The Journal of AIMA
ALL INDIA MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

indian management

NOVEMBER 2022 VOLUME 61 ISSUE 11 PAGES 40 ₹60

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DATA, TALENT, AND LEARNING



THE DECADE'S NEW CURRENCIES

Bruno Lanvin

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VOLUME 61 | ISSUE 11 | NOVEMBER 2022

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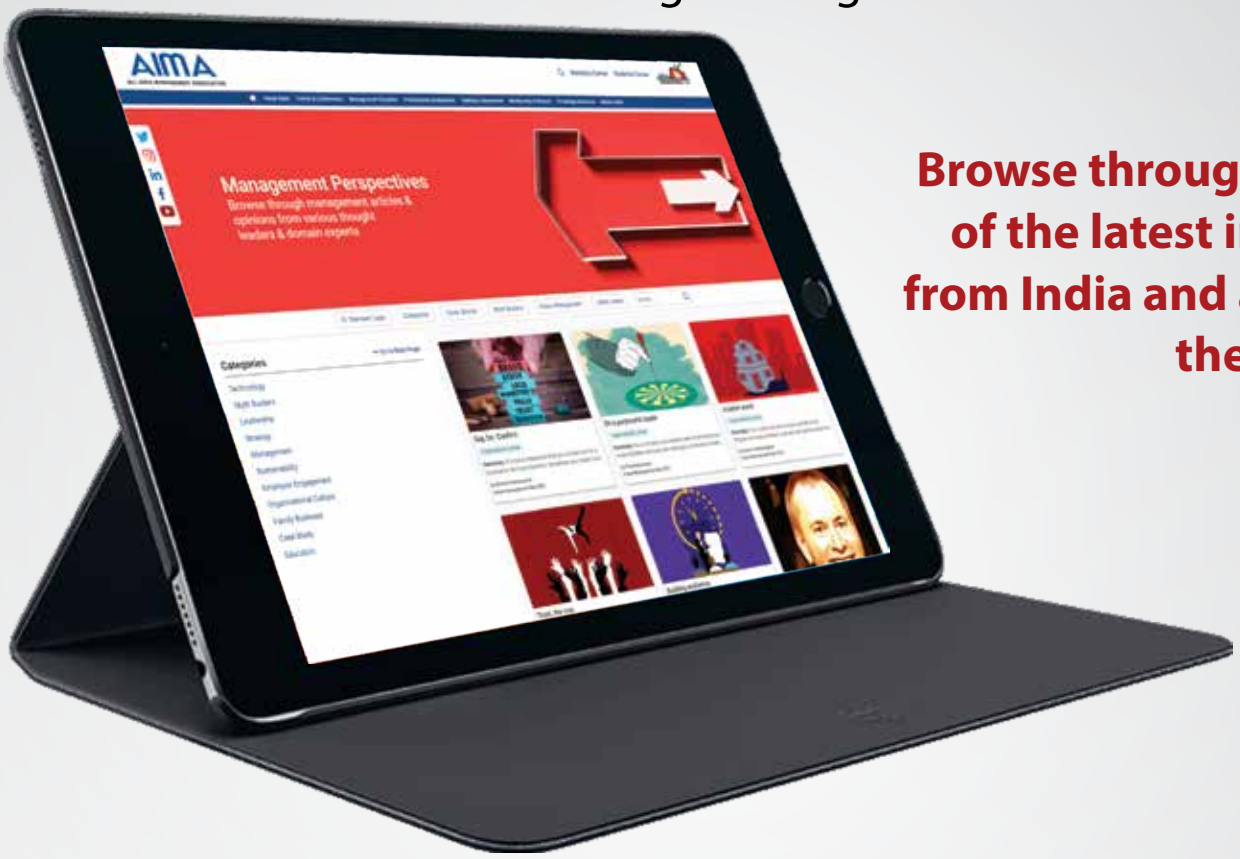




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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The new engines of growth: data, talent, learning

Shrinivas Dempo is President, AIMA & Chairman, Dempo Group of Companies.

