncertainties hinders progress. Analogous to the basic act of walking, forward movement requires lifting one foot, moving it, and bringing it down, leading to a moment of imbalance. Walking succeeds because of confidence in the landing surface and a clear sense of direction.

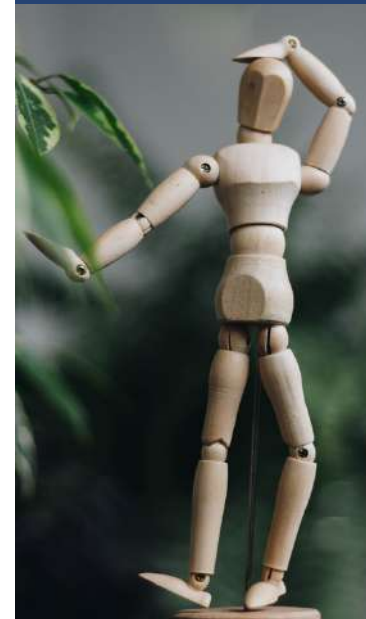
This simple process reveals a key aspect of uncertainty coping: developing confidence and maintaining direction amid a lucid and turbulent present. Leaders dealing with uncertainty undergo significant stress, requiring self-kindness. Demanding high performance necessitates positive self-energy without self-punishment for mistakes. Adopting a mindset of treating oneself as a caring parent would treat their child fosters resilience and cooperation within the team.

This capacity is cultivated through increased self-awareness.

Think Creatively

Intellectual Agility, a facet of the Leadership Code's Personal Proficiency, becomes increasingly vital in the era of AI-driven creativity. Across fields like science, arts, and commerce, AI amplifies creative capacities. In marketing communications, from individual creativity to collective influences and the transformative impact of social media, creativity has evolved. AI now synergizes millions of expressions, propelling a new wave of profound creativity. Leaders must harness this collective creativity and further elevate their own. To enhance creativity, adopting the DNA of Innovator, as defined by Prof Hal B. Gregersen, is key—mastering behaviors like Observation, Questioning, Experimentation, Networking, and Associational Thinking. Talent shows like 'Got Talent' have played a role in enhancing the overall quality and creativity of performing arts, marking another dimension in the evolution of creative expression.

ABILITY TO COPE



THINK CREATIVELY



Associational thinking is bringing together things that are normally not.

SENSING



Sensing

Sensing, the fundamental ability for living organisms to read their environment, is vital for survival. However, technological advances are eroding this capability. Decades ago, Asian farmers predicted weather patterns by observing the nesting behavior of weaver birds. Today, tools like Google Maps boost confidence in navigation but diminish the ability to notice crucial landmarks along the way.

Business leaders must hone their sensing abilities to observe trends and patterns in the operating environment, utilizing both predictive analytics and human intuition. Additionally, leaders must be sensitive to their own emotions and motives for better performance. As human connection weakens, leaders must excel in observing, listening, and empathizing to bridge the communication gap within teams.

MINDFULNESS -SATI-

This proficiency is crucial in leadership, enabling individuals to cope with uncertainties, think creatively, and be sensitive to themselves and others in the new operating environment.



To develop these three capabilities of Coping, Thinking Creatively, and Sensing self and the environment one must be more and more self-aware. Becoming aware is a basic human capability that can be developed to a refined skill through the **practice of mindfulness or Sati** as it is described in the teachings of Buddha, though the practice itself has no religious limitations. We have a general capacity to become aware of our surroundings, then we become aware of our actions sometimes long after an event, sometimes as we are engaged in it halfway through, and in some instances just before. If this basic capability is developed by constant conscious practice, then we can be more and more mindful. When mindful the first thing we learn is to become intensely aware of the present moment. Especially life as it happens now. Bringing our attention to the present, free from the worries of the past and the anxieties of the future, the two main distractions from the present moment. This reduces the inner chatter and then develop a profound silence within for prolonged periods. This alone frees up an enormous amount of mental energy that is wasted dwelling in the past and the future. Secondly this skill helps us observe things without losing perspective and becoming increasingly sharp in our observations. We lose our ability to observe objectively because we always get influenced by our likes or dislikes or due to deluded or confused mental states. Mindfulness gives that edge for a person to approach situations with a clear and calm mind. The most important ingredient to navigate through the kind of stressful situations we are exposed to regularly.

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