

Leadership and Management



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To become a centre of influence holding people together is a grave matter and fraught with great responsibility. It requires greatness of spirit, consistency and strength. Therefore let him who wishes to gather others about him ask himself whether he is equal to the undertaking...
(I Ching)

Art and Discipline

Before reading any further, glance up at the quote above, drawn from the I Ching, or Chinese Book of Changes, and read it through slowly (I Ching, 1971). Think about the questions implied by the quotation. Are you a leader? Do you wish to lead? If leadership is required of you, do you have the will to develop yourself such that you can assume its gravity with sufficient responsibility? Are you willing to learn? For, as the words above attest, leadership is no light matter.

Leadership is about responsibility, above all. It requires acceptance of the importance of one's self coupled with an appreciation of the greater importance of others over oneself; leadership entails liability for those who are led. Thereby, leadership becomes a discipline in its own right. It is not something which is simply "added-on" to one's other responsibilities. It must be learned - studied and exercised - as a discipline in its own right; indeed, as the most taxing discipline of all. Taxing, not least of all, because leadership is an art rather than a science. There is no set of techniques, rules or series of commandments with which the leader can arm him or herself and be assured of success. Guidelines yes, to attune oneself to the process and dynamics of the people one is given responsibility for; and techniques to aid one's facilitation. But life remains beyond control, inherently unpredictable and forever responding to interventions with idiosyncratic enthusiasm. One is always interacting, adapting, re-forming, responding as consequences reveal themselves. Yet always accepting responsibility, in spite of the unpredictability. Taxing in the extreme.

The inherent contradiction contained in having to take responsibility for a reality which is unpredictable and therefore beyond your ultimate control is but one of the many contradictions and tensions which form the context within which leadership is exercised. There are many others: exerting authority in a way which allows others freedom to develop their own creativity; the need for immediate yet inclusive decision-making; the importance of encouraging participation to ensure collective ownership of organisational strategy while having to demonstrate strong visionary capability oneself. The list is endless; this is the very stuff of leadership. (When faced with food for five yet responsible for a group of ten, which principles do you sacrifice and which retain?). Holding these contradictions in creative tension without compromise demands a maturity of a very high order; the kind of maturity we associate with wisdom rather than simply with knowledge or skill. Indeed, the pursuit of true leadership is nothing less than the quest for humanity

within oneself - developing the qualities which go to form a good leader is a training ground for becoming more human. The quest is for "greatness of spirit, consistency, and strength". Such is the challenge, and such the reward. For leadership is more than responsibility; it is also privilege.

Privilege is, of course, a double-edged sword. It is a gift which is bestowed, but also power to be wielded. Privilege brings power, and leadership is about nothing if it is not about power. Intrinsic to the nature of power is its potential for abuse. Power does have the ability to corrupt, hence the importance of recognising the need to cultivate wisdom - that indefinable quality of maturity - rather than relying merely on skill and knowledge. It is equally necessary, however, not to deny or avoid the attribute of power, nor to diminish its value. Without power, a defining characteristic of leadership is lost.

Co-creating the world

It is vital to recognise that, either through position or personality, the leader has the power to impact on the world - to change it. This, in fact, is the essence of leadership: the leader is one who does not accept the limitations of a "given" situation or set of circumstances, but uses the opportunity to transform such constraints into new realities, and takes responsibility for the privilege. Any other stance would be to forego leadership.

Vaclav Havel, the Czechoslovakian philosopher and statesman, asserts that "consciousness precedes being" (as quoted by Parker Palmer). What he means, Parker Palmer tells us, is that, "Matter... is not the fundamental factor in human history... Consciousness is. Human awareness is... Those are the deep sources of freedom and power with which people have been able to move boulders and create change." Palmer refers to these things in a talk in which he notes that leadership does not limit creativity by "treating institutional and economic realities as absolute constraints," but rather recognises that we "co-create the world" (Palmer, 1990:2). Thus, while we are indeed acted upon, we are also free to act; leadership lies in the complex interaction between the two.

Leadership is more than a job; it is a calling. What, then, do we need to know in order to practise leadership with dignity?

Ambiguity and Contradiction

Contradiction, and the tensions which arise out of contradiction, are the very stuff of leadership. But in fact it goes even further than this. Ambiguity and uncertainty, the consequences of contradiction, come with the job, as it were; they cannot be wished away. Leadership is about being able to act decisively *given* ambiguity and uncertainty, rather than in their absence. And acting decisively without denying the ambiguous nature of the terrain. Bad leadership is often the result of this denial. For example, the fact that the results of one's actions are always unknown (and unpredictable) at the time of having to act leads inevitably to uncertainty. Leadership becomes less than effective when, in the face of this, it vacillates, or refuses to act, or acts without the humility which comes with considering that its decision may not be the right one. To act decisively, and to take responsibility for one's actions, while knowing and acknowledging that one may be proved wrong through no "fault" of one's own, and that there is no final way of knowing, is the mark of the great leader, the leader who shows "greatness of spirit".

A major form of ambiguity and contradiction which the leader needs to embrace as a primary responsibility, is that between "holding the whole" and "breaking boundaries". In respect of the

organisation or group or community which he or she is leading, the leader is responsible for ensuring that everyone experiences ownership, participation, meaning and belonging. Communication, transparency, and consultation, and the understanding that "a convoy only moves as fast as the slowest ship" (Lievegoed, 1978:5), inform the activities aimed at protecting the boundaries of the community for which one is responsible. Yet, of course, the downside of these activities is that they can lead to isolation of that community, a conservative or reactionary way of approaching the world, and loss of relevance. The leader is also responsible for maintaining the community or organisation at the cutting edge - for ensuring that it has a cutting edge. For, as Max De Pree puts it in *Leadership is an Art*, "everything has a tendency to deteriorate." Communities and organisations tend always towards stagnation unless intervention - leadership intervention - is consciously aimed at combating this. (De Pree, 1989: 98)

Thus, the leader is responsible for breaking the boundaries of received knowledge, of "common sense", of patterns of thinking and behaving which, over the years, have built themselves into routines which lull people to sleep. But the leader has to maintain continuity whilst simultaneously promoting change; such is the nature of ambiguity and contradiction. The uncertainty referred to above comes as part of the same deal, for one implication of the foregoing is that the leader is often having to manage transition, and transition implies chaos. The intersection between the old and the new, between letting go of the old and taking on the new, is most often a place where rules are broken and disappear, and habit and routine are replaced with periods of chaos - which can be blessings and opportunities, although, if prolonged, can become dangerous.

Managing Chaos

The leader is thus often called upon to act, and to maintain a stable - though not fixed - centre, in the midst of swirling chaos. Peter Vaill, in *Managing as a Performing Art*, uses the metaphor of white water rafting to describe the kind of chaos to which the leader is subjected, and suggests that the myth of leadership assumes that there are periods of calm in between the rapids, where the river is placid and slow, and one can relax. This is a myth, says Vaill; in reality - particularly modern reality - leadership is continuous white water rafting; chaos is part of the terrain, not an aberration or particularity (Vaill, 1991:30). Such an extreme view may or may not be true of every leadership position, but certainly we must welcome the management of chaos and insecurity as part of the job of leadership.

For leadership, the implication of these things is profound. They suggest that tools, techniques, even specific skills and knowledge, do not make the great (or even the competent) leader. They are necessary, yes, and vital; we explore a number of these further on in this paper. But in and of themselves, they are not sufficient. It is the person and the way he or she approaches the world which is important, not simply the skills or knowledge which s/he may have.

Vaill decries the tendency to isolate "leadership competencies" from the person practising leadership, and then to assume that such "competencies" exist independently as lists of functions, tasks and skills which can be learned on short courses. The leadership role, he says, calls for "individuality, it calls for the whole person" (Vaill, 1991:19). It calls for a developmental approach to assuming leadership capacity within oneself, not a "quick fix" approach.

Lievegoed puts it this way. He contrasts what he calls the "philosophy of efficiency" with the "philosophy of surplus". The philosophy of efficiency is the lazy approach; the attempt to do more with less. In these terms, the shortest courses of "add-on competencies" one can find are the way to train leadership. The philosophy of surplus, however, is the wellspring of creativity; rather than being content with superficiality,

one deepens oneself, one's self-knowledge, the concepts with which one works (Lievegoed, 1981). This is so that one does not simply repeat techniques and skills which were possibly appropriate to previous situations, but adapts, out of a surplus reservoir within, to respond creatively to new situations. "In the world of permanent white water, one cannot know where the next opportunity or threat is going to come from."(Vaill, 1991:30)

Self-development

Self-development, rather than training courses or lists of skills, is the path required of the leader. There is no substitute for working on oneself, for knowing oneself, as the ancients put it. There is no substitute for questioning everything, for taking nothing for granted, for looking beneath and behind the skills and techniques one is taught, at the underlying paradigms, so that one obtains mastery over them, freedom to challenge and adapt and re-fashion. One should continually question and play with received knowledge in order to keep the concepts one uses alive. Dead concepts, those one uses with the same amount of thought given to brushing one's teeth, lead slowly but inexorably to emptiness and paralysis. (We shall look at some self-development exercises in the third section of this paper - "Function and Stance".)

Self-development is important too, because leadership needs to be versatile in order to respond to different situations differently, rather than responding to all situations in the same way. Leadership calls for different parts of oneself, different modalities and approaches, at different times. (We will return to this topic in section 2). Organisations and communities develop, grow and change, people differ, circumstances vary. The leader should be able to tap different parts of him/herself appropriate to "the time and the place". According to Elaine Yarborough, we have an orchestra inside ourselves, and need to learn to play all of the instruments rather than just a few; and we need to be able to conduct, to allow all the different parts of oneself to play as one whole (Yarborough, 1985: 55-63). One must gain mastery of oneself, if presuming to lead others.

The problem of not being able to play all the instruments at one's disposal goes beyond the dangers of omission, of simply not having the capacity within oneself to respond. Absence of response is one thing; responding inappropriately is another. Many parts of ourselves have never been used, are hidden from ourselves, and thus unable to be tapped. But other parts are denied and repressed. It is these denied aspects of ourselves which pose the greatest danger to the development of the leadership capacity within oneself.

