Coaching the CEO

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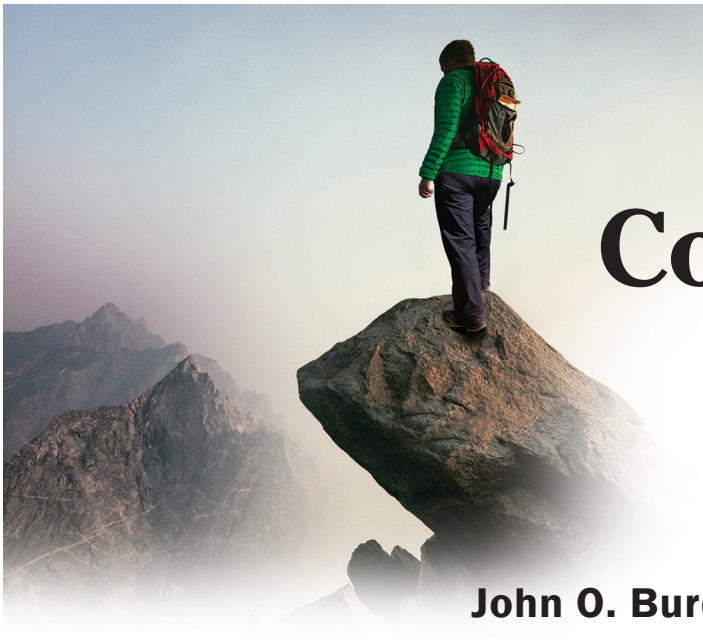

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"A leader who only gets better at what they have always done is ultimately sowing the seeds of their own failure."

Winners Don't Ask for Permission

Baron Pierre de Coubertin was so impressed by, what he thought was, the ethos of fair play that permeated English Public Schools that he sought to transfer the same philosophy to the modern Olympic Games.

Amateurism, gentlemanly/lady-like behaviour, teamwork and competitive sport as socially and personally enriching activities thus became a mantra for those early games. Meanwhile, in those same English Public Schools any breach of that philosophy was considered "cheating." Even thirty years later, when breaking the four-minute mile at Cambridge, Roger Bannister was castigated for having the temerity to use pacemakers.

It was against that background that Cambridge undergraduate, Harold Abrahams, forged a determination to win gold in the 1924 Olympics in Paris. Being Jewish meant he had faced a good deal of prejudice even before going up to Cambridge. When confronted with the ugly face of bigotry some withdraw … others stumble. Mr. Abrahams merely became more determined.

What especially upset the establishment of the day was that Abrahams had the gall to actually hire a professional coach. "A gentleman doesn't cheat." To make matters worse his coach, Sam Mussabini, was "a damn foreigner!"[1] For his day, Mussabini, was an excellent coach. He had previously coached athletes to gold in the 1908, 1912 and the 1920 Olympics. Being a "professional" meant, however, that he was banned from watching Abrahams in the stadium.

A superb athlete – Abraham's best time for the 100-yard dash was 9.6 seconds. In the 1924

1 He was actually born in Blackheath, London, of Syrian, Turkish, Italian and French ancestry. He was inducted into the English Athletics Hall of Fame in 2011.

Paris Games, his time in the 100-metres final was 10.6 seconds[2] … on a cinder track. And forget starting blocks. The athletes of the day dug two holes behind the start line (with a small trowel) to create the "perfect start."

Rebuked by his teachers and tutors, one can only start to imagine the intense pressure Abrahams was under. A climate of criticism and rejection that – for those that condemned him – quickly turned into pride and support when they realised he had actually won the gold! Abrahams understood what the pundits didn't – winners don't ask for permission![3]

It's Lonely at the Top

The research suggests that only about one-third of CEOs receive formal coaching.[4] Meanwhile, half of senior managers operate without external coaching support. The same study, paradoxically, suggested that nearly 100% of those same leaders (CEOs and senior managers) said that they would like to be coached.

