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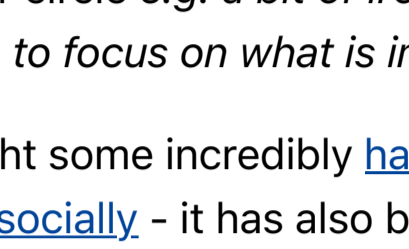
Principles over Process? That is what is behind "Unlocking Real Work" and the insights from the productivity gains in 2020 - despite or perhaps even due to the beyond-VUCA-whirlwind that we find ourselves in.

As we look to our leadership imperatives in our changed context, we can heed some helpful advice from Bob...

Bob, Context & Leadership :

The times they are a-changin'...

Come writers and critics Who prophesize with your pen And keep your eyes wide The chance won't come again



Or maybe it will? Principles Over Process - taking chances, having gumption.

"Cooperate Flexibly" this past year of 2020 has brought many things to light as to how we work, how we get work done, and what we do to collaborate as real people working not only to secure our livelihood - but also of course, our lives.

Our good sides, our scrapes, and our bruises have been brought to more than one video screen this year as we have all shown our mad juggling skills. The realities of living in a beyond VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous) COVID-19 Era World were brought home like Beyonce's Christmas gift to her inner circle e.g. a bit of irony, wrought in a lot of real connection, and intention to focus on what is important (teaser alert: joy).

While this year has brought some incredibly hard lessons - both emotionally, fiscally, and socially - it has also brought with it a broader opening to question what is - and what could be - and the role that real leadership plays in applying these lessons.

The incredible flux capacitor that was 2020 challenged a lot of the command and control paradigms over the course of the year. The proverbial light came on when it came to intention-based leadership ala "oh, we hired adults - let's treat them as such".

The lessons from L. David Marquet, Jocko Willink, and Leif Babin, out of the military towards a "leader-leader" mentality instead of a "leader-follower" gained a larger fellowship outside of the podcast groupies. Adding meat to the lessons taught to us by Le Petit Prince "If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the people to gather wood, divide the work, and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea" (Antoine De Saint-Exupery) to foster ownership, controlling one's ego to be able to truly learn, and collaborate.

Much of the fluff, pomp, and circumstance in business is seeming to fall more and more to the wayside as more and more, as the lessons taught by Bob Dylan "the times they are a-changin'" are sinking into the broader awareness around how our context of the work we do and why has changed.

In fact, more and more companies are embracing simple, "we hire adults" types of principles to better approach complexity to be more adaptive organizations. An excellent example of this is, of course, Netflix who ascribe to two main principles: Freedom & Responsibility:

- As We Grow, Minimize Rules.
Inhibit Chaos with Ever More High Performance People.
Flexibility is More Important than Efficiency in the Long Term

"The best managers figure out how to get great outcomes by setting the appropriate context, rather than by trying to control their people".

Pretty simple to say - bold to execute.

In fact, the Netflix Culture Statement continues with the statement

"Managers: When one of your talented people does something dumb, don't blame them. Instead, ask yourself what context you failed to set."

In this day and age, you do not as a leader or team member want to hear "because you told me to" or "that is the process".

Why?

In short, because those are the antithesis statements to enabled ownership, taking the space to rethink, and flexible collaboration.

Companies are understanding that if processes are no longer fit-for-purpose, they need to be put into question or thrown out the window, so that the focus is on truly value-added work.

In fact, according to BCG, "the challenges posed by the pandemic have revealed considerable untapped potential that can be captured by any organization to achieve major improvements in productivity and performance". In the according research summary to bolster that statement, Yves Morieux and Peter Tollman say that

"...over the past-half century, business complexity—the proliferation of multiple (and sometimes conflicting) performance requirements—has multiplied roughly sixfold.

To manage complexity, companies typically create new organizational structures, roles, processes, and systems; ever more elaborate matrix organizations; and new metrics, KPIs, and scorecards to track progress against these multiple objectives.