The Shadow

Depth psychology uses the concept of the shadow to denote those parts of ourselves which we deny. Robert Johnson, in his book *Owning Your Own Shadow*, describes it as follows: "The shadow is that part of us we fail to see or know... We all are born whole and, let us hope, will die whole. But somewhere early on our way, we eat one of the wonderful fruits of the tree of knowledge, things separate into good and evil, and we begin the shadow-making process; we divide our lives. In the cultural process we sort out our God-given characteristics into those that are acceptable to society and those that have to be put away. This is wonderful and necessary, and there would be no civilised behaviour without this sorting out of good and evil. But the refused and unacceptable characteristics do not go away; they only collect in the dark corners of our personalities. When they have been hidden long enough, they take on a life of their own - the shadow life. The shadow is that which has not entered adequately into consciousness. It is the despised quarter of our being. It often has an energy potential nearly as great as our ego." (Johnson, 1991).

The concept of the shadow is perhaps the most vital concept for the leader to grasp. Let us take as example the male leader who grew up in a culture which prohibited boys, who would be men, from crying. The ability to cry, or the male in tears, or vulnerability itself, is repressed as being "wrong". Over years this becomes a shadow aspect of the one who has been thrust into leadership. Two things result (because this is all happening unconsciously, this particular leader is not making attempts to "know himself"). First, he develops a fabulous strength of will, which his followers appreciate. Nothing can shake his conviction, or his pride. It is later that his followers discover the downside of this, for, as it is said, "the brighter the candle, the longer the shadow". The downside in this case manifests as an inability to humble himself, to admit to being incorrect or to admit to feeling hurt or wounded. The man has slowly become a stone, and a stone cannot lead.

Second - and simultaneously - the shadow takes on a life of its own. That which is repressed ends up by being unconsciously "projected" onto things, and particularly people, in the outside world. So our leader denies promotional opportunities for what he terms "soft" people, he will not listen to their advice; at an extreme, he ignores the accountant's advice because the accountant is conciliatory and self-effacing, and the organisation begins to fail financially. Such a person is not fit to lead.

Yet such people do lead. Such situations occur all the time. We all have shadows, although some attempt to bring them into consciousness, and thus integrate them. Parker Palmer uses the concept of the shadow to present a very interesting and important definition of leadership. He says: "We have a choice about what we are going to project, and in that choice we help create the world that is... A leader is a person who has an unusual degree of power to project on other people his or her shadow, or his or her light. A leader is a person who has an unusual degree of power to create the conditions under which other people must live and move and have their being - conditions that can either be as illuminating as heaven or as shadowy as hell. A leader is a person who must take special responsibility for what is going on inside him or herself, inside his or her consciousness, lest the act of leadership create more harm than good." (Palmer, 1990:4)

It is not that one needs to be perfect, nor that one should have mastered and understood oneself before taking up the mantle of leadership. However, leaders do need to commit themselves to such a process - the problem is that people often rise to leadership by a tendency towards extraversion, which can mean a tendency to ignore what is going on inside themselves. The link between leadership and self-knowledge calls us to re-examine that denial of the inner life.

Authority

Effective leadership, ultimately, does not depend on position; it depends on the respect which one can command. It depends on real authority, rather than on ambition or manipulation or contrived structuring. Such things will work for a time, but will fail eventually. And it is worthwhile to note that the root of the word "authority" is "author". One develops authentic authority by becoming the author of one's circumstances, instead of the subject. And to be the author of one's life requires self-mastery, sure-footedness, and the ability to adapt the story where necessary.

These things may read theoretically, but their verification lies in your own reflections. Think only of the leaders you have known whom you respect, whom you would follow, whom you would regard as authentic. There is no substitute for authenticity, for honesty or for transparency. One needs the strength to be vulnerable and open to critique; one needs an inner consistency to avoid both rigidity and excessive sanguinity. One needs to question, continuously. It may be that the real leader is recognised by his or her ability to ask the right questions, rather than an ability to come up with ready answers.

It does not help to vacillate, to be filled with self-doubt, to be confused or unable to act decisively. Of course not. But being able to ask the right questions does not imply such paralysis. Asking the right questions reveals reality, lays it bare, so to speak, in a way that ready answers never can. Right questions allow insight and creativity to arise. Asking the right questions is an art in itself, one which increases the ability to observe accurately; and accurate observation is a primary and vital leadership practice. 1

The faculty of questioning enables something more to happen. It opens the leadership function up to allow other members of the group to participate, to question and attempt answers. It encourages creativity and insight in others, as well as ownership. And the ultimate test of leadership, the ultimate privilege of power, is the ability, given power, to hold that power in check so that others can begin to lead, to gain power themselves. In this way the sum of creativity and ability is increased, and the leader loses nothing but his or her own fears. Facilitating the growth of leadership in others is perhaps the highest form of the art of leadership, its greatest triumph.

Function and Stance

... style is no substitute for substance... (John Heider)

What are the major areas of focus for the leader of an organisation; and how should the leader mediate his or her primary functions? I should like to start with two broad statements to form the foundation for the leadership "model" which will be presented in this section.

First, leaders are responsible for ensuring that their organisation performs effectively with respect to its aims and objectives. The organisation needs to have relevant and appropriate impact. Simultaneously, though, the leader is responsible for maintaining the organisation such that it remains capable of accomplishing its tasks. Put another way - to use Stephen Covey's phraseology (*The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*) - one of the failures of leadership is that it often concentrates on organisational production to the virtual exclusion of maintaining the production capacity of the organisation (Covey, 1989). Maintaining production capacity means regarding the organisation as a living system, and spending time, energy and money on seeing to the health of the system in a myriad of different ways. It therefore often means limiting potential production output in the short-term in order to ensure production capacity in the long-term. (Organisations working in the human service or development sectors may find it difficult to relate to the term "production". This term can easily be replaced with "service" or with the particular service in which your organisation is involved).

Put simply, you cannot work without rest, you cannot expect people to give continuously of themselves without also being supported. It is less than useful to act unceasingly without taking the time for reflection; development of staff is as important as immediate productivity in the quest for excellence.

The second statement concerns the use of the concepts "production" and "production capacity". The essence of leadership lies in ensuring that both have their place, simultaneously, and that creativity arises out of the tension between the two. The quest is for balance rather than compromise. Different organisations will call for different emphases at different times; different people will require different approaches from leadership in order to facilitate development. The leader should therefore be in control of the polarities and of the continuum between them, rather than at the mercy of conflicting possibilities and personal biases. Before these issues become too abstract however, let us begin the work of colouring them in by addressing ourselves to the model itself.

A Model for Organisational Leadership

Models are notoriously problematic tools for the purpose of conceptualisation and understanding, for they are not "real". They tend to lose the nuance and subtlety of life itself, its complexities and contradictions. They do, however, work well in drawing our attention to major issues or elements, as well as the most important relationships between the elements. It is in this sense that we talk of a model here; we are trying to isolate certain important leadership functions and methods.

The real question is: in organisational life, which areas does the leader need to concentrate on most? Which areas stand out as demanding the leader's attention; concerning which aspects of organisational life does the leader need a continual overview? How does the leader "read" these areas; how does the leader recognise where the weaknesses lie, where the strengths lie, and what form of intervention will increase organisational "excellence"? Also, in terms of intervention, what should the leader be capable of in order to respond appropriately? The model discussed on the following pages consists of three sets of polarities. Each set concerns one element of organisational life, while the polarities themselves are diametrically opposed ways of dealing with these elements, of responding to them. We will explore each set in isolation from the others before building them into a composite model.

First Set

Organisations consist of people; they are nothing without people. People are, indeed, the very reason for organisational formation. The richness of an organisation, the quality of its work, the value of its output; all these are dependent, above all else, on the people who staff it. Organisational culture, the way an organisation really works - and the way it feels to work in the organisation - is largely a result of the collective behaviours and attitudes of all the people who work there.

First Element - People

People are notoriously different. Some are motivated through love of their work, others by money, yet others by power and ambition, while some are not motivated at all. Some take responsibility yet show no creativity, others are wildly creative but take no responsibility, while some are simply not interested. Some arrive trained, others arrive needing training; some have fixed ways of doing things, others are open to alternative suggestions. Some have a highly developed sense of self-management while others are in need of structures and procedures external to themselves. Some work cooperatively, whereas others seem to consider each day as a possibility for riding into battle.

As leader it is your responsibility to aim for the ideal, in order to actually achieve a moderately productive environment. And the ideal is: a community of souls wherein each is able to participate and find meaning, in which people respect each other as well as the rules which arise to regulate their behaviour, and where individual creativity is able to flower. No organisation achieves this ideal fully, yet some do not even approximate it. It is essential to recognise and respect that leadership has a primary role to play in this approximation. Every organisation will draw towards it diverse kinds of people, while not every organisation will have authentic leaders at the helm. De Pree begs leaders not to complain about their followers, and not to use their followers as an excuse for poor leadership; indeed, he appeals for this tendency to be reversed, and for leadership to judge itself on the quality of its followers (De Pree, 1989).

Of course, this is a tall order which many will find difficult to accept. Perhaps you have taken over leadership of the organisation relatively recently and do not feel responsible for appointments made by

others, or cultures developed by others. Perhaps you feel you have tried everything with particular staff members and it is clear that they show no potential for change or development. Perhaps your organisation is part of a larger whole - you may be leader of a department within an organisation, or of a regional office within a national structure - and you feel that the organisational culture is set by the wider context and you have little power to change it. What then?

These constraints are all real, and it is important to acknowledge and not belittle them. Some people will not change; some appointments you yourself never would have made. But it is equally important not to use these constraints as the excuse for ineffective leadership. The early part of the previous section emphasised the fact that a leader "accepts the power of human agency with respect to structure and context and situational constraint".

