

# Ten Ways to Build Great Leadership in Turbulent Times

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*Delighted to be speaking on this topic at Leaders Connect UK Conference October 3, 2014. If you are a leader or emerging leader, please join us. Registration for the event is still open!*



I know as much about change, turbulence and failure as I do about success. I did not start my career aspiring to run a steel company, nor did I plan to be a rather relentless breaker of barriers in business and in the community at large. What I have studied, what I have learned, and what I have lived in my journey and through the journey of my clients has given me a perspective that is resoundingly counter-intuitive because it is not focused on playing to strengths, but on using strengths, changes, challenges, stressors (even failures) as a lever for our greatest potential and results.

Science confirms that our ability to inspire, empower and actualize our potential has never been greater; remember this, empower it, use it! Neuroscience confirms that we can rewrite

default patterns of thinking, communicating and doing; we can build new emotional set-points that take us forward faster and better while also enhancing our ability to focus, ideate, learn and relearn.

**Common sense tells us that we should be integrating this knowledge in the way we learn, teach, coach, mentor and work;** but habits of thinking, communicating and doing that made us successful in the past are often our greatest barriers to the optimization of our potential in the present. Those who aspire to great leadership must recognize that achieving it means changing the set point resetting the individual and organizational GPS to fast forward in ways that inspire, empower and actualize the fire of human potential at a speed of change, challenges and opportunities that will continue to accelerate faster than ever before. *McKinsey & Company research and client experience suggest that half of all efforts to transform organizational performance fail either because senior managers don't act as role models for change or because people in the organization defend the status quo.*

**Here are 10 ways to reset the GPS, refocus, repurpose and reboot potential; ten ways to build great leadership in turbulent times:**

**Step 1.** Build YOUR 3Q Edge™ by drawing upon your strengths and transforming changes, challenges, stressors and failures into a lever for your greatest potential; start building three essential leadership strengths that GROW at the speed of change/challenges.

**Q1: IQ** Enhanced ideation, focus, strategic thought, ability to learn-relearn.

**Q2: EQ** Self-awareness, awareness of others, self-management,

relationship management, communication, resiliency, risk tolerance.

**Q3: SQ** Purpose, values, integrity-the timeless anchors of true leadership, sustainability and the grit to forge ahead when the going gets tough!

To quote Professor Charles O'Reilly, Stanford Graduate School of Business, *"Staying competitive, then, means changing what you're doing."* Our ability to change what we are doing means developing the intellectual and emotional dexterity Q1 and Q2 that drive innovation while further developing Q3!

**Step 2:** Resolve to evolve and re-define winning. Purpose equals profit on a multiplicity of levels. Reset the internal and organizational GPS by championing purpose, integrity, values (Q3-SQ) that are the only consistent anchors of comfort and sustainability we have and will have. Make purpose = profit your mantra, and the mantra of your organization. *"By encouraging employees to both seek and provide help, rewarding givers, and screening out takers, companies can reap significant and lasting benefits."* Adam Grant, Mckinsey & Company April 2013

**Step 3.** Do not wait for great ideas to collide, empower them. Create active, thriving spaces for positive change. Celebrate diversity. Develop new ways, better ways to build creative hubs; ways for people to come together, ways that drive vertical and horizontal communication and collaboration. Create virtual and actual spaces where new ideas to be discussed and shared.

**Step 4.** Take one step every day that will invigorate the motivation of others. Perform a random act of kindness each day by reaching out to someone outside your team, outside your

usual network and championing their work and potential. Perform a random act of kindness by helping someone who but in their best effort and failed to fail forward by helping them find the solution amid the problem.

**Step 5.** Build NEW touch points. Get out of your box. Building a strong executive team is critical, but so is visiting the front line. Find front line champions with whom you can build relationships. Model and develop resiliency, empathy, risk tolerance and grit. Inspire your people to recognize and harvest their ability to fail forward by seeing changes, challenges, even failures in new ways that guide and empower them forward. Make your town hall meetings exciting, empowering. Unpack the knowledge by using stories of your people, examples of great thought, great commitment, great purpose and results that come from all levels in your organization. Find active ways to not only share information, motivate and to end every town hall meeting with a challenge that you can throw out there for the most purposeful to catch and throw back. Determine how you will use your next town hall meeting to cast a challenge that will drive innovative ideas and solutions.

**Step 6.** Build enlightened self-interest. Develop new ways to champion working better together because success means creating value for those you lead, work for and serve. When people begin to understand that creating value for clients, stakeholders, direct reports, colleagues and the communities you serve is the way forward, doing so becomes top of mind and drives results. People are deeply motivated by their ability to contribute to a greater whole, a greater purpose. This motivation often starts with first seeing how it benefits them.

**Step 7.** Embrace change as a lever for your potential and the potential of your people by focusing on the human side. Build blank time, happiness time, relaxation time, empowerment time into your schedule and the schedules of your people because it will help them flourish. Create small important spaces of time that are critical to ideation, innovation, collaboration and wellness.

**Step 8.** Learn to connect the dots by building a better relationship with yourself and with others. Leadership begins with self-awareness, self-appreciation and a relentless desire to grow, evolve and contribute. It is about embracing your strengths and using your challenges to take simple, purposeful, powerful steps that will help you evolve forward in ways that impact your life, your work, the people you serve and your sense of personal fulfillment and meaning.

**Step 9.** Find new ways to unpack knowledge, transform complexity into simple, purposeful powerful steps that are understood and integrated outside our peer group, outside the personal or organizational silos in which we dwell because success is not achieved or sustained alone. Develop actual and virtual communities of purpose that are learning, doing hubs where people exchange ideas, empower growth and learning in new ways that help them motivate and inspire each other.

**Step 10.** Develop a leadership code of ethics that you can model and integrate in your organization. Champion 7 leadership commitments that drive great leadership. Make them visible, make them real, and make them grow!

1. The commitment to lead at the speed of change, in the face of challenges and failures; the commitment to build YOUR 3Q Edge™
2. The commitment to the empowerment of self and others.
3. The commitment to purpose and vision
4. The commitment to communicating the vision and purpose.
5. The commitment to courage.
6. The commitment to integrity.
7. The commitment to action-ability.

**Great leadership is about success, and success is not about taking, it is about serving.** Those who lead will be those who serve by developing their ability to empower, inspire and actualize their potential and the potential of others by kindling the fire of courage, integrity and humanity that keeps them on track and fuels the determination and resiliency many lack because it is easier to manage than to lead. **Great leadership is a 3Q equation supported by courage. Courage grows each time we align IQ (intellect), EQ (humanity), and SQ (integrity). Carpe diem!**

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