The paradoxical result is an explosion in organizational complicatedness.

During the same period that complexity was increasing by a factor of 6, organizational complicatedness in response to complexity was increasing by a factor of 35 times—or roughly the square of complexity.

Metastasizing complicatedness has taken a significant toll on organizations. It is a serious obstacle to real (genuinely value-adding) work, and as such is a major cause of stagnant productivity in many developed economies....

In this process of adjusting to a radically new situation, much of the complicatedness of the traditional work environment melted away, creating space for people to reset and refocus on the nuts and bolts of value-adding work.

The lockdown unlocked real work."

At the end of 2020 and transitioning into 2021, we can take some keen advice from Bob as we look to how we are dealing with complexity, giving our people freedom and responsibility as adults, and focusing on what really makes a difference in value-added work:

- Don't stand in the doorway, don't block up the hall
For he that gets hurt will be he who has stalled
The battle outside ragin'
Will soon shake your windows and rattle your walls
For the times, they are a-changin'
Come mothers and fathers throughout the land
And don't criticize what you can't understand
Your sons and your daughters are beyond your command
Your old road is rapidly aging
Please get out of the new one if you can't lend your hand
For the times, they are a-changin'

No matter what form work will continue as be it hybrid, flex, with a commute, with or without homeschooling - how are we unlocking real work and moving away from the complicatedness that grew over time. By allowing ourselves the bravery to strike through what is no longer fit for purpose and reassess our value-streams, what our customer's users actually need, and what makes for a great workplace, we can look to thrive and adapt in complex times, rather than stall-out under the burdens of organizational complicatedness.

For the times, they are a-changin'.

"Adults, Please"

Learning from Netflix: How to Build a Culture of Freedom and Responsibility

An interview and podcast (hit the link to start) with Patty McCord, former chief talent officer at Netflix and an architect of the company's famous Culture Deck, explains the principles in that she devalues into in her book, 'Powerful.' This is where you can find famous culture slide deck from Netflix breaks the values down.

knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu



How Netflix Reinvented HR

Trust people, not policies. Reward candor. And throw away the standard playbook. The HR tenets of Netflix are fairly simple: Hire, Reward, and Tolerate Only Fully Formed Adults, "Act in Netflix's best interests, "Tell the Truth About Performance, Managers Own the Job of Creating Great Teams, Leaders Own the Job of Creating the Company Culture, Good Talent Managers Think Like Businesspeople and Innovators First, and Like HR People Last - how you truly practice according to the values and principles is how these make a difference in the drive to foster creativity, collaboration, and innovation.

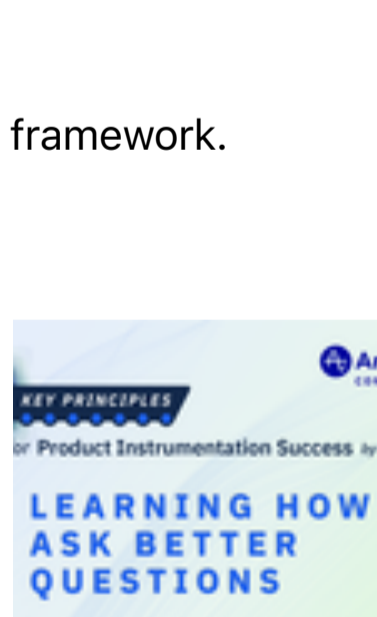
hbr.org



Jocko Podcast: The Debrief w/ Jocko and Dave Berke #8: Getting The Team to Perform When the Leader is Not Around on Apple Podcasts

The team performs when the leader is there, but when the leader leaves, the team's performance dips. What is the role of the team in this? What is the role of the leader's ego? A great debrief podcast series.