There are a number of aspects of organisational life which relate directly to the development of a community of people, and which the leader should therefore have an overview of, if not direct involvement in. Recruitment of staff, as well as induction processes, as well as the legal and economic conditions of employment; these are all entry points into the community and therefore important. Human resource development - staff training, monitoring and evaluation and supervision, the reflective practices of the organisation, counselling and development - is another area which demands to be led. Teambuilding and conflict resolution activities also fall within this element, as does communication. Direct involvement in all of these areas is not demanded; delegation is an important leadership capacity which should be used intelligently. But a direct grasp of the strategy and efficacy of each of these areas is essential.

First Polarity - Confronting/Supporting

The leader is responsible for the development of his or her people such that they are able to build their own capacity and thus become ever greater assets to the organisation and the work. Assisting people with their own development processes requires the ability to work in two opposing modalities. One is the modality of confrontation; the other that of support. The leader intervenes in the development processes of others either through providing them with support or through challenging them. Or both, of course.

Elaine Yarborough refers to these two modalities as hard and soft interventions (Yarborough, 1991). Hard intervention skills involve confrontation of specific behaviours; suggestions or advocacy for change; teaching a specific skill; indicating that you as leader will not tolerate it if certain behaviours persist. Hard intervention may also involve leaders indicating that they are concerned or worried about certain dynamics and that dire consequences might ensue if they are not changed.

Hard interventions are often necessary but always dangerous. They are often a warning that the leader may be uncentred or have an emotional attachment to whatever is happening. In other words, they may signal a projection of the leader's shadow, rather than an objective response to events. In any event, they release this possibility. A special awareness is called for. Even if hard interventions succeed brilliantly, there is often little cause for celebration. There has been an injury. Someone's process has been violated. Later on, the person whose process has been violated may well become less open and more defensive. There will be a deeper resistance and possibly resentment.

None of this can obviate the need for hard interventions, but they should serve to keep the leader on his or her toes. Hard interventions always run the risk of manipulation, on the one hand, and aggression on the other.

Soft interventions, on the other hand, do not break into other people's processes. They are an attempt to provide support, and as such they assume trust in the ability and integrity of the other. Soft interventions are nurturing and collaborative. They involve forming tentative guesses about the meaning of behaviour, reflecting behaviours that are observed without interpretation, indicating to people the consequences of their behaviour, or simply changing a response to a person or group without giving direct feedback. (This latter particularly when a dynamic has developed between the leader and another, and the leader recognises that the negative behaviour of the other is part of the dynamic between them). Soft interventions involve waiting longer than usual to intervene; trusting that people can and will reach their own conclusions about productive behaviour; and providing a structure for people to arrive at their own answers.

Soft interventions, as with hard ones, should be considered and thought-through responses to people and situations. They are not soft in the sense of the leader's fears or inabilities with respect to dealing adequately with a situation. Neither is supportive behaviour overly sympathetic to the point of condoning unhelpful behaviour. Then again, soft interventions run the risk of being paternalistic; one should not allow support to degenerate into a patronising attitude on the part of leadership.

At different times one needs to be directive or facilitative. Leaders need to cultivate the ability to perform both functions. Organisations are known by what they do, although sometimes more by what they purport to do than by what they actually do, a problem which is closer to the heart of development and human service organisations than to commercial organisations, which at least produce a quantifiable product. For NGOs the quality of the work which they do, or the effect of the work, is more important, yet less easy to evaluate; the potential for deluding both self and others is therefore that much greater. Identity, as an element to be cared for, is thus of major concern to NGOs. The question of what exactly it is that the organisation does, how this is accomplished, and whether it is relevant or effective or not, is a further primary concern for leadership.

Second Element - Identity

It is the leader's job to keep the organisation at the cutting edge of its particular field, to ensure that the organisation is doing the right thing, is relevant, effective and in demand. It is also important that individual staff members partake in the organisational identity, draw meaning and motivation from it and feel that it is theirs, that they can own it and develop it and give their all to it. Finally, organisational identity comes not simply from organisational aims and objectives, but also from the efficacy of these aims and objectives; how well the organisation performs them and how much impact they have on the user, or client.

There are then two areas of organisational life which the leader must concentrate on: the one area is, broadly speaking, forward direction; the other is assessment of achievements to date. And, of course, the interaction between the two.

Forward direction involves organisational mission; what the organisation is in the world for. Organisational mission, in turn, is dependent on both the context in which the organisation finds itself - mission is only relevant and appropriate in a given set of circumstances, and these shift, often with bewildering rapidity - as well as on the particular set of creative visions incorporated in the organisation's members.

Mission, then, needs to be operationalised; we need to move beyond broad vision to strategy, the "how" of accomplishing aims with a scarcity of resources and in the midst of environmental constraints.

The leader, therefore, is responsible for a number of areas. There is the need to maintain a constant watch on environment and context. There is the need to ensure that vision is held collectively and not simply in the hands of a few people. (Equally there is the need to see that vision is forceful and that it is renewed; that it is not allowed to stagnate.) There is the need to strategise around vision, to do detailed planning, to be aware of timing, deadlines, logistics and the interaction of people and departments or programmes. The need for individual planning and accountability as well as for group synergy.

At the same time, work on forward direction needs to be balanced - and, indeed, informed - by assessment of achievements. Successful achievements may change the very context within which one is working; while failure may be due to inappropriate strategy, bad planning or incompetent staff. Evaluation and monitoring, then, become important areas of intervention for leadership. Individuals, different programmes, the organisational vision or mission itself, should be monitored and evaluated constantly. Not simply in terms of whether we have done what we said we would, but how well we have done it, what kind of impact it has had, where we can improve, where do we need to re-think and change direction, and so on.

This is the arena for organisational learning, for the development of a learning organisation, of an organisational culture which is open to critique and challenge, which asks itself the hard questions and is able to respond appropriately. For strategy is not simply a case of following a series of logical steps; Mzwandile Msoki points out that many organisations get caught in what he terms "strategic drift", an inability to give effect to (logically) chosen strategy because of unconscious individual, cultural, even leadership resistance to change, the logic of the strategy notwithstanding (Msoki, 1994).

The leader should, in the first instance, be able to focus; to focus his or her thoughts, to focus the organisation, to focus the diverse and scattered energies and inclinations of a range of different people. To choose from a diverse range of opportunities and possibilities; to hone in on environmental threats and select the way through. To choose one thing where a number of options may have similar results. To prioritise.

In order to accomplish this the leader needs two faculties. The capacity to vision, to project oneself and one's organisation into an unknown future, to see beyond the present, to imagine that which is not yet. To think beyond the boundaries set by external constraints and internal force of habit. To see opportunities where others see threats; to see the gift and challenge brought by crisis and danger.

The other faculty is the ability to choose a course of action, to choose between options. Easily said, but in fact one of the toughest leadership tasks of all. For all choice involves sacrifice. The leader is not simply a visionary; neither is the leader simply the one who can cut to the heart of a matter and make the hard choices quickly. Focusing involves both.

As a prelude to - and foundation for - moving from focusing to grounding, let us gain another perspective on focusing by taking a look at strategic thinking. Strategic thinking involves thinking in two contradictory ways. The one way may be termed analytic, the other conceptual. Analytic thinking has to do with understanding the given; conceptual thinking with imagining (conceiving) the future.

Analysis implies breaking the whole down into its constituent parts, understanding the parts and how they interact and affect one another, and building a logical argument for point of entry and intervention. The particular method we use for breaking the whole down into parts will differ from person to person, and possibly lead to different conclusions.

But the actual decision about which strategy to choose is accomplished through conceptual rather than

analytic thinking. Strategy formulation implies choice, not simply dissection. It implies, given a set of circumstances and our analysis of them, going beyond the given to imagining how a particular intervention might affect those circumstances. It implies a leap of faith, for in truth we cannot know how an intervention will affect circumstances until we have tried it.

Conceptual thinking is holistic thinking, visioning. It is essentially a creative act, an imagining, the building of a whole. Analytical thinking is essentially a logical activity, an understanding, a breaking down into constituent parts. Strategy formulation is the employment of both forms of thinking in a continuous weave of alternating forms (Kaplan, 1994).

Moving, then, from focusing to grounding, we see a similar interweaving of opposing forms. Grounding is an activity related more to analytical than to conceptual thinking. Grounding is concentrating not on what could be but on what is, not on what we should be achieving but on what we are - or have - achieved. Grounding is moving away from the future to look squarely at the constraints of reality. How does the context bind us, in which ways are we limited by lack of resources, what are our successes and failures to date, what are our strengths and weaknesses? Grounding is thus also the attempt to build institutional memory, to establish precedents on which to base our focusing activities.

Third Set

Lievegoed puts it this way: that the leader is called upon to develop the techniques "that make it possible to seek continually new social forms (structures) of the organisation, appropriate to each situation, in such a way as not to encroach upon the freedom of any member. An extraordinarily difficult task." (Lievegoed, 1978:11) And again: "The crucial factor is that people work together in such a way that they are stimulated rather than inhibited in their own development by the rules (and structures) which arise to regulate their co-operation." (Lievegoed, 1978:13)

Third Element - Structure

Organisations require form; they are not anarchic collectivities of free-floating activity. Organisations require structure, and the larger and more complex the organisation and its activities, the more complex the structure. They require rules, procedures, conditions of service. Neither democracy, nor equality, nor productive fellowship can be achieved without them.

Rules, procedures and structures can, however, paralyse an organisation and its activities; they can inhibit creativity in its members. There is a need to keep structures and rules to a minimum, or at least to continually attune them to current organisational function and strategy, to the size and character of the organisation, and to the kinds of people resident in the organisation at a particular time.

This does not mean continually shifting structure. Structure provides security and meaning to organisational members, and too much change leads to chaos and fear. But equally, rigid and inappropriate structures curtail creativity, flexibility and responsiveness. The trick is, once again, to find the balance. Structures and procedures should be designed to enhance communication rather than to inhibit it; indeed, procedures for comprehensive communication are a prerequisite for adequate structure. Structures should also be transparent such that all members have access to understanding them and operating freely within them. It should be recognised, however, that all structures will entail some degree of hierarchy, for hierarchy is an intrinsic attribute of complex structure.