A wish isn't an action; saying isn't doing; and desire isn't delivery. Confidentiality, the time available, "if it ain't broke …," "what would I really gain," and "I'm getting all the coaching I need inside the business" loom large among the reasons why coaching at the top gets set aside. Cocooned in a subtle veil of silence, "it ain't what you know that gets you into trouble; it's what you think you know that ain't so."[5]

Although quickly eroding, the stigma of "needing to be coached" still concerns some. "I didn't realise that the CEO had problems." There is, of course, no need for the CEO to tell anyone that he/she is being coached. Moreover, it's a clear breach of trust – even if the executive in question makes it public – for the coach to discuss who he/she is or has coached.

To the above we need to add the political reality that a subordinate (or even an in-house specialist) providing negative feedback to a top executive can be a career-limiting move. And the prize for employee of the year goes to the supervisor who, at the last town hall meeting, reminded everyone that in the millennial era "coaching is at the very heart of competitive advantage."

Virtually every other form of endeavour, where excellence is the benchmark of success, coaching is a given. No one even makes it to the Olympics, let alone medals, without a great coach. Paradoxically, that same executive who pushes coaching aside for the activity where he/she makes a living will gladly pay for support in improving his/her golf swing.

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2 The Olympic record.
3 That doesn't mean they don't think deeply about how those actions will impact others … **before** they act.
4 Study by Stanford Graduate School, co-authored by Stephen Miles and David Larcker (August 2013).
5 Attributed to numerous historical figures but principally to Mark Twain.

In my own experience, it's not at all unusual for top executives to be so dialed into the results and share price that they overlook how impactful their everyday behaviour is. A friendly smile and addressing employees by name go a long way. Take also the example of coaching as a company-wide intervention.[6] No matter how much time and money is invested with middle managers, if coaching isn't evident at the top much of that investment is for naught.

There is the Board of course. Although it is changing, all too often the Board, including the Human Resource committee, focuses on issues that directly impact the balance sheet and/or the investment community (financing, strategy, results, compensation, benefits, succession). Day-to-day executive behaviour is often too far removed for directors to be able to interpret how the business is impacted. Remedial coaching for a CEO who isn't meeting the numbers is, of course, a different matter.

It doesn't help that the conversation at the top around issues such as succession and leadership development – issues of genuine importance to the Board – are dominated by the organization's strategic imperatives. Important as "the plan" is, in a turbulent and uncertain world strategy is, at best, a work in progress. As Napoleon was quick to remind generals, "Strategy is forgotten as soon as the first cannon are fired." Culture matters!

Here it should be emphasised that there is a big difference between performance and developmental coaching. The former is about enhancing performance in the role as it is today. The latter implies developing the skills and capability needed several years out. The short-term nature of the capital markets puts an emphasis on today's performance. A smart executive understands that success is a marathon … not a 100-yard dash. Here today … gone tomorrow isn't much of a plan!

There is a case to be made that CEOs often sidestep coaching because they don't fully understand how coaching will benefit them. Two points are significant here. One: every coaching conversation is different and the approach needs to reflect the needs of the individual being coached. Two: coaching at the top is not the same as coaching in the middle of the organization. The time span of discretion (how far one looks into the future), the balance between strategic and operational actions, the degree of complexity, the need to spend far more time managing from the outside-in and even the language used becomes more complex and/or is reframed, the higher in the organization you go. These are not small shifts of behaviour.

The Building Blocks of Coaching

The coaching conversation must be informed by (1) the emerging economic environment; (2) tomorrow's customer's needs; and (3) the business strategy. Coaching that is limited to making the coachee better at what he/she has always done or fails to factor in the emerging

6 As more millennials enter the workforce, coaching will grow in importance. In 2020, nearly half of the U.S. and Canadian workforce will be millennials or iGen.

business context is a poor investment. Within that future-oriented mindset, regardless of level, a number of coaching disciplines are common.