The near-death experience of many enterprises during the COVID pandemic has concentrated minds on growing revenues and capabilities. Now, new risks have emerged in the forms of high inflation, geopolitical turmoil, and an accelerated technological shift.

In this environment, most businesses are finding it challenging to eke out growth and they need to think afresh about the critical resources required in a crises-ridden economy. Data, talent, and learning stand out as the vital troika to pull enterprises across economic disruptions and ensure growth along the way.

Data, talent, and learning stand out as the vital troika to pull enterprises across economic disruptions and ensure growth along the way.

Data is the most critical building block of new growth. With every product, process, person, and institution getting digitalised, nothing can exist or function without data. The basic technology of today's life and business generates, acquires, transfers, stores, interprets, and activates data in every act. Data is the new language to identify, understand, communicate, and transact. Data is cognition itself.

Business growth in the new ecosystem is possible only through an edge in delivering cheap, easy, fast, and personalised offerings to the customers, which is enabled by having an edge in deploying data-powered technologies. The greater the operational and market data, the faster and more effective the business decisions. Data capacity and competence also allow quick course correction and more experimentation.

While data is becoming central to business functioning and success, the buck still stops with the people. It is the people's skills and aptitude for selecting and shaping data that ultimately determines speed, scale, cost, and efficiency.

As the technology becomes more esoteric and the economy more complex, the talent pyramid is becoming rather thin at the top. Enterprises must ensure that they have enough supply of the right talent needed to keep growing. It has become essential to have people who can work with data to create new needs and wants and steer customer choices.

The shortage of critical talent is promoting new forms and terms of employment. Enterprises must learn to accommodate multiple models of work, collaboration, and hierarchy. The reliance on remote work during COVID lock downs has allowed companies to access talent in far off cities and countries and even informally tap talent employed with other companies. Gig or project-based hiring has become necessary for enterprises because there is not enough specialised talent for everyone. Owning or having privileged access to experts has become a key competitive advantage.

Talent scarcity requires enterprises to change traditional approaches and attitudes towards the workforce, especially the tech-native new generation. The young workers take money for granted and they want more than just cash, career, or rank on the table. They demand accommodation of their tastes

in identity, politics, ethics, and causes, and they are in a position to tell the employer 'my way or highway'. Enterprises' hierarchical culture must make room for a significant level of democracy for the sake of competitiveness and growth.

The most difficult part of becoming a learning organisation is transmitting the new knowledge and know how. Breaking down the territorial and tribal mentality can be quite challenging.

In addition to data and talent, modern enterprises also need rapid learning capacity. To keep growing, they cannot rely on knowledge and practices perfected for the economy of the past. New knowledge can be created only when a culture refuses to believe in its own perfection and is willing to experiment with heretical ideas or adopt strange ones from others.

With the gravity of economy shifting from capital to knowledge, business growth has become greatly reliant on know-how leadership. It is becoming essential for enterprises to develop systems and practices to create and procure new knowledge and know-how routinely and implement it effectively.

Being open and relaxed about the hierarchy are preconditions for learning. Intelligence and innovation cannot be reserved for or assigned to particular departments or designations. Often, the most transformative insights come from those who are on the periphery of the system or outside it. Centralisation is the surest way to ignorance and presumption, which eventually makes any entity a sitting duck.

The most difficult part of becoming a learning organisation is transmitting the new knowledge and know how. Breaking down the territorial and tribal mentality can be quite challenging. However, an organisation is doomed in the new economy unless it promotes a free flow of information and critique among all its sections and between it and its external stakeholders. It helps to institutionalise unstructured interactions where people are better able to express themselves without reference to the hierarchy.

Data, talent, and learning are the major currencies of business in the emerging, tech-driven knowledge economy, and enterprises need to harness this troika to grow in an uncertain and hyper-competitive world. IM

The opinion expressed is personal.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,

For quite some time now, we've been living in the so-called digital age; an age in which digital systems, digital economy, digital aids, digital ways…everything digital dominates the way the world functions. Data—often called the new oil—is the fuel that runs this digital world. Data is key to digital transformation, and thereby, enhancing business performance. It is no longer a concern of just the IT or the data science departments, but is being used—gained, processed, and leveraged—by all departments of organisations and institutions.