Structures include the division of work into manageable units, departments or programmes. They also include procedures for integrating the differentiating units, for enabling different sections to articulate their work together wherever necessary. Structures include decision-making procedures and communication channels. Structures also articulate lines of accountability, and procedures for ensuring that accountability enhances rather than inhibits productivity and creativity.

Leaders should ensure that structures and procedures match the needs of the developing organisation.
Third Polarity - Mobilising/Giving Meaning

This third element translates into two opposing modalities with respect to leadership. These modalities relate to "holding the whole" and "breaking boundaries".

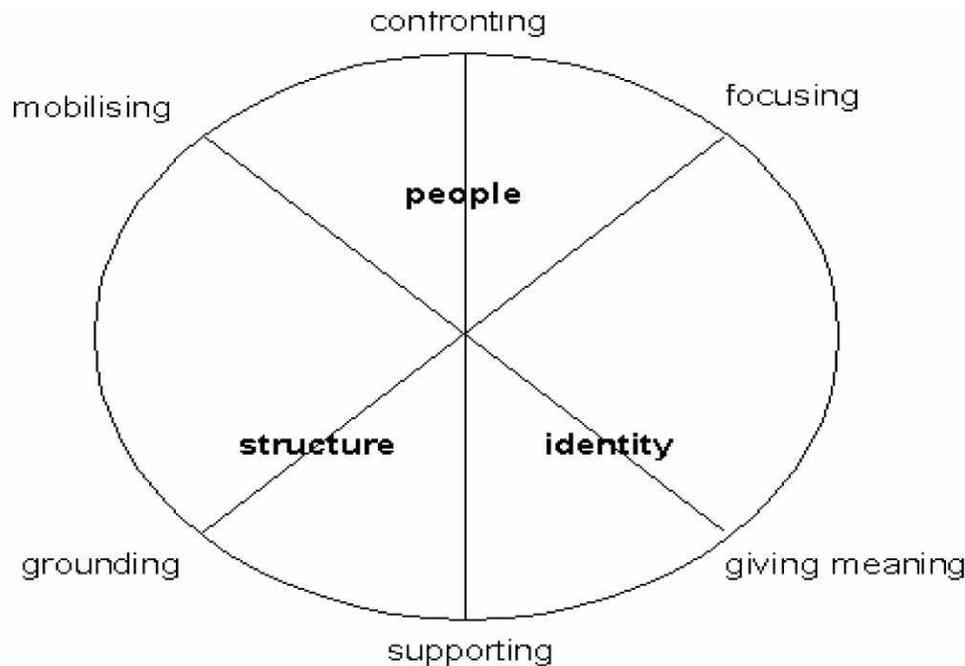
Giving meaning refers to the leadership stance of providing a sense of security and familiarity to organisational members such that they are able to work within a recognisable and coherent framework. The house has a foundation, a roof, doors and windows. The house is a home to operate out of and to return to. There is a sense of continuity, of pattern and routine, inherent in the structures and procedures of the organisation. The leader commits him or herself to the notion of due process, and to a concept of equality with respect to membership. He or she avoids arbitrary action and decision-making; there are recognisably right and wrong ways of doing things. People have recourse to a structure which exists in and of itself, rather than at the whim of the leader. The organisation itself has internal coherence and integrity; there is a sense of objectivity and boundary.

The leader, in giving weight and attention to these things, embodies a feeling of stability, of maturity. There is a certain ponderous quality to the leader here, an age and wisdom. The leader is unruffled by external fluctuations, and provides a stable shoulder to lean on.

On the other hand, the dangers of insularity, complacency and stagnation assert themselves. Also the dangers of rigidity, of form no longer following function, of inflexibility. The organisation runs the danger of getting stuck. It is up to the leader to maintain movement here, to act as a mobilising force. The method is one of subversion, of operating from outside the bounds set by the framework and by the norms which have built up in the organisation. Rather than father or mother figure, the leader here is youth, questioning, rebelling, granted.

No structures or procedures should be strong enough to hold the leader captive if the time for - and appropriateness of - those structures and procedures has passed. The real danger though, lies within the leader. Of all the polarities which the leader has to encompass, this is perhaps the most difficult, the most trying. We tend, in ourselves, towards one side rather than the other. Generally, we develop in such a way that we find it easy to reject and criticise the side which is not us. The development of leadership entails being prepared to be objective.

The Composite Model



We have, then, a composite model for organisational leadership, in the form of a circular diagram which should make for easy access to the main features of leadership. Are you paying attention to the people element in your organisation, or are crises of conflict and interpersonal tension the norm? Is the organisation's identity intact and is its strategy taut and poised as the string of a strung bow, or are you continually reacting to events beyond your control? Are your current structures facilitative or inhibiting?

Then again, are you able to support and confront, to focus and ground, to mobilise and give meaning? Are you able to recognise where all these elements and functions interact, and find the right mix and the right balance for the particular situation? Perhaps most important of all, are you able to anticipate what is coming towards you, so that you can maintain mastery of the situation rather than being forced into a continual firefighting mode?

Finally, can you begin to recognise your own strengths and your own limitations, either in the range of interventions at your disposal or in your ability to objectively observe what is needed in a particular situation? Leadership is as simple as the diagram indicates, and as complex as your own inner processes.

Of course, application of the leadership model changes as the organisation grows, ages and develops. In the early phases of birth and growth, structure is the least important element, and people are swept up in the enthusiasm of the impulse. Organisational mission and strategy are paramount. Later, structure assumes more importance, sometimes denying the people element and therefore requiring redress later.

Similarly, in early phases leadership is seldom questioned; later the organisation might require a more structured approach in order to contain leadership within the organisational framework; while still later more people grow towards leadership and authority, and leadership becomes dispersed throughout the organisation, or rotated according to set rules or particular expertise.

Then again, different people, in different phases of their own development, require differing approaches from leadership. At times leadership will need to be directive and confronting, at other times more facilitative and supportive. It will depend on what is needed.

It must be noted that this picture of leadership says nothing about different leadership styles which the leader may adopt. This question of leadership style is ubiquitous in much literature on leadership; descriptions are given of the hierarchical style, the co-operative style, the autonomous style, the consultative style, the autocratic style, and so on. One is asked to identify one's dominant style, or to generate lists of behaviours by which one can identify a particular leadership style. Certain styles are more fashionable than others, more acceptable in particular settings or amongst particular groups of people.

Nothing has been said about leadership styles because they are beside the point; they are contrived, the use of a particular method to deal with a particular situation, a superficial veneer to create an impression. The need to adopt a style, to learn to act in a particular way, is an acknowledgement that one has no authority, that one is forced to substitute.

Style is no substitute for substance, as noted in the quote which heads this section. Albert Camus, in *The Fall*, writes: "When one has no character one has to apply a method". (Camus, 1983). The point is the same. The development of leadership capacity is the development of substance and character, not merely the assumption of particular skills and techniques appropriate to certain styles of leadership. If one pursues the former path, then one does not need to talk about whether consensus decision-making is more effective than consultative decision-making, or not; one will not need to ask how much authority should be given with responsibility when delegating a task. For there are no answers to these questions that are not dependent on the specific situation and people involved, including the leader him or herself.

One must develop the ability to observe what is needed, one must develop the faculties to respond with what is needed, and one must develop the fluidity to change one's responses with a minimum of inner resistance. One must develop sufficient inner authority to allow the situation to lead one to the correct response.

Practice and Development

On the streets of New York, a man asks directions of two long-haired freaks lounging on the sidewalk. The man is hesitant and shy, dressed in bowtie and suit, a violin case in his hand. "What is the best way to get to Carnegie Hall?" he enquires. "Practise, man, practise" comes the reply.

None of us are born leaders; we are all born babies. We all have to develop leadership capacity as we grow. The previous two sections describe what we should be striving for as leaders, not what we should expect to be able to be before becoming a leader. Much of what the leader needs to know cannot be learned theoretically, before the job is begun. Experience, and reflection on that experience, is the true guru from which to learn. This is not an entirely satisfactory answer for the leader who wants an easy passage; neither, for that matter, for those who have to work under a leader struggling to find him or herself. But it should comfort those who take up leadership knowing that they are ill-equipped yet willing to learn.

Many who design training courses for leadership will not find this position satisfactory either. Yet leadership courses, provided they are conducted in-service - that is, for practicing leaders - can constitute important areas of learning for the leader. So too can the reading of books and articles. Seminars and talks, conversations with other leaders; all these are ways of learning from others and as such immensely

valuable, as so many people have covered so much ground over the years.

Nonetheless, even given all these development options, there is no substitute for working on oneself, getting to know oneself, and learning through reflection on one's own action. What follows in this section are a number of avenues for working on oneself in the pursuit of leadership excellence. There are, of course, many others, and we would encourage the practitioner to investigate further options. The options which follow are the ones which we have found, through experience, to be the most successful.

Observation

Accurate observation lies at the heart of successful leadership interventions. Yarborough notes that practitioners weak in leadership intervention skills have usually not developed their observation skills (Yarborough, 1985). The entire previous two sections are based on the ability to observe what is going on in order to choose the appropriate response.

There are many ways to improve one's observation skills. Learning to draw, or attending art classes, can assist immeasurably in learning to see. Most artists will confirm that what distinguishes the artist from the amateur is not so much the ability to draw as it is the ability to see accurately. Seeing cannot be taken for granted; as with any other skill, it is a learned activity. Similarly, music appreciation classes, or simply prolonged listening to music - without spinning off into reverie - can aid the ear, and listening is as important an observation tool as seeing.

One can also engage in listening exercises with colleagues. Some of these might include: holding back from responding to a statement until you have ascertained whether you have heard it correctly; repeating what you have heard in your own words before responding; and attempting to listen on a number of levels at once, thus the content level, the feeling or emotional level, and the level of intentionality (trying to hear beneath the words to the underlying will, or intention, of the speaker). This last is particularly difficult - it is often largely unconscious to the speaker him or herself - but is particularly useful to the leader attempting to ascertain what is really going on in a confusing situation.