1. Coaching isn't about giving advice. It's framing the conversation such that the coachee finds his/her own way (power to).
2. What the coach believes the coachee will perceive. The coach must thus work from the belief that the agreed outcome **will** – not might – could or should happen.
3. An experienced coach learns how to work from a beginner's mind.
4. To coach is to listen in the way the coachee has always wanted to be listened to.
5. New behaviour emerges only when the coachee changes the conversation he/she is having with him/herself. To coach is to help connect the coachee with his/her own story, ask great questions, introduce a new metaphor, share a compelling story, open the door to best practice and personally model the behaviour being sought.

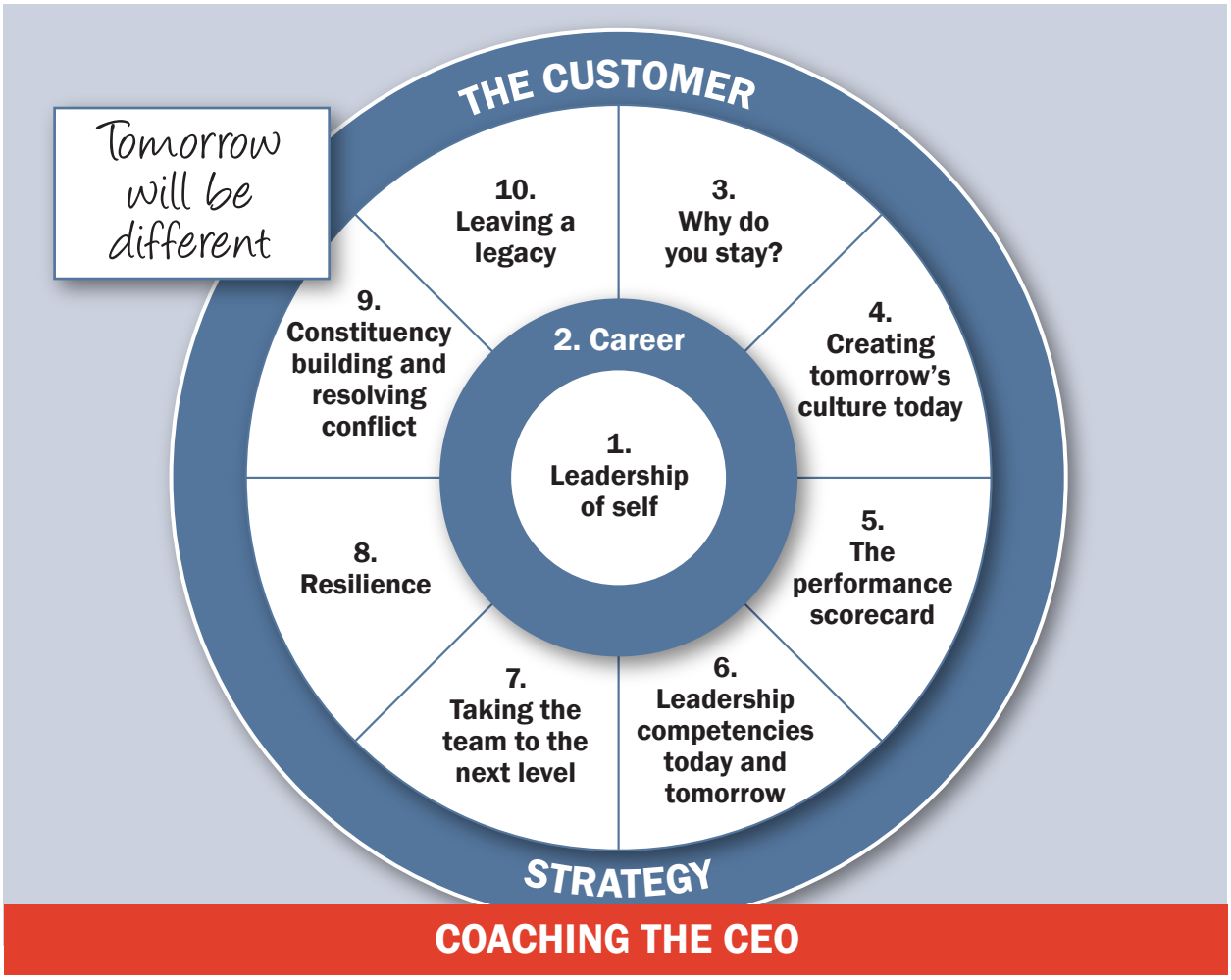

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Figure one

6. A great coach is tough-minded. Tough questions, candour and the capability to talk to power become the tools of the trade. Silence is invariably the best question of all.

