





# Leaders Eat Last



**OUR NEED TO FEEL SAFE**

**POWERFUL FORCES**

**THE ABSTRACT CHALLENGE**

**DESTRUCTIVE ABUNDANCE**

**SOCIETY OF ADDICTS**

**BECOMING A LEADER**



# Our Need to Feel Safe



## PROTECTION FROM ABOVE

- Leaders are the ones who run headfirst into the unknown. They rush toward the danger. They put their own interests aside to protect us or to pull us into the future.
- Leaders would sooner sacrifice what is theirs to save what is ours and they would never sacrifice what is ours to save what is theirs.
- When we feel sure they will keep us safe, we will march behind them and work tirelessly to see their visions come to life and proudly call ourselves, their followers.
- When we have to protect ourselves from each other, the whole organization suffers. But when trust and cooperation thrive internally, we pull together and the organization grows stronger as a result.
- Our primitive minds still perceive the world around us in terms of threats to our wellbeing or opportunities to find safety. If we understand how these systems work, we are better equipped to reach our goals.
- The cultural norms of the majority of organizations today actually work against our natural biological inclinations.
- It's not the genius at the top giving directions that makes people great. It is great people that make the guy at the top a genius.

## BELONGING

- For an organization to be successful, it's leaders need to understand the true purpose of their organization, the "why."
- Organizations where people share values and are valued, succeed over the long-term in both good and bad times.
- The more familiar we are with each other the stronger our bonds.
- Working late does not negatively affect our children, but rather, how we feel at work does.



# Our Need to Feel Safe



## LEAD THE PEOPLE, NOT THE NUMBERS

- With economic theory switched to protecting money over protecting people, how can we ever feel safe and committed to our jobs if the leaders of the companies aren't committed to us?
- The very concept of putting a number before a person flies directly in the face of the protection our anthropology says leaders are suppose offer.
- As soon as people are put second on the priority list, differentiation gives way to commoditization and when that happens, innovation declines and the pressure to compete on things like price and other short term strategies goes up.
- The more pressure leaders from a public company feel to meet the expectations of an outside constituency, the more likely they are to reduce the capacity for better products and services.
- Sadly in our modern world, given the systems we've developed to manage our companies, the number of organizations that inspire employees to truly commit themselves is a slim minority.
- Happy, inspired, and fulfilled employees are the exception rather than the rule. According to the DeLoitte shift index, 80% of people are dissatisfied with their jobs.

## SHARED STRUGGLE

- US marines are better equipped to confront external dangers because they fear no danger from each other. They operate in a strong circle of safety.
- The ability of a group of people to do remarkable things hinges on how well those people pull together as a team.
- "A warrior carries a breastplate and helmet for his own protection but his shield is for the safety of the whole line." - Spartans





# Powerful Forces



## WHY WE HAVE LEADERS

- Our motivation is determined by the chemicals incentives inside everyone of us. Any motivation we have is a function of our desire to repeat behaviors that make us feel good or avoid stress or pain.
- Trust is a very special human experience produced by the chemical oxytocin in response to actions performed on our behalf that serve our safety and protection.
- To a social animal, trust is like lubrication- it reduces friction and creates conditions much more conducive to performance.
- To earn trust you must first give trust.
- Leadership is the choice to serve others, with or without any formal rank.
- Leaders are the ones who look out for those to the left of them and to the right of them. They are often willing to sacrifice their own comfort for ours, even when they disagree with us.
- The more trust that people to the left of us and the people to the right of us have our backs, the more equipped we are to face the constant threats from the outside together.
- Absent a circle of safety, paranoia and cynicism prevail. When the circle is strong and the feeling of belonging is ubiquitous, collaboration, trust and innovation result.
- Almost everything about us is purpose built to help increase our odds of survival and success. Our need for leaders is no different.
- Each new generation embodies a set of values and beliefs molded by the events, experiences, and technologies of their youth, which tend to be different then those of their parents.
- We are our own best hope. We are not victims of our situations, we are the architects of them.



# The Abstract Challenge



## MANAGING THE ABSTRACTION

- As social animals, it is imperative for us to see the actual tangible impact of our Time and effort for all our work to have a meaning and for us to be motivated to do even better.
- The goal of the leader should be to have to give no orders. Leaders are to provide direction and intent and allow others to figure out what to do and how to get there. Captain Marquet
- Customers will never love a company until the employees love it first.
- Destructive abundance results in prioritizing the metrics over protecting those who produced the metrics, Focusing almost exclusively on the score and forgetting why they set out to play the game in the first place.