Intentionally observing what is going on in a meeting in terms of group dynamics, and having the space to feed back to the group as a check on accuracy, is another excellent observation exercise. Simply making a pact with colleagues to report to each other on what each has observed on their way to work in the morning is another admirable observation exercise; it is remarkable how one's observations increase as the days go on, how much more observant one becomes, and how much more interesting life appears. Judgement often clouds our ability to see; it is interesting to note how much more one observes when judgement is withheld.

The use of metaphor - imaginatively characterising what you are seeing through the use of an alternative perspective from another area of life - is often a great aid to insightful observation. Like this: for leaders, the metaphor of the hawk is an appropriate one. The hawk glides high in the sky, calm, relaxed; everything is seen from its high vantage point; the overview is all-encompassing and diffuse. But within the overall, generalised picture with its shades and textures and patterns, the tiny individual mouse is suddenly seen. The ability to focus becomes keen, and the hawk will swoop down, accurately and efficiently, to isolate one tiny element within a vast perspective. As Heider puts it, it is only when the leader can see clearly that he or she will shed light on others (Heider, 1988).

Therapy

Many people regard psychotherapy as an indication that the person who goes to a therapist is sick, or at least has problems which cannot be solved without radical assistance. This is an unfortunate perspective, as there are vast areas of ourselves which are hidden, suppressed, unconscious, and these affect the way we respond to the world. Therapy can be an important way of getting to know ourselves better, and thus becoming better leaders.

There are many forms of therapy to choose from. We should not forget also that there are therapies which do not require the intervention of a therapist, such as taking time out alone, away from the confusions of everyday life, to "take stock" and centre oneself.

Action-Reflection

Observation of one's own action, reflection on that action, and the drawing out of lessons and principles for future action, is perhaps the most important tool of all. There is a standard procedure for action-reflection, depicted in the diagram on the next page, which can be used as an aid in this process.

Action-reflection Cycle



Begin with the experiences themselves, observe yourself while you are acting, jot down notes to jog the memory later when you have the chance. Reflect on your experiences, review the things which happened and the way you acted, note foreseen and unforeseen consequences, where plans went awry and where intentions surprised you with success. See if you can find patterns in what you observe, try to draw principles for future behaviour out of these patterns, develop your own learnings and principles (perhaps even your own theory of leadership). Use these principles to change your behaviour, to plan different and innovative ways of approaching your future leadership tasks.

Mentorship and Developmental Counselling

Action-reflection, performed alone, will take one only a certain distance. The danger is that one's observations are pre-determined by how one sees the world, that one's reflections never break out of the mode of thinking which one has already developed. It helps then to have a mentor with whom one can reflect, who can challenge and confront and provide alternative perspectives (and also advice). Coupled with developmental counselling, this can be a very powerful tool indeed.

Developmental counselling is a structured form of action-reflection using a mentor, or partner, as counsellor. Structured meetings, held monthly or bi-monthly or even every third month, set the framework for this process. The practitioner writes a report detailing experiences for the period, noting questions which have arisen, reflecting on successes and failures, strengths and weaknesses, omissions in terms of the plan one had set oneself, recurring doubts and problem areas. This report is worked through together with the counsellor in a lengthy session which is isolated from interruptions. The counsellor helps the practitioner to reflect objectively, to identify the relevant patterns, and to set new plans and goals for the coming period.

Experience indicates that there is no greater method for developing leadership than the combination of action-reflection and developmental counselling.

An Exercise: Turning Points

(An exercise for exploring change)

One of the most important tasks of the leader is to manage change, to facilitate people and situations through change. To help people - and whole organisations - overcome their resistance to change. Managing change comes with the territory of leadership; one of those things which cannot be wished away. It is one of the toughest parts of the leadership job. One's ability to manage change processes in others, and in groups and organisations, will depend in a large measure on one's ability to manage change in oneself. What do you do when circumstances force change onto you - or are you eager to change before being "forced" to? How do you behave, how do you respond? How much do you know of yourself, how much of yourself is repressed and projected out onto the situation, how can you improve? The following is one exercise which could assist you in coming to grips with these things.

The exercise is done with a speaking partner or counsellor. Either both parties can engage in being "client" - and both in being counsellor - at different times, or one party can simply assist the other.

Identify three recent, important turning points in your life. Points during which something changed significantly in your life, as a result of this event or process. (It is sometimes worthwhile not to choose the most recent turning points, as these are often still too painful, or euphoric. The more emotional distance you have from the turning point, the more objective a perspective you will attain).

- i. Describe each event in detail. Paint a picture of words so that the event or the time becomes visible - almost palpable - for both you and your partner.
- ii. Explore in depth how you handled this situation, how you dealt - psychologically - with this time. What were your responses, your rationalisations, your emotions, your actions, and so on. (Your counsellor or speaking partner should be questioning you closely throughout, confronting you with

your avoidances and omissions, challenging you to remember and articulate those things which you may have forgotten or may think unimportant). Characterise the nature of the different aspects of your life after this experience. What had changed, which changes were sustained; did you assume new responsibilities, did your attitude to certain things change? What, really, was different?

- iii. Once you have done this for each experience, compare the three, your various answers to all of these elements in your turning points. Can you see any patterns emerging, any commonalities across the experiences? Can you begin to see patterns in your life, in your responses to change, in the way you behave, in the kinds of events and forces coming towards you?
- iv. What then do you learn about yourself? What insights do you gain about the ways in which you learn, or develop; the manner in which you respond to change? And what does this tell you about your leadership of others' change now? What insights do you get into the change process itself, and into your particular slant on the process? (Throughout, the counsellor should be challenging you to go beyond yourself). How do you change, and how can you use this understanding to be a better facilitator of others' change?

This exercise can also be done in a group, with people divided into pairs, and the whole group sharing and discussing their learnings at the end. But it is important that a degree of trust exists amongst the people, as this is an intensely intimate exercise which throws up issues about yourself which you might need time to come to terms with.

Finally, this exercise can be done any number of times; the more the better, as patterns are more valid the more experiences they are based on. You need not be afraid of not finding new turning points on which to work. On the contrary, the more you engage in this exercise, the more you will remember, and the more turning points you will be able to identify. Life is, after all, a continuous medley of change.

An Exercise: Stuck Issues

(An exercise for exploring the shadow)

We talked of the shadow in the first section of this paper, and would ask you to return to those pages if the intricacies of the shadow concept escape you at the moment. "The shadow is that which has not entered adequately into consciousness. It is the despised quarter of our being. It often has an energy potential nearly as great as our ego."

The following exercise is one way of getting to know your shadow, or at least parts of your shadow. Performed regularly, it is one way of gradually bringing your shadow into the light of consciousness. However, it is an extremely difficult exercise to perform adequately. There is lots of room for evasion and avoidance; lots of temptation to rationalise. The shadow resists exposure with all its power, and its power is considerable, certainly greater than you imagine. As with the previous exercise, you will need a trusted speaking partner or counsellor, someone who will question deeper and challenge further, throughout this process, than you will want to permit. Someone who will insist on exposing the very resistances which you will want to maintain.

Nevertheless, the exercise remains difficult, and requires a real commitment on your part.

- i. Identify an issue in your life which, in spite of all your attempts to the contrary, you never succeed in getting beyond; a stuck issue. Such issues may relate only to your relationship with another

individual, or they may be part of your mode of interaction with the world at large.

As a leader, for example, I might recognise the importance of bringing people along with me in my exploration of new ideas, and of facilitating their ownership of those ideas. Yet I invariably end up running ahead of the group, causing alienation and generating criticisms of elitism and empire-building. This in turn may lead to my feeling resentful, and angry with the others for not taking responsibility. Thus the issue which I choose may be my own self-critique of running ahead of the group, or it may be my feeling that every group which I lead seems to be made up of people unable to take responsibility for themselves.

Another example could be my relationship with my teenage daughter, which seems to be getting worse despite every effort of mine to make it better.

(Note that, with all of these issues, the other party - or outer circumstances - can always be blamed, and the accusations may often be valid. But they are beside the point. You are concentrating on your side of the equation, your share of responsibility. It is only through looking at yourself and your responsibility that your shadow may be addressed and exposed. Getting angry and placing blame out there is more often than not your shadow working away in the dark, rather than being exposed to the light).

- ii. Choose one illustrative incident which is a typical example of this issue.
- iii. Describe this incident in graphic detail. Sketch a detailed picture, in colour, of all that happened, the context in which it happened, etc. Make the image real and alive; feel the emotions and struggles as they occurred.
- iv. Characterise, as clearly as possible, in as much detail as possible, what it was that you did in the situation. What other people did is important for the picture, but this forms a background for your own actions, which should stand out in relief, as it were. It is you who are the focal point, the hero or anti-hero, of the story.
- v. The story, of course, ends in "failure" for you, else it would not be a "stuck issue". So, having characterised what you did, you need to answer three questions. First, what did you lose through this incident? Second, what did you gain? And so finally, who was winning? This last question does not refer to the other people in the story in the sense that either they or you were winning. It is only yourself with whom you are concerned here. "Who was winning" means what part of you was winning? Was it the part you know and love, the positive image of yourself which you beam out into the world, or was it perhaps a previously unrecognised part of you? Have you seen part of your shadow here; have you uncovered that which has been hidden, that which you do not and never have wanted to acknowledge? (It needs to be emphasized once more that your shadow will resist exposure by blaming what you lost on outside factors; you have to be on your toes not to fall for it).
- vi. So, can you now characterise your shadow, or at least that part of it which you have recognised through this process? Describe it, allow it to stand in front of you, own it. Do not reject it through anger or disgust or dismay or self-flagellation. This will simply drive it back where it came from. Rather, make friends with it, integrate it, accept it and begin to work with it. Learn to recognise it easily, so that it no longer hides. It will lose its power to trip you up, and become a powerful piece of your leadership repertoire, your ability to work across many situations.
- vii. The above will happen over time, also if you repeat the exercise using different issues. In the immediate term - at the end of the exercise - try to work on what small steps you can take to break the mould. Where do you need to start?