7. Coaching is a supportive behavioural dance. Coaching mastery draws on a robust coaching model, meaningful executive experience, cultural relevance, interpersonal sensitivity and mental agility. As an example, if the coachee's role involves significant international experience, a coach without that experience is a poor fit.

Coaching at the Top of the House

The **Coaching the CEO** template **(Figure one)**[7] is drawn from my own work in coaching CEOs and top executives. There is no intent that the framework **(Figure one)** come across as being set in stone or mechanistically applied. I bring it to the text merely to introduce where and how the CEO coaching conversation might likely add value.

It's a privilege to coach; such a privilege that it should never be forgotten that it's never about the coach. The explanation that follows explores each of the coaching elements outlined in **Figure one**. They are presented in what might be described as a "logical sequence." In practice each of the elements are like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle: it doesn't matter in what order they are laid down, merely that you need all of the pieces to complete the picture. Indeed, coaching that seeks to make leadership of self the initial focus may be stepping into private space too quickly. A more comfortable discussion focusing on the team, culture and/or leadership competencies is often the best way to build rapport. There are, of course, circumstances that dictate that the initial coaching focus be on performance.

1. **Leadership of self.** No one on their deathbed wished they had spent more time with the Board of Directors. Personal priorities, managing family commitments, giving back, charting a rich and fruitful life and striving to be the best you can be define leadership of self. Whatever the challenge, self-awareness and how we lead *ourselves* must always be the genesis of anything approaching leadership excellence.

   If you don't know where you have been … it's tough to know where you are going. If you don't know who you are … you can never fully access your talent. If you surround yourself with people who drain away your creative energy … being more of who you have always been is the best you can hope for. If you are not living your own story … you are living someone else's.

   There is also a case to be made that there are really two CEOs. The one that people – relatively few in a large organization – meet and spend time with. The other represented by the image the CEO projects into the organization.[8] In the first, the CEO is a role model.

7 For CEO read "Country Manager," "Divisional President" and/or "business owner."

8 This image is represented by some as "the CEO's shadow." The problem being, that for most people, the image of a shadow is somewhat dark and foreboding. Optimism, humour and the belief that tomorrow's success is within our grasp suggests a far more positive ethos.

In the second - through symbolism, story, ritual, myth, catching heroes/heroines doing it right and building bridges to the middle kingdom – he/she projects a presence that makes people want to give of their best. One speaks to taking key leaders places they might otherwise not go. The other is about shaping tomorrow's possibility.

Critical Tools: (1) the coachee's story; (2) his/her life priorities; (3) exploring both the CEO's impact on those around him/her and his/her cultural alter ego. **Coaching Imperative***:* Pushing back against defensive routes.

2. **Career.** I have interviewed – at times in front of an audience – a good many senior executives with a view to understand how they had reached such an exalted position. Did they have a career plan? How did they implement that plan?

   Virtually all of the executives I spoke to had a plan – even if it was fairly crude. The irony being that their success was invariably largely a matter of recognising or going after an opportunity that hadn't figured in their plan. And here is the difference that makes a difference. Through good reading habits, curiosity, constantly seeking to take their performance to higher ground and, generally, putting a high priority on ongoing learning … they were ready.

   Managing one's career means finding the "golden thread" that charts a meaningful passage between the emerging context, personal goals, the expectations of others and career opportunity. It's the challenge of becoming oneself, while concurrently shaping what's possible. Step one: exploring possibility. If you can imagine it, you have made the first step in realising it. Step two: setting both personal and career goals. Step three: an investment in learning … being ready. Step four: responding to opportunity.

   Critical Tools: Exploring how the coachee learns. In that career success rarely follows the route defined by "the plan," how people learn is more important than what they learn. **Coaching Imperative:** Finding the golden thread.