## IMBALANCE

- Ironically the more have, the bigger our fences, the sophisticated our security is to keep people away and the less we want to share.
- Our desire for more, combined with our reduced physical interaction with the common folk starts to create a disconnection or blindness to reality.
- When we divorce ourselves from humanity through numerical abstraction (metrics), we are (like Milgram's volunteers) capable of inhuman behavior.
- Those at the top have all the authority and none of the information. Those at the bottom have all of the information and none of the authority. Not until those without information relinquish their control can an organization run better, smoother, and faster and reach its maximum potential.



# Destructive Abundance



## SO GOES THE CULTURE, SO GOES THE COMPANY

- The culture of an organization can fall out of balance when *selfish* pursuits are out of balance with *selfless* pursuits. This is destructive abundance.
- Abundance can be destructive because it abstracts the value of things. The more we have the less we value what we got.
- Abundance destroys value. Is not when things comes easily that we appreciate them, but when we have to work hard for them or when they are hard to get.
- In a culture of strong character, the people inside their company feel protected by their leaders and feel that their colleagues have their back's.
- In a culture of weak character, the people will feel that any protection they have comes from their own ability to manage politics, promote their own successes, and watch their own backs.
- Performance can go up and down, the strength of a culture is the only thing we can truly rely on.

## SO GOES THE LEADER, SO GOES THE CULTURE

- Integrity is when our words and our deeds are consistent with our intentions.
- How you do anything is how you do everything.
- Leadership is not about being right all the time. It is a responsibility that hinges almost entirely on character. Leadership is about integrity, honesty, and accountability (all components of trust).
- Leadership comes not from telling us what we want to hear but from what we need to hear.
- “You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him.” - Goethe



# Society of Addicts



## AT THE CENTER OF ALL OUR PROBLEMS IS US

- Endorphins and dopamine are the reason that we are driven to hunt, gather, and achieve. They make us feel good when we find something we are looking for, build something we need or accomplish our goals. These are the chemicals of progress.
- The human body wants us to feel good when we are doing the hard work so we will more likely do it. That is why it releases endorphins to mask physical pain with pleasure (runner's high).
- Short or long term, The clearer we can see what we are setting out to achieve, the more likely we are to achieve it.
- Serotonin and oxytocin help us form bonds of trust and friendship so we will look out for each other. It is because of these two chemicals that we have society and culture.
- Because of these chemicals we pull together to accomplish much bigger things than if we were to face the world alone.
- When we cooperate or look out for others serotonin and oxytocin reward us with the feelings of security, fulfillment, belonging and comradery.
- When the leaders of an organization create a culture that inhibits the release of these chemicals it is a sabotage of the organization itself.

## AT ANY EXPENSE

- When we feel threatened our bodies turn off nonessential functions such as digestion, growth and the immune system.
- If we work in environments where trust is low, relationships are weak or transactional, and stress and anxiety are normal, we become much more vulnerable to illness.
- Oxytocin gives us lasting feelings of calm and safety and boosts our immune system.





# Becoming a Leader



## THE COURAGE TO DO THE RIGHT THING

- “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader.” - John Quincy Adams
- It is the struggle it takes to make it work that gives that thing its value.
- When we share hardship, we biologically grow closer together.
- Cooperation does not mean agreement. It means working together to advance the greater good.
- Love is giving someone the power to destroy us and trusting they won't use it.

## ONLY HUMANS CAN SOLVE HUMAN PROBLEMS

- Those who work hardest to help others succeed will be seen by the group as the leader or the alpha of the group.
- What produces loyalty is, that irrational willingness to commit to the organization even when offered more money elsewhere, is the feeling that the leaders of the company would be willing, when it matters, to sacrifice their time and energy to help us.
- Just as a parent can't buy the love their children with gifts, a company can't buy the loyalty of their employees with salaries and bonuses.
- People will respond to the environment in which they operate. It is the leaders who decide what type of environment they want to build.
- When we do not feel safe from each other in the environments in which we work, our instincts drive to protect ourselves at all costs instead of sharing accountability for our actions.
- As humans, our behavior is significantly influenced by the environments in which we work; for better and for worse.
- Leadership is always a commitment to human beings.