Talent has been irreplaceable since time immemorial, as it is directly proportional to productivity. The COVID pandemic, economic instability, and other such crises have only aggravated the prevailing VUCA situation in the world. In such a scenario, recognising talent and putting it into application is a must for organisations to survive, and eventually, succeed. This is what will help them save on precious resources, optimise funds, and make profit.

Technology is changing business landscapes and environments at a rapid rate. Those who learn, adopt, and adapt, survive. Those who don't, fall behind, and in a worst-case scenario, perish. Learning helps organisations align employees with their business goals. The learning process also helps identify gaps and fill them.

Data, talent, and learning have become the currencies of the decade. How organisations utilise these currencies in their operational paradigm will decide the future of the organisations.

Do write in with your views to **imeditorial@spentamultimedia.com**

Maneck Davar

Maneck Davar

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Indian Management, the monthly magazine of Spenta Multimedia Private Limited, is published and printed by Mr Maneck E. Davar on behalf of Spenta Multimedia Private Limited. Printed at Spenta Multimedia Private Limited, Plot 15, 16 & 21/1, Village – Chikloli, Morivali, MIDC, Ambernath (West), District-Thane. Published from 1102, Akashdeep Building, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi – 110001.
Editor – Maneck E. Davar

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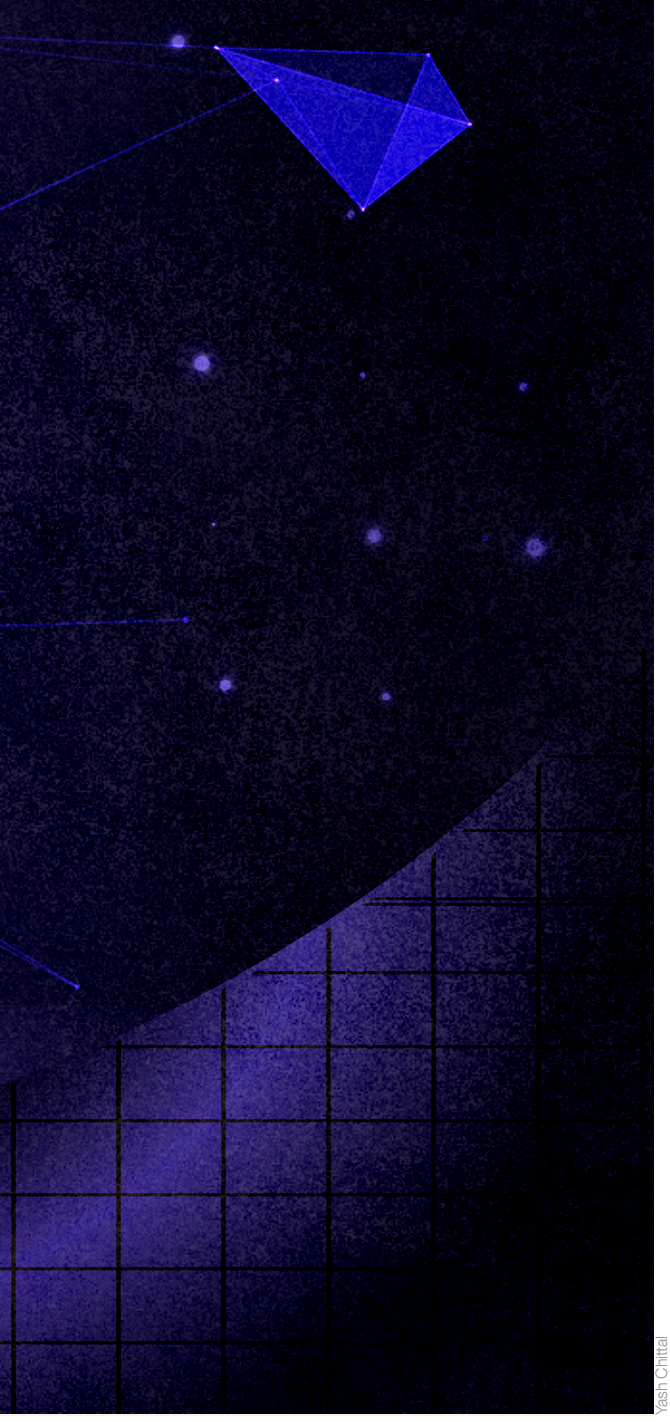
Yash Chittal



The decade's new currencies

Data, talent, learning: no organisation or industry can think of having a future without incorporating these in its operations.