3. **Why do you stay?** Assessing the level, nature and source of personal satisfaction in the role. What are the factors that come together to build a feeling of well-being? What changes would yield greater satisfaction? Whose support is needed? Commitment without context is a form of self-delusion.

   The intrinsic satisfaction from the role; the organization's mission; the focus, or otherwise, on short-term results; the strength of the brand; the quality of the top team; the reputation of the firm in the marketplace; the investment in tomorrow; the freedom to act; the availability of top talent; the organization's role in the environment; and giving back – all play a role in why the executive in question (CEO) chooses to stay.

   As a general theme, understanding why key executives stay is of paramount importance. If you don't know why your outstanding performers stay, you can't do more of it. There is

also a case to be made that if you understand what your best people love about their role and the organization, that insight can enrich how you attract others. If you don't attract outstanding talent, you can't hire outstanding talent.

Critical Tools: A robust methodology to surface why the organization's top performers (as appropriate, the CEO) stay. **Coaching Imperative:** If you don't know why you stay, it's tough to know if you should stay.

4. **Creating tomorrow's culture today.** It's no longer the case that strategy drives culture – develop the strategy and then build the "right culture" to support the strategy. In an uncertain world, culture enables the strategy – a series of strategic scenarios brought to life, as the business environment dictates, by a strong and agile culture. We need **both** strategy and culture, but culture has primacy. People are loyal to the culture, not the strategy. If strategy and culture collide, culture wins every time. Always!

   "Managing culture" is about creating tomorrow's organization, today. "Management" means measurement.[9] Not much happens, of course, without *leadership.* Leaders who move the culture in a new direction do so because they know how to inspire. The word "inspire" comes from the Latin *spiritus* (to breathe life into). Successful leaders breathe life into culture … every single day.

   Culture is built on four critical pillars: Mission, Diversity, Brand and Speed. Bracing those supporting pillars are the organization's values. Values aren't rules – they give people permission to act.

   Moving the culture in a new direction means working on both the cultural drivers (strategy, what you measure and reward, the talent management system, technology) and the cultural anchors (mindset, metaphor, language, symbolism, story, ritual, myths).

   Bringing the culture to life involves structure, process, candour and pushing decision-making closer to the customer. Meanwhile, the white space on the organization chart isn't a vacuum; it's full of noise. If you don't influence that "noise" in a meaningful way … if you don't manage the informal organization … it will manage you.

   Critical Tools*:* The ability to measure the culture you have (roots) and the culture you need (wings). **Coaching Imperative:** If you're not managing your culture … someone else is (e.g., suppliers, key customers, a militant union, disenfranchised middle managers, an aggressive investment group).

5. **The performance scorecard.** At its best, coaching strives to achieve extraordinary performance. And yet, climbing even the highest mountain starts at base camp. The organization's strategy and business plan roll up into the scorecard for the role.

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9 See *The A-Z of Organization Culture*, John O. Burdett (2017), for a robust and business-oriented measure of culture.

A robust scorecard balances: (1) **D**irection (strategy, the market, growing the business); (2) **D**elivery (critical goals, implementation, innovation); (3) **D**evelopment (building the talent pool, succession, taking the team to the next level); (4) **D**ay-to-day dialogue (building a constituency, bringing the informal organization on board, engagement).

A one-on-one, 360° feedback tool[10] draws out the coachee's day-to-day performance and developmental needs. What strengths should the coachee build on? What behaviours are holding him/her back? What should the coachee start to do, do more of and stop doing? What resources are available? Who else should be involved? When will the coachee know he/she has been successful?

Critical Tools: A means to bring into focus both the short and long term. **Coaching Imperative:** Unless the executive in question delivers results he/she won't be afforded the opportunity to lead.

6. **Leadership competencies today and tomorrow.** A leader who only gets better at what they have always done is ultimately sowing the seeds of their own failure. What will success in the role look like three to five years from now? What role-specific competencies define future performance?

   The accelerating rate of change, the digital revolution that is engulfing us, shaping an organization that, of necessity, will look very different from organizations in the past – means that tomorrow's leadership will be very different.