Evaluation

Finally, there is absolutely no substitute for good, old-fashioned, honest evaluation. This can be a particularly terrifying experience for a leader, particularly one who is insecure and manifests this insecurity in various ways. But it is an essential method for learning and improving. It does not need to be viewed as a vote of confidence or no-confidence. It is not a judgement which, if negative, should lead to abdication. We do not need to view it so melodramatically.

But, if the leader is genuinely interested in improving, there are few places where more valuable feedback can be attained than through those whom one is leading. One does not have to take every bit of advice or criticism; people are dealing with their own issues in their feedback anyway. But an evaluation honestly conducted will lead to an underlying picture of the leader which will prove an invaluable tool for self-development, for dealing with issues like the shadow, and so on.

For this kind of evaluation to work, it is important that the leader does not conduct the evaluation him or herself; that utter confidentiality is assured and maintained; and that leadership feeds back its learnings to those people who participated in the evaluation. In the final analysis this is simple decency, and simple decency will probably take the leader further than technique or skill.

LEADERSHIP TO MANAGEMENT: Form and Substance

"Trust God, but tie your camel..." (Rumi)

The preceding sections have been written as much for managers as for leaders, and as much for "middle management" as for "directors". It is, in fact, with trepidation and a sense of danger that we, at this point, begin the process of differentiation between leadership and management. It must be done in order to clearly articulate the concept and dictates of "organisational responsibility" - to coin a generic term for both leadership and management - but to do it is dangerous because it may compound the mistake which is made by many. This mistake consists in the separation of leadership and management such that one is either a leader or a manager, but never both. To the contrary, we would like to assert, always both.

Except perhaps in the early days of organisational creation when the warmth of initial enthusiasm is enough to carry everything, no leader will be ultimately effective without taking management functions and roles seriously, without learning the necessities of management, without becoming a good manager. Dealing with people, initiating new strategic departures, ensuring through one's personal integrity that everyone feels an integral part of the whole; all these leadership functions will come to nothing without being grounded in a smoothly-running, well-gearred vehicle capable of riding rough terrain. At the same time, no manager will be able to cope with his or her management responsibilities without incorporating the kind of leadership capacity described in the previous sections.

Vaill puts it this way:

...today's executives (managers) must be leaders. The precedence of leadership over management has never been more imperative than it is today. One can't simply 'manage an existing system', for the unstable environment continually threatens to render any given structure and set of policies out of sync with its demands and opportunities. Under these conditions, a leadership model is far more appropriate than a managerial model. The leader constantly invents strategies that are intended to

improve the systems adaptation to its present and future environment. (Vaill, 1991:16)

Management and leadership are not separate functions. They are, to re-use an old metaphor, two sides of the same coin. They cannot exist apart from each other. The "coin" itself, the overarching concept, as it were, is "organisational responsibility". Within this concept, leadership and management stand almost as two polarities.

Differentiating between these two polarities will enable us to begin to understand the management component on its own. Interwoven as they are, there are two colours here, two strands. The quote from Vaill, above, gives us our first clue. Management, it appears, is about controlling an existing system, while leadership is about invention and adaptation. Leadership then, is fluid, flexible, responsive, innovative; the image which arises is one of movement and change. Management, on the other hand, is about controlling that movement within systems and procedures. It is slower, less mercurial, more static and continuous, more set in its ways. The image which arises is one of stationary structure, supportive framework.

Leadership is process; it is continually in motion. Management is the product of that process, as well as its saviour. Left to itself, movement would travel on into infinity, there would be no boundary, no brakes. Structure provides movement with a framework within which to move without overreaching itself. Management grounds leadership by setting up and maintaining the systems which provide the organisation with coherence, with continuity and sense, with the weight required to prevent it from drifting off into the heavens. Management is the organisation's way of coping with the fact that leadership's head is always in the clouds.

In *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Covey refers to the idea that all things are created twice (1989). The first creation is a mental one, the second physical. He provides as example the construction of a house. The first creation is the mental one, the design itself. The second is the putting together of the bricks and mortar, the construction itself. Leadership, in this sense, is the design, while management is the building itself. Leadership then, is the formative force, management the physical substance. Leadership is water; management is earth. Leadership is process, management is product.

It is incumbent on leadership to ensure that the organisation is effective in what it does; that its strategies, and the way in which it gives effect to these, are appropriate and have impact. It is incumbent on management to ensure that the organisation is efficient in what it does; that its internal systems function logically and smoothly. To put it simplistically, it has been said that while leadership ensures that the organisation does the right thing, management's responsibility is to ensure that things are done right.

The following table serves to illustrate some of the major differences between the management and leadership functions:

Management	Leadership
Administers	Innovates
Focuses on systems	Focuses on people
Relies on control	Inspires trust

Short-range view	Long-range perspective
Asks how and when	Asks what and why
Eye on the bottom line	Eye on the horizon
Imitates	Originates
Accepts the <i>status quo</i>	Challenges the <i>status quo</i>
Does things right	Does the right thing

Management then, is about giving substance to organisational direction, and form to organisational needs. It is about setting up systems and procedures, controlling these systems and procedures so that they function optimally and are adhered to, and ensuring that the various systems and structures articulate coherently.

Systems and procedures facilitate the smooth running of the organisation; they ensure that the organisation is controlled and disciplined. They provide a structure within which people can operate, and provide a measure of equality in the sense that "everyone is equal before the law". The attempt of many organisations to develop a democratic organisational form is often interpreted as the need to allow each person full freedom, without accountability. But experience has shown that freedom without accountability leads to the "law of the jungle" where the most powerful dominate all others. Democracy is a fragile entity which demands the protection of systems and procedures if it is to work and not degenerate into anarchy and chaos.

At the same time, excessive structure and rules can lead to extreme forms of bureaucratic absurdity where people's creativity and motivation are stifled under the weight of relentless systems and procedures. Balance is vital.

One of the main areas where the quest for balance is so important is around the question of discipline and accountability. Management control, in this area, entails: establishment of performance standards; measurement of performance; evaluation of performance; and correction of performance. Systems and procedures need to be designed in order to ensure accountability and compliance. At the same time, such systems, once in place, should not be taken for granted and applied by rote. There is always a need to balance organisational needs with individual needs. Where this is ignored, conflict and tension results. The setting up and monitoring of the systems can be regarded as pure management. But the adjustments of the system to respond to the ebb and flow of organisational and individual fluctuations demands leadership skills on the part of the manager. Note that "control" does not mean some people controlling others, it means the organisation is "in control", the parts work together responsibly to create the desired results. This condition could be labelled *accountability*.

Similarly, detailed organisational planning is a function which lies squarely in the hands of management. It includes the setting of objectives and schedules, and the development and control of budgets. It is absurd, however, to imagine that these plans and budgets will ever run like clockwork, and the manager who operates on this principle will either become fanatical as he or she tries to mould reality to the system or plan, or despondent as events take control. Environments change, people change, successful plans alter the very conditions which lead to their success, and failed plans need to be evaluated and recast. The ability to look, from the outside, at the plans one has developed, rather than simply operating within them, is again

one of the leadership components in management. While the detailed creation and monitoring of those plans is one of the management components of leadership.

Some general principles that the manager may want to take note of are the following:

- I. First, people who are charged with the responsibility of accomplishing a given task must be given the necessary authority to carry it out.
- II. Second, the number of people a manager carries responsibility for should be limited to the fewest possible under given circumstances if the job is to be done effectively.
- III. Third, managers should attempt to delegate as many routine matters as possible, and in general decisions should be made at as low an organisational level as possible.
- IV. Fourth, beware of dual accountability, where personnel are responsible to more than one person. In most modern organisations this is inevitable as strategies differentiate and programmes multiply, but one should be conscious of the dangers and try to ensure that multiple accountabilities are as coherent and transparent as possible, and that systems are set in place for their management.

Finally it is important to mention the special difficulties of management in a development or human service organisation. First, in these types of organisations, production is not carried out on the shop floor, where it can be seen and monitored. Neither can production be easily quantified, as it can in a commercial operation. On the contrary, production usually takes place outside of the organisation itself, with communities, individuals and other organisations. Production is not easily quantified when the required outcome is the development of the client. And production is not under the control of the staff member or the organisation when the production means the facilitation of others' development; results are as much dependent on the client, the recipient of services, as on the organisational practitioner. In these circumstances managerial control needs to be exercised especially sensitively. Systems and procedures need to be set up which do not simply measure quantifiable results but which bring in - and facilitate discussion of - relevant information which will keep the organisation conscious of the nuances of "success" and "failure", unanticipated consequences of these, and early warning signals concerning the need to adapt strategies or skills requirements. Where quantifiable results are only one part of the story it is particularly easy for management to fudge the issue, or to lose control (and then sometimes to become dictatorial in compensation for doubt). The management of development and service organisations demands more than the usual portion of leadership mix.

Second, there is the issue of the split between supply and demand. Commercial ventures' productivity and effectiveness is directly related to income. Not so with development or service organisations, where supply of financial resources is often not linked at all to effectiveness or impact. In other words, supply does not come from clients but from donors, and is therefore not linked to demand. This can lead to organisational tension as different parts of the organisation hold themselves accountable to different constituencies. It can also lead to despondency where effort goes unrewarded, or to organisational "flabbiness" where the organisation has more resources than it can effectively utilise. The problem of resourcing service organisations is one which managers would do well to be conscious of as it deals with the fluctuations of organisational life.

Management often finds itself caught between maintenance of systems and demands for system adaptation. This is not a problem which will disappear with time, or with the well-managed organisation. As with leadership, the need to keep on one's toes comes with the territory.

MANAGEMENT: System and Structure

"...he has been left with the five senses, like pieces of a broken wineglass." (Lawrence Durrell)

We shall, in this section, point out the various systems which management needs to set up, and which thereafter need to be managed. It is important to be aware of the directions in which one's energies should be pointed. However, we should be aware of the danger of doing this. Understanding management's tasks by analysing the organisation - breaking it up into its component parts, as it were - leads to a differentiation of the various organisational functions. While it is necessary that we do so, the danger lies in the manager concentrating on the differentiated pieces and losing sight of the need for integration.