✦ BRUNO LANVIN, CO-AUTHOR, *THE FUTURE IS YOUNG*



Yash Chittal

In today's world, uncertainty has become the norm—COVID was a largely unexpected shock; the heightening of international tensions and the return of inflation have given jolts to many. In the meanwhile, global threats (inequalities, climate change) have not diminished. Decision-makers (public and private) as well as ordinary citizens are now changing their consumption and saving behaviours according to parameters that are seen as utterly volatile. It is hence more challenging (and more necessary) to be future-ready today than it ever was before. Recent trends indicate that future-readiness will largely rely on three major currencies: data, talent, and learning.

Data is not the new oil. It is the new air. We breathe, generate, and consume data through every step we take, and every interaction we participate in. Our societies, our organisations (private and public) are undergoing accelerating processes of digital transformation, in which value is created and shared in ways that were inconceivable just a few decades ago.

Talent is what allows us to create value out of data. More than 60 zeta bytes (ie, 60 times 1021 bytes) of data was produced over the last 12 months alone. How can we make sense of all of this, and how do we translate data into the strategic and operational information that will allow our organisations, businesses, and governments to be more efficient and improve our lives? For this, we need talents, ie, the women and men who will guide our steps into the future.

Learning is what permits talent to grow. It starts with education (formal and informal) and continues all along one's life, through constant up-skilling and re-skilling. But learning is not just for individuals: our institutions, our organisations, even our products can also learn and grow, and help us make tomorrow a better world.

Let us explore each of those three core components of future-readiness in turn.

Data is not the new oil; it is the new air

A decade ago, digital transformation was still seen in many organisations as the sum of all the digital initiatives one could take (from the automation of payroll and procurement documentation to setting up firewalls and other cyber security measures). Today, no industry can imagine its future outside of a true re-alignment of its resources, markets and capacities around digital constraints and opportunities. Digital transformation is now clearly a matter of death of survival for any activity one can think of.

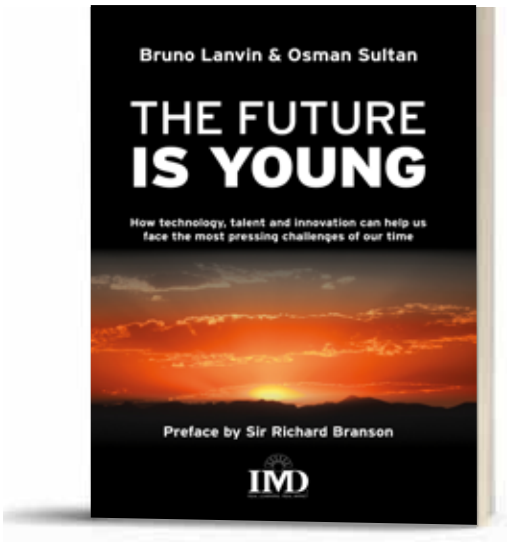
This means that if data cannot circulate freely through economic and social tissues, economic activities, employment, and all types of interactions (from education to social interplay) will be hampered, and in some cases, impossible. This is one of the reasons why current tendencies to splinter the internet (creating a 'splinternet') are potentially so damaging to our economies and societies. Nationalistic tendencies and geo-strategic considerations have recently given more flesh to that possibility. The possibility of 'closed internets' is now openly mentioned in countries like China, Iran, and Russia.

Other governments are also considering tighter policies to better manage (or control) data flows, as they feel that some of their traditional levers are being eroded by new tools such as block chains, crypto-currencies, or exceedingly powerful large tech companies such as Meta and Google. Recent steps taken by China towards its own champions (such as Alibaba) maybe a harbinger of stronger governmental moves towards more data control.