   It doesn't stop there, though. What social, economic, political, marketplace and forces internal to the business define tomorrow's challenge/opportunity? How will iGen and millennials define the emerging organization culture? How will gig employment, crowdsourcing and social media define the nature of work? What disruptive technologies lie just over the horizon? In what ways will the shortage of top talent limit what's possible?

   See **Figure two.** Note: No matter the size and location – when the context changes it changes for every organization and **every** leader.

   Five competencies, in particular, would appear to have future currency.

   i. Digital direction: Anticipating where and how the emerging technology will change the strategic fortunes of the business. A willingness to act.

   ii. Leadership reach: The ability to work concurrently with very different people, in very different businesses, in different parts of the world.

   iii. Comfort with ambiguity: More interested in doing the right thing than being right, risk oriented, fails fast and moves on, leads through values and not edicts, comfortable with being uncomfortable.

10 Ideally structured around a robust leadership model and reflective of the challenges the coachee faces. "One-on-one" implies a personal conversation with all of those providing feedback. Although in common use, an off-the-shelf 360° feedback instrument can be just as misleading as it is valuable.

THE CHANGING BUSINESS CONTEXT		
20th Century	**TO**	**21st Century**
The "plan"		Strategic scenarios
Superstars		Super teams
Strategy drives culture		Culture enables strategy
The team works for the leader		The leader works for the team
Structure: hierarchical		Structure: team of teams
Team: homogenous		Team: multicultural
The one best way		Agility
Expertise		Speed of learning
If it ain't broke don't fix it		Introduce disruptive technologies
Change management		Organization culture as an adaptive system
Enrich the tribe		Build community
Steady state		Exponential change

Figure two

iv. Learning how to learn: Someone who reads, the courage to let go, curiosity, constantly challenging the status quo, willing to explore what's possible, pushing to the edge, a natural collaborator.

v. Culture savvy: Creating tomorrow's organization today. Hiring and coaching with tomorrow's culture in mind. Building an organization that displays a quality best defined as "StrAgility."[11]

Defining tomorrow's leadership success is an imperative for: (1) the current leader; and (2) as a platform for developing a successor. Can the incumbent succeed into the role

11 Both strong and agile. From *Myth, Magic, Mindset*, John O. Burdett (2008).

he/she is currently in? Does he/she have a successor? Developing a successor is a fiduciary responsibility. It also means mastery in coaching.

Critical Tools: A library of up-to-date, future-facing, leadership competencies.[12] **Coaching Imperative***:* Tomorrow will not be a replay of today.

7. **Taking the team to the next level.** No one makes it on their own. No one! Michelangelo had a dozen or more assistants when he painted the Sistine ceiling. Churchill regularly practiced his "impromptu speeches" on his friends. And next year's champion of virtually anything wouldn't even consider competing without a business manager, coach, personal trainer, massage therapist, dietician, equipment manager, driver, pilot and a host of other "helpers" on the team.

   Four critical dimensions shape team success.

   i. What the team needs to know. The organization's overall mission. What do the organization's values really mean? Why does the customer buy and how will that change going forward? The goals and strategic priorities of other key teams. Acquisition and divestment plans. Competitive threats. How the business makes money.

   ii. The quality of leadership demanded. A compelling purpose, the right leader, the right strategy, the right goals, roles and responsibilities understood, clear team roles and ground rules for team behaviour established.

   iii. Supportive followership. Trust on the team, candour, listening, collaboration, affirmation, storytelling, humility and taking time to celebrate success.

   iv. Accelerating the team through the learning curve. Team members coach each other, managing meetings, optimism, humour and a sense of fun, working successfully with other teams and taking time out to work on team performance.

   There is a difference between cooperation and collaboration. One describes people working together in pursuit of a common goal. The other is rooted in the spirit of generosity that puts the needs of others first. One is ultimately self-serving. The other builds lasting trust and commitment. To be truly collaborative is to bring your whole self to the relationship. Because everything is shared … anything is possible.