Any complex organisation must differentiate out into separate sections. The key, though, to successful differentiation is renewed integration at a higher level. The manager needs to keep the task of integration firmly in the forefront of consciousness at all times. The various individual systems need to articulate together if the organisation is going to live. This leads us to one way of understanding the following section. The systems to be outlined below are separate from one another, although they overlap. Structure, however, provides the basis for how the systems interrelate. Structure provides the integrating force which enables differentiated systems to work smoothly together.

This section, then, will outline three main systems, and the sub-systems which constitute the main systems. Thereafter it will say a brief word about the structures which may serve to integrate the systems, those structures which serve as the foundation on which the systems rest and depend.

Before we begin, please note that all systems overlap, and that the "categorisation" and sequencing we have used in our articulation of the various systems is, to an extent, arbitrary. Others would categorise differently. This is simply the way which has proved most useful to us.

1. Identity System (Learning-Planning System)

The organisation's cutting edge, its reason for being, is its identity and the strategies it employs to give effect to that identity. What the organisation offers its constituency and environment, what the organisation's users need of the service provided; these are the things which make meaning for the organisation, which provide it with reason to develop and grow. And organisational strategies and identity arise largely out of what the organisation learns as it pursues its goals, for no strategy can resist improvement through reflection on experience.

2. Environmental or Scanning System

This is the system which ensures that the organisation is kept aware and informed of all fluctuations in its environment. It has been ironically referred to as the "future memory" faculty of the organisation; the ability to anticipate the issues coming towards one out of the future in order to facilitate planning and adaptation of strategy. Different managers in different organisations will of course respond to this need with different systems, as with all the systems to be outlined.

All such systems need to be able to bring in relevant information - and 'relevant', of course, will be a

subject of organisational choice. The system should be able to sift the information so that it does not swamp the leadership of the organisation. Too much information eventually performs the same task as disinformation; it confuses rather than enlightens. There should also be procedures for using the information, as teams, in order to assess the environment and use the assessment in strategic discussion.

3. Intervention or Operational System

This is the organisation of the strategy itself. It is the articulation and management of the different elements of strategy, as well as the differentiation and integration of various strategies (should the organisation be employing more than one strategy). How do different strategies - or different projects or programmes - articulate together? Or are they unrelated, and is the organisation in danger of fragmentation?

And how do the people working in the different areas relate to each other; how, indeed, do they organise themselves should they be working across strategies or programmes?

How transparent is the strategy, how self-confident, how appropriate? Is the system able to indicate, in cases of failure, whether the strategy was wrong or whether it was badly implemented?

The activity of - and procedures for - detailed planning also fall into this system. Organisational requirements, such as the amount of detail required before implementation, need to be stipulated. What needs to be in written form and what does not? Do you want wall-charts outlying detailed time-line and dead-line specifications for the next three years, including how objectives will be measured, by whom and to whom and how will reporting be done? What resources - both human and material - will be required, and so on? Or does it work better for you with less detailed initial planning and more ongoing team meetings such that issues get worked through - within a strategic framework - more or less as they arise? However you do it, the key consideration is that the organisation is 'in control' of its strategy, and remains so throughout the inevitable periods of change and chaos.

4. Evaluation System

For any organisation wishing to improve on its practice, or simply to find out what is going right and what wrong, this system is vital. Without it the organisation will gradually drift out of touch and become less and less relevant.

This system should monitor plans and programmes, assess the impact of different strategies and methodologies, isolate the areas which need improvement or which are strong enough to be built on. The system should also help to hold individuals accountable, to assist with their reflection on action and thus with their development, and to point to organisational weaknesses which require remedy.

The evaluation system will always be the "touchiest" system in the organisation, as it goes to the heart of individual and departmental performances and competencies. As such, every effort should be made to ensure that they maintain equality in the organisation through recognised standards and norms, and that the system - while needing to be strong enough to challenge the various organisational parts - also needs to be sensitive enough to respond to the understanding that people find feedback and criticism difficult. Ideally, this is one system which people need to 'own' as far as is possible.

We are really talking here of quality control, and therefore the following system should articulate closely

with the evaluation system.

5. Management Information System

In fact, all of the above systems will only be half-baked without an adequately organised management information system. This is often the weakest point of organisational life, and it is amazing how many decisions are made on assumed knowledge rather than on factual information.

A management information system needs to be organised around the correct questions, or it is easy to bring in information which is irrelevant or actually misleading. We need to ascertain what we need to know, and why.

Management needs to develop methods for bringing the information in, methods which are "user-friendly" and consume as little time as possible, but which are sufficiently exhaustive to be useful. The information needs to be organised in a manner which makes it easy to retrieve. More than this, information should be organised, where possible, in a manner which allows for easy cross-referencing, so that salient groups of disparate data can be brought together with minimum difficulty. It is this coming together of different groups of data which generally provides the insights necessary to the process of learning and re-strategizing.

6. Personnel System

People are, of course, the main organisational resource with which to achieve its aims; they are literally the life of the organisation. They need to be cared for, nurtured, developed, and provided with security.

7. Human Resource Development System

This is the system which ensures, through various channels, that people are competent to perform their jobs. More than this, however, the system should be managed in such a way as to ensure that people are developing to their full potential. There are, therefore, a number of sub-systems which together constitute the whole.

Continuous assessment of competencies required to achieve organisational aims is one. The training of individuals through various training options is another. Supervision and developmental counselling is a third. Action Reflection, as an individual or group activity, is another; nothing is more beneficial than teams reflecting together on group and individual strengths and weaknesses. Working through the medium of case-studies, or group reflection on the kind of information which should be available in the management information system, is invaluable.

These all may seem as if they are disparate activities rather than systems. The point is however, that they are only so as long as there are no systems in place to manage them; as soon as there are they become part of a routine, or pattern, and thus manageable. Human resource development is generally the most neglected part of organisational life. It is seldom, then, that the above types of activities actually occur if they are not systematised and managed.

8. Conditions of Service System

The rules and regulations that govern peoples' working together - organisational policies, career paths, gender relations; grievance procedures, disciplinary codes; relevant personal information - all need to be brought together under one system, and managed as one system.

9. Remuneration System

This system is closely linked to the one above. It concerns salary structures and appraisal procedures (as such, indeed, it articulates closely with both the evaluation system and the human resource development system). Money being what it is - or our attitudes to money being what they are - it is important that this system is objectively viable and competent in the sense that it is not arbitrary or biased. It should be as transparent as possible - and here we refer to the system itself and not to individual salaries. It also needs to compare favourably with the "normative" world outside the organisation if it is to find favour with personnel.

10. Administrative System

This is perhaps something of a misnomer; after all, every system has its administrative component. Nevertheless there are a number of systems grouped here; the first shares its name with the overall system of which it is part.

Precisely because administration permeates every other strategy, one needs to be able to hold it all together with a system which will enable the manager to control the quality and functioning of the administrative service. Administration's task, also, is to serve a wide variety of programmes, projects, departments; as such it often finds it extremely difficult to find the coherence required to maintain motivation, pride of service and sense of group accomplishment.

11. Financial System

Financial strategy, financial control and allocation are vital parts of the manager's task. Here is an area where effective systems are more important than anywhere else. Particularly with those organisations which are not large enough to have their own financial manager, management has to regard this area as a priority. It is easy to lose one's way with respect to finances, often with disastrous consequences. It is also the area which is most open to abuse and corruption. Finance is the one area which needs a tight and very controlled system for optimal organisational effectiveness.

12. Resource Securing System

For some this will mean fundraising. For others it will mean lobbying and advocacy work. For others still it will imply public relations, marketing, or networking. Whichever is most applicable to your organisation, this is the lifeline, the source of food, water, sunlight. It is necessary that due attention is paid to this line, that it be kept free of problems, running smoothly at all times. It is a system which needs to be managed, rather than simply engaged with in an ad hoc fashion by certain charismatic individuals as the need arises or opportunity presents itself.

13. Resource Control System

All of the resources of the organisation require control and management. Here we talk not of financial resources but of the material resources which the organisation has, and will, acquire. These need to be maintained, evenly distributed, regularly checked and the information filed. Charges need to be made for depreciation and use so that they are capable of being replaced. Systems are necessary not simply to ensure adequate management control but also in order to free management from having to continually follow up, as well as arbitrate, the use of organisational resources.

Underpinning these three main systems we have the structures and procedures which are necessary to integrate them.

Structures and Procedures

1. Decision-Making Structures and Procedures

Who - or which unit - takes which decisions, and how? How do these relate to decisions taken by others? What form of responsibility goes with the decision? Who has authority for what? When can decisions be made, when should the issue be referred? How are decisions made - by one person, through consultation, by group consensus, by majority vote? How much preparation goes into decision-making, how much information should be available, how much time? Is there flexibility to use one's discretion, or is the consultation with - and participation by - others more important than speed of response? How are the results of decisions evaluated?

2. Accountability Structures and Procedures

Who is accountable to whom? How is this accountability put into practice? Are there hierarchies of accountability, or does the organisation have a "flat" structure in which everyone is accountable to one person, or in which people are assumed to be accountable to each other? Is there adequate accountability and consequence in the organisation or are people free to do as they please?

3. Communication Structures and Procedures

Are there recognised lines of communication between individuals and between units? What kind of information should be communicated? What form should such communication take? Which communications should be duplicated and stored? What kind of information should be widely disseminated: what kind should be limited to specific parties? Is certain information confidential?

4. SELF-MANAGEMENT: Exercise and Improvement

"Nothing can be done without solitude...

It's very difficult nowadays to be alone because we all own watches.

Have you ever seen a saint with a watch?" (Pablo Picasso)

Self-management is the basis for management, leadership, and good organisation. Good organisation is unobtainable without competent leadership and management, and the ability to manage oneself is at the heart of competent leadership. In a way, if one can manage oneself, the rest of management follows as common sense. If one cannot learn to manage oneself, all one reads and hears remains just so many words.

