



Paving the way to better leadership.



Value of Resilience
Why Empathy Matters
The Better Side of Balance
Secrets of Role-Modelling

Editor's Word

Dear Reader,

LEADnovate serves as a publication that acts as a bridge - between students, professions and generations - to connect people together and build a collective picture of the ideal leader.

As we embark on our mission to stimulate pioneer thinking through wielding stories of leadership, we provide this downloadable leadership resource that provides tips that you will find useful. Store it as a pocket guide in your phone or circulate it to your team members as a scholastic resource on team-building.

We dedicate our collective ideas to you and your team, so that together, everyone benefits from better leadership and teamwork.

Carean L. Oh
Editor

About

LEADnovate Magazine is created by a team of educators with the fundamental belief that learning should be pursued as much outside the classroom as within. Noticing the lack of scholastic resources on leadership, we have dedicated our time to cultivating the next generation of leaders.



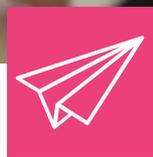
What Leadership Entails

Leaders help themselves and others make appropriate decisions so that common goals can be achieved. They set direction, build an inspiring vision, and create something useful. Leadership is about mapping out where you need to go to "win" as a team or an organization; and it is dynamic, exciting, and inspiring.

Yet, while leaders set the direction, they must also use a variety of skills to guide their people to the right destination, in a smooth and efficient way. For one simple reason - there is no leader without followers, and no followers without good leadership.



Work



Play



Learn



Volunteer

"A leader is like a binding glue. The cohesive strength of this glue depends on the substances used to create it:
Transparency, resilience and creativity."
~ Carean L. Oh

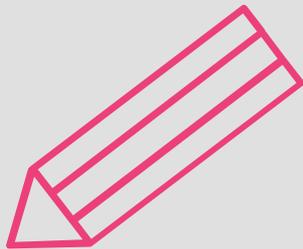


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Produced by Novaly Pte Ltd
Editor: Carean L. Oh
Writer: Carean L. Oh | Claire Chan
Designer: Maharani L. Siwi
www.LEADnovate.net
Telephone: 6469 3997
Address: 144 Upper Bt Timah Road
Beauty World Centre #B1-10
Singapore 588177
Enquiries: carean@leadnovate.net

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The Value of Resilience

One question we might often ask ourselves is, "To what extent are we able to withstand the storms of life?" We need resilience. Resilience is our ability to bounce back from adversity. It is almost the key determinant of being able to recover from an unexpected life-changing event or challenge. Today, as we adapt to unprecedented issues plagued by a pandemic, growing demands of a work-from-home revolution, challenges are inevitable.

It may be a tempting idea to tear at our hair and succumb to pressure at work. But it's important that you keep calm no matter how overwhelming the emotion is. You may think, 'It's only once. I am a human. I have feelings and right now, I need to vent it all out.' Still, your composure as a leader demonstrates your resilience to your colleagues at work.

Someone who leads with resilience is someone who demonstrates the ability to see failures as minor setbacks, with the tenacity to bounce back eventually - and show that you are able to do so. Else, there will not be trust and respect for you. These two attributes are worth more than you can possibly imagine. In difficult times, your team is looking to you for emotional assurance and courage as they trust you to be the leader who can protect their interests.



You may be the **ONLY** light.

It may seem like a tall order but remaining positive, or even acting that way, makes a difference to team morale. Your team is looking for you to set the direction and light the path. Projecting a positive outlook that will help others maintain the emotional strength they need to commit to a shared vision, and the courage to move forward and overcome setbacks together. A lack of resilience always results in disappointment, not only emotionally but it also batters your confidence, spiralling down towards an overall team failure.

An acquired quality

Being resilient is not something you can summon at the snap of the fingers. It is a deep-seated, entrenched quality that only strong individuals have.

It is amassed through experience and the often-overlooked opportunities thrown our way, deceptively masked as 'failures'. The repeated setbacks and attempts to rebound make one stronger and leaders are appointed as 'leaders' for this reason.

If you have acquired this experience, you are already resilient. You need to believe in yourself and show your team that they too, can walk in your footsteps.



Power of Collaboration

Neuroscience research suggests that our brains have a negative bias and you will fall into the trap of undermining your ability to crawl out of the pit. It is possibly effective to be intentional about reaching for positivity in order to enhance resilient leadership.

As a leader, you are not alone. The secret is to 'collaborate'. Develop and nurture a broad network of personal and professional relationships. Personal relationships create a strong base of support — a vital element in achieving goals, dealing with hardships, and developing perspectives.