   The influence of the team on individual performance is often dramatically understated. The notion that you can change the organization one person at a time is an equally flawed idea. Individual coaching not complemented by ongoing coaching of the team is to plant a tree and then forget to water it.

   Critical Tools: The means to truly assess all aspects of team behaviour. **Coaching Imperative:** The leader works for the team.

12 Our proprietary library of leadership competencies have been revised four times in the last twelve years.

8. **Resilience.** As we move through a new century several new realities emerge. Today's pace of change represents the slowest things will ever be. The structure and design that underpins today's organization – developed 100 years ago – is ill-equipped to deal with the current (let alone the future) level of uncertainty. Driving technology that connects and creates new ways to be into a traditional organization is like asking a man in a straitjacket to do summersaults.

   "Managing change" – an ambiguous term at best – has to give way to the need to build organizations that surf the crest of change. To that end, getting middle managers back in the game is a make or break issue.[13] As is recognition that a winning value proposition starts with a ruthless focus on what the organization does better than anyone else. And you can't afford to "evolve." You need to work on tomorrow's organization, today. Be bold or be overwhelmed. Think big … or think exit. Reinvention, not revision. Agility, not adjustment. A "black swan[14] event" lies around the corner. Count on it!

   It's not the strongest or the fastest that sustain. When the storm is at its height those left standing are those who can draw on an inner strength, who adapt, who learn from and build on experience … who are resilient. Resilience is not unlike the plasticity of the brain; we can learn to do that which isn't necessarily natural.

   There are five sources of resilience: (1) heightened self-awareness; (2) build personal flexibility/adaptability; (3) develop mental toughness; (4) make learning a passion; and (5) surround oneself with resilient people.

   Critical Tools: A systematic way to measure resilience. **Coaching Imperative:** Only the resilient will survive.

9. **Constituency building and resolving conflict.** Organizations designed for a different century are ill-fitted for the challenge of this one. That said, some vestiges of organization life are unchanging. Every business needs some degree of hierarchy.[15] Every enterprise is a network organization. And the reason strategy fails? It's not lack of alignment. It's lack of buy in and support from other key leaders in the organization.

   There are different forms of capital: financial, working and human capital being the ones most usually referred to. Goodwill can also be thought of as a form of capital. The most undervalued, however, is social capital. The term "social capital" refers to the ability to access and take advantage of resources embedded in social networks. In the past such networks were limited to personal interaction. Technology affords unlimited networking opportunities that even a decade ago didn't exist.

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13 Effluent runs downhill and a series of downsizing, rightsizing and process improvement actions over the past decade have pushed an ocean of the stuff directly into the path of middle managers. As a result, the majority feel disengaged, disconnected, disappointed and disenfranchised.

14 A metaphor for sweeping and unpredictable events that change everything. The 2008 financial meltdown being a good example.

15 Those who propose organizational approaches such as "Holacracy" claim otherwise, i.e., self-organizing teams replace hierarchy.

Face-to-face or digital, when all else is stripped away, the key to building a constituency is TRUST:

- **T**he ability to build rapport
- **R**especting the other person's point of view
- **U**nderstanding the other person's needs in the relationship
- **S**hared values
- **T**he need to deliver on any promises made

You can't always decide who you need to work with, but you can influence the nature of that relationship. What key relationships shape success in the role? Who on the Board is supportive? Who, if anyone, is on the fence? What other relationships need to be formed or improved – both within and outside of the organization?

Critical Tools: Building a map of the constituency demanded. **Coaching Imperative:** Addressing, building and/or extending the constituency as demanded.

10. **Leaving a legacy.** There are different reasons why people take on the top job. For some it's clearly to make money. For others it's to make a career. The best amongst us, however, are driven to make a difference. Not just a difference in the fortunes of the business but in the lives of others. A difference that endures. A difference that – even though several years may have passed since the individual in question held down the top role – is evidenced by a clear set of footprints in the sand. A contribution that incoming tides haven't been able to wash away.