podcasts.apple.com

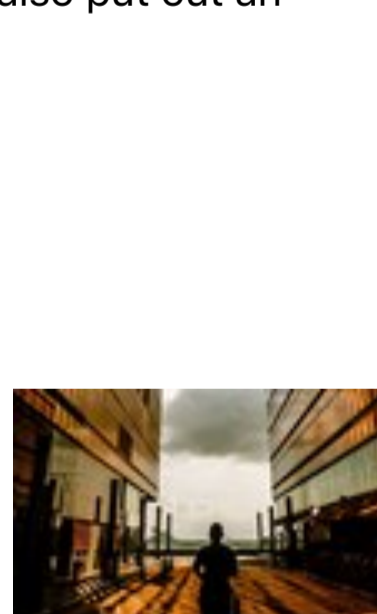


Leading in Complexity: "Break it down for me, fellas"

Turn the Ship Around I L. David Marquet I Talks at Google

Yes, my husband put this book on my nightstand. Yes, I liked it a lot. David Marquet, retired US Navy Captain wrote Turn The Ship Around, which is his telling of his personal journey to turn followers into leaders. This is a great talk where he goes into the salient lessons around starting over, control, competence, clarity, and ripples. A shorter version of this talk is in linc.com.

www.youtube.com



You're Not Powerless in the Face of Uncertainty

Reframing a challenge can help you cope with it. This article offers up a couple of thought frames to help leaders orient in situation.

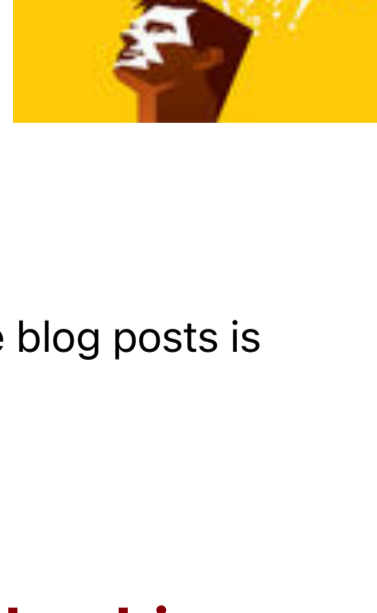
hbr.org



A Leader's Framework for Decision Making

I would be seriously remiss, if I did not include Snowden and Cynefin in this edition. This is a breakdown on leadership and decision making that's based on complexity science, which helps executives sort issues into contexts such as Simple, complicated, complex, chaotic. Great intro - and mental framework.

hbr.org

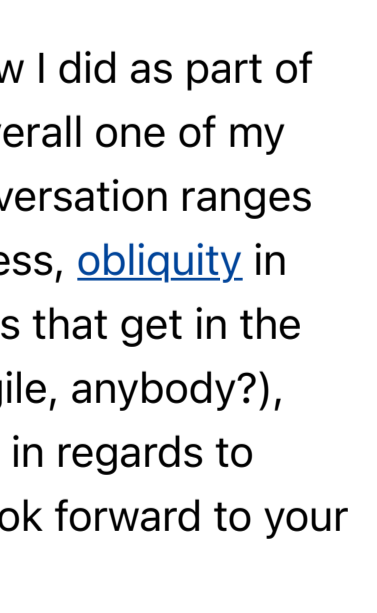


Asking Better Questions

This guy, @JohnCullter has a great blog. A lot of the work he does is around helping teams deciding what to measure. This starts, of course, with asking good questions. Good questions help teams focus their measurement/telemetry efforts, and increase the likelihood that what they measure will enable valuable insights.