Why Empathy Matters

Have you ever complained about a team member who just didn't make the mark? Or dragged your feet into a meeting with a group that you didn't like working with? Perhaps, you might have told them off. Or gritted your teeth and endured the pain of working with members you perceived to be difficult.

The solution to your woes may lie in empathy. Empathy is the ability to place yourself in other's shoes so that you can understand their perspectives, thought processes and even their reality.

More than just a buzzword, empathy is an overlooked quality for progressive teams. Empathy is the vitamin for growth - it opens the eyes of a goal-oriented leader to understand the problems encountered by the team, his most valuable asset.

Studies have shown that empathy is positively related to job performance. Team members feel contented to have a compassionate leader, yielding a reciprocal outcome. You listen, they yield. In a hard-set environment, empathy softens blatant realities, making adversities more endurable. Team morale increases as one knows that the boss is 'in it together'.

Business leaders can effectively demonstrate empathy in some ways, starting with being more sensitive. Lend a listening ear. Be intent on listening and not reacting. Compare and contrast your life as a leader with the woeful member. Remember that everyone's reality differs. Realise that one day, you may be at the receiving end of a problem. Not only does empathy prepare you for a more receptive team, it presents an opportunity for you to prepare for personal failures which have not been thrown into your path yet.



The Better Side of Balance

A positive way of life automatically leads to amazing results. To those who want to achieve more in life, don't you think this is a more healthy and effective way?

Wealth aside, a well-balanced life transforms us from within. More time to do our favourite things or spending time with our favourite people bring out the fun in us, sparking joy. Afterall, being accomplished is about delivering results in the healthiest way possible.



Burnout, a very common but overlooked term, can cause the strongest team member to crumble. For a team to succeed in achieving great things, we do not want our longest-serving and best people to say, I've had enough.

I quit.

This occurs when immense pressure is put onto a person, culminating in "chronic stress." This stress could be caused by a variety of things, from outrageous workloads (like no work-life balance) to simply not feeling valued for the hard work you do. If you do notice that you have been acting out of character lately, then you will need to face the hard truth: as a leader, you need to pause, recalibrate your expectations and let the steam out of the spout. Declare a lunch outing, have a realignment discussion with the team and make adjustments with their input. Ask, "Why are you staying back?" "Are you spending enough time resting?"

"Since when have we not done our personal things?" Any form of stop-check is not a waste of time. It makes your team feel respected, cared for and in turn, they will certainly reciprocate by doubling the effort when everything falls into a better balance.

Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling five balls in the air:
Work, family, health, friends and spirit. You will soon realise that
work is a rubber ball ... but the other four - family, health, friends
and spirit - are made of glass.

Brian Dyson
Former Vice-chairman and COO of Coca Cola



Work-life balance is important in many ways. It is even more so when you need the capacity to lead.

A good leader who is healthy feels strong emotionally, physically and mentally. Stress is the leading factor of conflicts, disputes and disintegration of dynamics. Leaders obsessed with results forget that a company is a quilted fabric of people who come from different backgrounds and characters. It is a pulsating organ that constantly breathes with thoughts, ideas and opinions.

At its very heart, products and services are generated by humans and humans need care. A good leader recognises this delicate attribute in a company - be it time, talk or tribute, a perceptive leader makes a difference to the team by creating a mentally healthy work environment.

Secrets of Role Modelling



"Example is leadership."
Albert Schweitzer

Positive, empowering and inspiring.

Do you look for the above in a professional role model? No, we are not talking about your parents or influencers. Or someone who airbrushes or exaggerates their success stories. It's someone in your industry or career who inspires you to be successful. The volatility in the professional world has become more significant as the world changes, and so do values. Find your role models early in life, observe how they handle challenges and maintain a professional demeanour despite distractions. You will be surprised at how honest they are in their opinions.

A template for success can be a stepping stone to finding your own voice and style. To be honest, it is said that leaders are made and not born. Yes, it takes a selfless attitude, relentlessness, trust in others and a range of management skills to lead a team successfully. If you aspire to be a leader, start small. Begin with adopting a style that you like. Aspire to be like a professional role model whom you admire.

Adapt your leadership style by referring to someone who has the ability to influence and motivate their team to work harder and reach all their goals. who inspires by walking the talk.

You'll be surprised by the difference it makes to your progress one day.





Priceless

Assets You Missed

Think of each of your team members as an asset - would they collectively be more valuable than the building your company owns or the sum of one batch of products you are launching?

If your answer is 'no', think again.