    Leaving a legacy is, in large measure, about the contribution made. It is also about knowing when to let go.[16] Power can and does corrupt. Success is addictive. It takes courage to go where others fear to tread. It can take an even greater degree of courage to know when and how to pass the baton. The first Henry Ford nearly destroyed a legendary business by hanging on too long. His great-grandson, William Clay Ford Jr., chose the right moment and, in doing so, revitalised the company. He was replaced as CEO, in 2006, by Alan Mulally. William Clay Ford Jr. remained as Chairman.

    You're not going to leave a legacy if you want to be on a pedestal, eschew risk or ride roughshod over the people in the middle of the organization. If you lack a subtle understanding of the power of language, fail to grasp the difference the right story can make and/or display anything less than the total belief that the outcome being sought *will* happen … you won't leave a legacy. Focus, humility, authenticity, recognising a good idea and knowing when and how to say "no" also loom large in how legacy leavers make their mark.

16 Both Alexander the Great and Hannibal noted that knowing when to retreat was the most important leadership quality of all.

You can't stray very far from what it means to leave a "legacy" without employing the term "character." Character is comfort in speaking to power. It's constantly challenging the status quo. It's found in a sincere apology. It's knowing when to lead … and when to follow.

Loyalty speaks to character, as does being tough-minded when the situation demands it. Character is found in small acts of generosity; it's admitting that you were wrong; it's working hard to not come across as the smartest person in the room; it's "being" – not simply adhering to – the organization's values; and, yes, it's open to being coached.

Three things, in particular, appear at the heart of leaving a legacy: a culture that endures; a successor who excels; and a successful team that, as needed, reinvents itself. Sound judgement is the start of it … learning, and sharing that learning, is part of it … but caring is the heart of it. Legacy leavers give back. Long after his contemporaries have become bored with their sports teams or latest luxury jet, Bill Gates will still be making a difference.

Critical Tools: Drawing on the example of other legacy leavers. **Coaching Imperative:** Focusing on what really matters versus working on what others deem important. Steve Jobs wasn't in the habit of doing what other people thought was important.

Conclusion

The map is never the territory and the suggested coaching building blocks must always be subservient to the specific needs of the individual. I developed this material for two reasons: to capture my own learning – always a good idea! – and that a CEO or member of the C-suite might understand the potential value inherent in the right coaching relationship.

Top executives live in a goldfish bowl and, as such, their actions are magnified. The organization's values have little to do with what's written on the plaque in reception and everything to do with how the CEO behaves. How the CEO turns up, his/her mastery in coaching, the stories shared, learning people's names, a simple smile as he/she walks through the office, in no small measure, shape what's possible.

It's easy to forget that a small action from the CEO can be literally life-changing for someone in the middle of the organization. If you are a top executive, you don't owe it to yourself to be coached – but you do owe it to all of those whose lives you touch. Quoting that oracle of profundity, Uncle Ben in *Spiderman,* **"With great power comes great responsibility."**

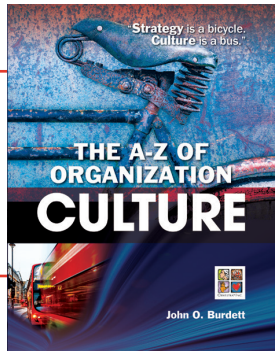
John Burdett has worked in over 40 countries as an executive and as a consultant for businesses that are household names. He has worked and continues to work on organization culture for some of the world's largest corporations.

During the past 12 months, John's partnership with the Bedford Consulting Group and TRANSEARCH INTERNATIONAL meant that his proprietary work on organization culture was accessed by hundreds of major businesses around the world.

He has also coached a number of high profile CEOs and C-suite executives in different parts of the world.

John holds a doctorate in management development and since 2000 has published ten best-selling books on leadership, talent management, executive coaching and organization culture. He recently completed his highly lauded talent trilogy: *Talent* (2013), *Team* (2015), and *The Empty Suit* (2016). His latest book is *The A-Z of Organization Culture* (2017). John lives in Toronto.

To download John's books and other leadership offerings go to Amazon.com., eBooks, Barnes and Noble, or Kobo. Access using author's name: John O. Burdett.



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