My buddy and fellow TTI crew member, @Mike Hruska, also put out an excellent job aid for problem articulation that I use.

blog.amplitude.com

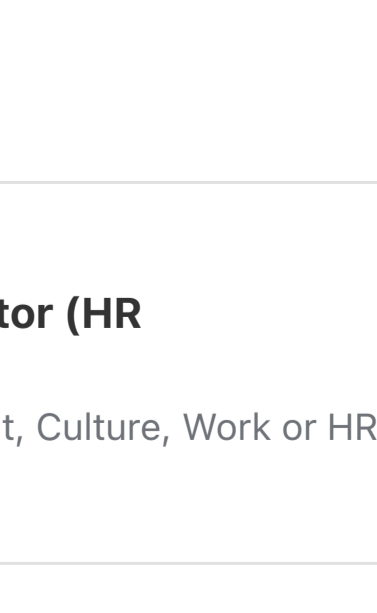


The World We Are In Now

How the Lockdown Unlocked Real Work I BCG

The experience of work during a time of pandemic has revealed a hidden driver of organizational performance: relational productivity.

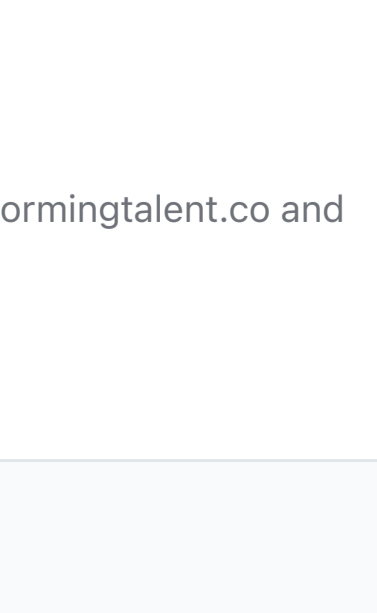
www.bcg.com



The Age Of Community Capitalism

CEO Zhang Ruimin "there is no such thing as a successful company. There are only companies that move with the times". This is a great historical overview of how the roles of companies and organizations has changed - and how the times continue to be a-changin'.

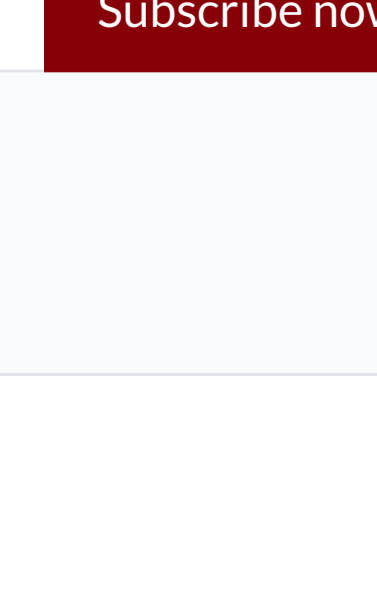
corporate-rebels.com



Finding simplicity in chaos: Beyond VUCA — People Matters

As a psychologist, I am a huge Systems Fan ... :) Moving on, this article is an easy entry into "human systems dynamics" to help people move past just describing the world as being VUCA - and moving into "what can we do about it?"

I love, love, love @ComplexWales and one of my favorite blog posts is Inconvenients and the Rise of the Shiny. www.peoplemattersglobal.com



TTI Question: How has your own leadership shifted this year?

This edition comes on the heels of an awesome interview I did as part of #RCIRCLE Talks to series with my friend, mentor and overall one of my favorite people, Tom Klein. (Find the talk here). The conversation ranges from the application of psychology and politics in business, obliquity in approaching what we want to achieve, word associations that get in the way of what we want to truly accomplish (e.g. lean or agile, anybody?), Gordon Gecko as a business school guru, and bad puns in regards to organizational development. We had a lot of fun and I look forward to your feedback!

Please so like me know what further interview topics or guests you would like to see on #RCIRCLE!

If the topic of leading in complex times or organizational development is a topic that is relevant for you and your team, I am happy to pop on a call to dive into deeper.

All of my very best regards,

Liz Lembke

Chief Talent Navigator at Transforming Talent

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Elizabeth M. Lembke - Chief Talent Navigator (HR Consultant) @elizabethlembke Feeding the Passion for Transformation: Be it Talent, Culture, Work or HR

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