Human capital is the single most valuable asset in today's economy. There is a correlation between education and the competitive position of a country in the global arena. To be effective, we need quality contributors who are educated, perceptive and forward thinking.

Former General Electric CEO, Jack Welch said, "An organization's ability to learn, and translate that learning into action rapidly is the ultimate competitive advantage." The only thing worse than training and losing employees is not to train them and keeping them. Being busy, distrusting or disorganised

is no excuse. A progressive leader knows that any team member has a strength to tap on. Often, such traits are masked. Employees can appear shy, inhibited or timid when addressing the events of the day, but this should not be the basis of any bias. Every employee has to exit the company being better than he or she was. That is the obligation of a good employer.

Eventually, the role of a leader is to manage, guide and motivate: prioritise connecting with and understanding your team to help establish a work dynamic that brings out the most productive and dedicated versions of themselves.

Are you a thrower or a catcher?

In certain cultures, people throw stones as a punishment for those who went against strict traditions. Those stones were real and the effect, lethal. In the modern day context, stones that are thrown at another tend to be more figurative but equally harmful. Have you ever wondered how it feels to be a stone thrower and a receiver in the context of leadership? The idea may seem unusual but it is real.



As much as a thrower wants to mask his or her intention behind an excuse, what is really intended is to perform an illusory act of escapism. The one and only reason for manipulating others through criticisms, judgement and skepticism is to achieve his or her selfish demands.

Don't succumb to such narcissism.

If you find yourself at the receiving end of a pile of work thrown on your lap (that does not seem to be part of the deal), learn to voice your opinion. We are not suggesting that you simply shun the work and ignore the treatment. It's time to make yourself heard.

**Throwers feed
their ego by
belittling others.**

Defend and Protect



Admirably, there are many leaders who are highly successful. Yet, they do not see that as a reason to abuse their positions. On the contrary, they use their position, credibility and influence to defend and protect those who cannot adequately defend themselves.

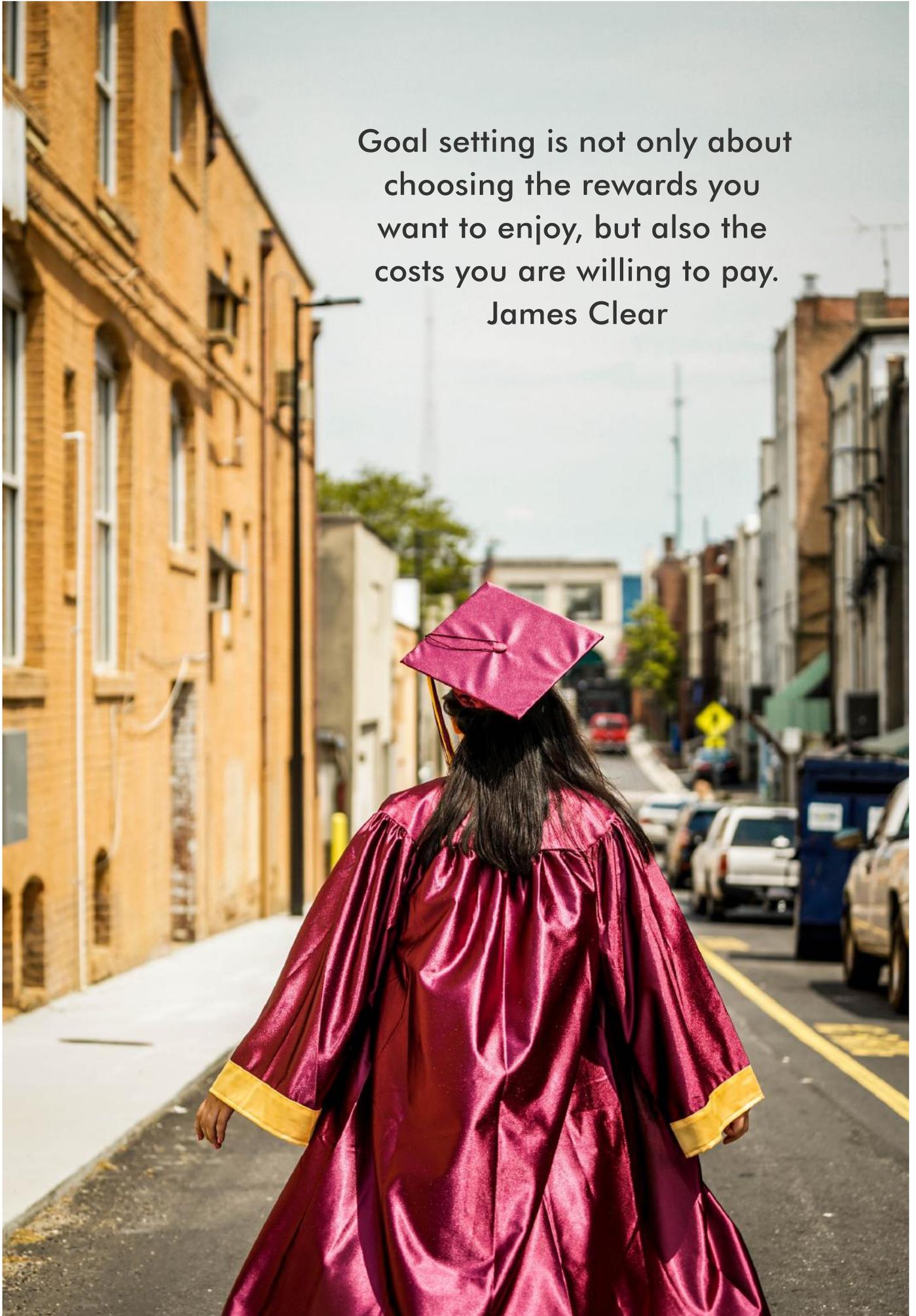
While Stone Throwers ride on the weaknesses of others, Stone Catchers embrace these weaknesses and think of how to encourage better performance. This brings about mutual benefits - the people whom they entrust their confidence in feel a sense of appreciation while they gain loyalty and collaboration.