The trick to learning self-management is often touted as the need to learn time-management. Time-management courses have become the ubiquitous quick-fix solution to the problems of self-management. And there is indeed much to learn from understanding the techniques in managing time; time-management courses are a useful adjunct to other efforts at self-mastery. (We will, in fact, be touching on some of these techniques further on in this section). But in and of themselves they are inadequate, and confuse the trainee by missing the point. It is, after all, not time which has to be managed, but oneself.

Having techniques at one's disposal does not imply that they will actually be adopted and used to one's own advantage. The adoption of such techniques implies a prior level of self-management expertise. Many people who have heard that the use of a diary is a basic pre-requisite for adequate time management fail to use the diary precisely because they are lacking in the self-discipline required for self-management.

Self-management is not a technique. Neither is it a set of techniques. While techniques will aid immeasurably, the essence of self-management is inner discipline - the honing of oneself - becoming an effective instrument in one's own hands.

Stephen Covey's *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* talks of three essential principles which together form the basis of self-mastery. These are time honoured principles which the person who is effective at self-management will have integrated into his/her lifestyle to such an extent that their existence would be hard to recognise. Once they become habit, the battle for self-management will have been won.

Principle: Be Proactive

The first principle is the basis for all else, and reads simply - be proactive. You will find the word "proactive" currently sprinkled throughout most books and courses on organisation, management and leadership. It is sprinkled so ubiquitously that it begins to lose all meaning. Generally it means something like: reactive management or strategy leaves you continually "on the defensive" - at the mercy of events. In order to be effective, you must take charge, exert your will, act pre-emptively, anticipate and work ahead of events. This is all true, but one can easily buy into the argument without realising what a radical paradigm shift from one's normal way of seeing the world it really is.

To be proactive means more than simply taking initiative. It means that we are responsible for our own lives. It means that we do not regard ourselves as determined by outer conditions; rather that our behaviour is a function of our decisions, not our conditions. You may recall that this was, in fact, the way in which this paper started. We stated at the outset that "the leader is one who does not accept the limitations of a 'given' situation or set of circumstances, but uses the opportunity to transform such constraints into new realities". The principles of self-management begin, appropriately enough, in the same way.

This principle goes against the natural grain of our thinking. It seems clear that we are determined by outer circumstance, that we are a product of our conditioning, that we are ultimately very small cogs in very big wheels. If this were not true, and we were in fact responsible, then who could we blame for the conditions

of our lives? No-one but ourselves.

There is an old adage which says "For he (sic) who thinks the problem is out there, that thinking is the problem". The point is that unless you take responsibility you cannot change anything. Ultimately, the only person over whom you have any kind of control is yourself. Change yourself. Recognise your responsibility (meaning that you have the ability to choose your response). Do not blame circumstances for your behaviour.

There are many times when you will find it difficult to appreciate this principle; there are many times when you will reject it as self-evidently wrong. Yet it remains the basis for mastery of oneself, for self control, for self-management. There is no technique attached to this principle. It requires a paradigm shift; it requires a new way of looking at your world.

Principle: Begin with the End in Mind

Once one has fully comprehended the import of the first principle, the second becomes slightly easier. Beginning with the end in mind is a direct corollary of this first principle. Once you have accepted the need to act on the basis of your own responsibility, and to take charge of your future, the second task is to visualise that future. In other words, you need an "end" to move towards, a goal to guide your planning, a star to navigate by. And this is not given to you; you need to create your end yourself.

If you are not able to imagine, visualise or conceive that which you are trying to achieve, then you will be unable to plan for it, you will not be able to carry your proactivity through. You will remain a victim of circumstance. Beginning with the end in mind implies imagination, the ability to conceive a future "state" which does not yet exist. You need to project yourself out there, into the future; to take it in hand, to look backwards from that vantage point to where you are now so that you can see what needs to be done to get there. Beginning with the end in mind is the first step in planning; it is the goal towards which planning is directed.

The precise "end" with which you will begin will differ from person to person and situation to situation. Some people, at certain stages of their life, may want to visualise what they would like to have achieved by the time they die, and thereby begin to plan their macro life-circumstances around this end. This may imply major life changes. One can also, however, visualise a goal which is much closer and part of one's current life-circumstances. For example, if you have just taken over leadership of a problematic organisation, it will help to get beyond current reactive attempts at crisis management if you visualise what the organisation will look like when you have succeeded in transforming it. You can then work backwards from this vision into the steps needed to achieve it, and thus into concrete planning.

You can also apply this to much smaller things, like the facilitation of a one day training course. The essence of this principle for self-management is limitless and invaluable. Effective self-management, however, requires that, wherever else you use it, it should be used at the very least in the medium term as a means of managing your own life.

Take an interim period ahead of you; one or two or five years, depending on how far ahead you feel you can see. Visualise what you would like to have achieved by then - as leader and manager, and perhaps also, if you wish, on a more personal level. Write this down as a personal mission statement, your guiding light. Then, look at all the major areas in which something would have to be achieved in order to realise the overall mission. Write a goal statement for each of these areas; a "mini-mission statement", in a sense. Once

you have done this, you will feel like you are in control, that you are being responsible and proactive, that you are able to plan constructively. That you are managing yourself competently.

Principle: Put First Things First

This principle takes up where the other two finish. Once we have accepted that we are responsible, and have taken that further into visualising the "end" which we will work towards, we need to plan. Putting first things first is a means of prioritising and sequencing activities and objectives, and lies at the heart of planning.

"Plan tomorrow today; plan next week this week; plan next month this month and next year this year." It seems so obvious, and in fact actually practising this injunction changes one's life; the sense of relief at having finally mastered one's crazy existence is palpable. Yet so few people practise it. What the practice of it really implies is the prioritisation of the planning process itself. Planning takes time, and so is often shelved. Yet we do so at our peril, or at least at the peril of self-management.

With the two principles outlined previously we have the belief that we can choose a future, as well as a picture of what that future is. The current principle takes it one step further, and demands that you plan for that future, for that choice, in detail. Planning is an integral part of self-management, one of its cornerstones. Planning involves taking a goal towards which one is aiming and inquiring as to the individual steps necessary to achieve this goal. And then sequencing these steps in terms of time and consequence : putting first things first.

But putting first things first means more than this. Many things will cross your desk every moment of the day; one can, in a management or leadership position, more or less expect that half of the things which you will be called upon to do are unexpected things, unplanned for. As much as you may plan, it helps to plan in time for the unexpected demand, the suddenly changed situation.

It is when confronted with these uncertainties that many managers crumble, and go back to reactive management, continually fighting fires and complaining that nothing stands still long enough to take it in hand.

Putting first things first means that, in spite of what is coming towards us, we will choose how and to what we will respond. We will not simply react, losing our heads and doing whatever seems most urgent. Doing whatever seems most urgent is crisis management, and supremely ineffectual. We need to rather choose what is most important, and prioritise and sequence accordingly. This needs a cool head, but it also needs understanding of the underlying principle, and commitment to it. Covey provides us with a reworking of an old exercise to assist in this; a summarised form of the exercise follows below.

The issue is to organise and execute around priorities. Ask yourself this question: "If you were to do the one thing in your professional life - your working life - that you are not doing at present but that you know would have enormously positive effects on the results, what would it be?" Think about and answer this before continuing.

Now look at the following table, or matrix:

The Self-management Matrix

Urgent	Not Urgent
I Activities Crises Pressing problems Deadline-driven projects	II Activities Prevention, Relationship building Recognising new opportunities, planning, recreation
III Activities Interruptions, some call, some mail, some reports, some meetings Proximate, pressing matters Popular activities	IV Activities Trivia, busy work Some mail Some phone calls Time wasters Pleasant activities

A distinction is made above between urgent and important activities. Urgent things are normally visible (or audible, like the ringing of a telephone that is impossible to ignore). They press in on us, insist on action, are often right in front of us, and are often unimportant. Important things, on the other hand, have, quite simply, to do with results. Generally, we react to urgent things; we have to act proactively to achieve important things.

Look once again at the matrix above. Into which quadrant(s) do your activities mostly fall? And into which quadrant did your answer above about "the one thing in your professional life" fall? For most people who are struggling with self-management issues, the answer to the former question will most likely be Quadrants I and III. And the answer to the latter question will, for almost everyone, fall into Quadrant II.

Focus on Quadrant I, it keeps getting bigger and bigger until it dominates you.

I Results Stress Burnout Crisis management Always putting out fires	II
III	IV

Focus on Quadrant III will lead to a sense of being victimised, out of control; certainly no self-management here.

I	II
III Results Short term focus Crisis management Reputation - chameleon character See goals and plans as worthless Feel victimised, out of control Shallow or broken relationships	IV

This is the result of focusing on Quadrants III and IV.

I	II
III IV Results Total irresponsibility Fired from jobs Dependent on others or institutions for basis	

As Covey says, "Effective people stay out of Quadrants III and IV because, urgent or not they aren't important. They also shrink Quadrant I down to size by spending more time in Quadrant II."

I	II
Results: Vision	Perspective Balance Control Few crises
Quadrant II is the essence of effective self-management. It deals with things that are not urgent, but are important - including, for example, some of the exercises and development practices spread through these pages.	

And one last quote from Covey: "What one thing could you do in your personal and professional life that, if you did on a regular basis, would make a tremendous positive impact on your life? Quadrant II activities have that kind of impact. Our effectiveness takes quantum leaps when we do them." (Covey, 1990)

Exercising the Will

Finally, the key to self-management lies with your will. All that has been said is worthless if your will is weak, if you have too little inner discipline to carry through with your intentions. Most of us suffer to some extent from these problems. Rudolf Steiner, the Austrian philosopher, presents us with this simple exercise for strengthening the will.

In the evening, tie a knot in your handkerchief. Say to yourself that at 11 o'clock the following morning, whatever is happening, you will untie that knot. This exercise can be varied; the secret is to always choose activities that are inconsequential and trivial in any sense other than that of the exercise itself. Perhaps you won't achieve success the first time, or the first few times. Persevere, even after it begins to work for you. Strengthen your command over yourself. The key to self-management lies with you.

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