Can you recall someone who is a Catcher? Such a personable leader will never be forgotten for the impact they have made in our lives.

**Good leaders do not fear
losing their influence.
They thrive on empowering
others.**

Carean L. Oh

Goal setting is not only about
choosing the rewards you
want to enjoy, but also the
costs you are willing to pay.
James Clear





The Art of Goal Setting

Set clear goals based on honesty and confidence - for both yourself and your team. With a hundred and one items to see to, it is natural that a leader is inundated with obligations. Still, without a clear set of goals, the leader is unable to lead without a beacon.

Without a clear understanding of how they will fit in, your team will find it hard to work with commitment and a sense of purpose. Leadership for the long run calls for thinking about and planning for what needs to be done before being forced to do something,

In 1960's, Edwin Locke put forward the Goal-setting theory of motivation. Specific and challenging goals contribute to higher and better task performance.

Goals indicate and give direction to the team about what needs to be done and how much efforts are required to be put in.

The willingness to work towards attainment of goal is main source of job motivation. Clear, particular and difficult goals are greater motivating factors than easy, general and vague goals. Higher the level of self-efficiency, greater. Do be realistic or the individual might quit before meeting challenges.

Through the lens of Foresight



Leadership is a deep, continuous process of thinking and rethinking. There are leaders who advocate this belief, such as late Former GE CEO Jack Welch. In the course of his career, he was revered for demonstrating that leadership is not about just being at the pinnacle.

"He wanted great people on his team, and he worked to develop their talents," says academic director of Wharton University, Michael Useem in an article, 'Leaders Who Create Leaders'.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, we have seen companies flounder and fold, while others adapt and thrive. Leaders with good acumen fortify their teams to ride the waves of adversity, enabling their companies to survive.

This shows that leaders with a mind to succeed do not only survive in times of a bullish economy, but prepare how to remain relevant even in times of a crisis.

Rank-and-File: The Indispensable Brick

One's status does not determine one's influence. In a knowledge-based economy, the amount of knowledge one has contributes to a valuable intangible asset - in other words, intellectual capital.

You may not agree, but it takes little to observe that rank-and-file employees are the backbone of most companies. With no fancy titles on their business cards, they are valuable workers who are indispensable. For one primary reason: they are equipped with critical or specialised skills that function like bricks of a house.

Our leadership should be about resolving the issues that prevent our employees from delivering their best; not simply the things that get under our skin.

Tanveer Naseer

Without them, knowledge and feedback from the ground could not be conveyed to management. As much as a leader needs to direct, he needs people with the skills, knowledge and commitment to execute his vision.

It is the rank-and-file employees that ensure customer service relationships are intact and the quality of the business products and services are of the highest level.

Addressing the needs of these people in terms of motivation and compensation differs in many ways as compared to that of managerial cadre.

It is important to connect with these employees and find out what motivates them, bearing in mind the profit-sharing is not the best idea. Look into their needs that may range from time-off, to family welfare and even upgrading their skill sets. You'll be surprised by the lower attrition rate in the long run.





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