One of the reasons why governments may fear the continuous rise of data and its growing vital importance for all types of activities is that they sense that the talent required to create value out of such data is both scarce and difficult to manage and control.

Talent is what allows us to create value out of data

One of the reasons why governments may fear the continuous rise of data and its growing vital importance for all types of activities is that they sense that the talent required to create value out of such data is both scarce and difficult to manage and control. This is a phenomenon that the Global Talent Competitiveness Index Report of 2020 (GTCI 2020) explored to some length. Under the title 'Artificial Intelligence and Talent Competitiveness' the report underlined



that both sides of the AI/talent equation (supply and demand) deserve concurrent attention in order to: (1) build the skills necessary to ensure optimal human/machine cooperation and (2) create the conditions to maximise the social value and long-term sustainability of such cooperation. It is also critically important that AI be designed within universally accepted guiding principles respecting the rule of law, fundamental human rights, inclusion, and diversity.

The same report also made it clear that the emergence of AI in the workplace requires a massive re-skilling of the workforce. At all levels of qualifications, workers will need training on adaptability, social intelligence, communication, and problem-solving. Life-long learning will increasingly play a key role in developing skills to foster empathy, creativity, imagination, judgement, and leadership, which are likely to continue to be human-only activities.

Re-skilling will also be necessary to develop fusion skills in order to allow humans and machines to interact in hybrid activities effectively and efficiently.

Learning is what permits talent to grow

One of the challenges facing all education systems is that they are expected to train students for jobs that cannot even be defined at this point in time.

There are only two ways to address this paradox. One is to build curricula around 'generic skills' such as problem solving or inductive reasoning, while teaching coding techniques (as opposed to coding languages) all through the formal education system, from kindergarten to university. This is what countries like Singapore have practised for some time already, with spectacular results in international education rankings such as PISA.

The other way is to consider that education is a lifelong process. Technological innovations, new ways of working and interacting, and new social and economic norms require a constant adaptation from workers. Their employers have a critical role to play in ensuring their constant up-skilling and re-skilling. This is not just an issue of productivity and competitiveness. It is also part of good management. The future of work will rely largely on free agent, gig workers (working part time for multiple employers), and highly mobile talents (across geographies and across sectors). New generations (X, Y, Z, Alpha) seek meaningful occupations, ie, jobs through which they can contribute positively to society, and jobs that offer them possibilities to grow, innovate, and enjoy a healthy work-life balance.

So, data, talent, and learning will mesh with each other to become the spine of a new breed of social and economic organisms. Much effort will be needed from all of us (private and public organisations, cities, nations, and individual citizens) to fully grasp the potential benefits and pitfalls of such a massive change. On all those fronts, we are only seeing the beginning of what tomorrow will bring. The future is still very young indeed, and we all have a role to play in shaping it to our liking. IM



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bruno Lanvin is President, IMD's Smart City Observatory; co-founder and co-editor, Global Talent Competitiveness Index; co-author, *The Future is Young: How technology, talent and innovation can help us face the most pressing challenges of our time.*


Yash Chittal

Yet much of the hardship suffered by new leaders is entirely preventable—often by recognising and addressing shortcomings of their own.

✦ BILL TREASURER, AUTHOR, *LEADERSHIP TWO WORDS AT A TIME*

An enduring leader

The realities facing today's 'new' leaders are unprecedentedly novel, challenging, and anxiety-provoking. For example, not only must more new leaders lead remote teams across larger geographical distances, but many must also navigate supply chain issues and create new customer engagement models wrought by the pandemic. Added to this plight, most step into their roles with little to no guidance.

Studies1 show that while 83 per cent of organisations say it is important to develop leaders, only 5 per cent have implemented their plans to do so. No one has handed them a playbook that takes them from being an individual contributor to the person responsible for the output and performance of others. New leaders are not spending their time trying to get from good to great—they are just trying to make it to the end of the week!

For starters, once they move into their leadership role, they discover that what they thought a leader's job would be and what it is are two different things. Before becoming one themselves, they saw that instead of working in a cubicle, leaders had roomy offices. And instead of working alone on a spreadsheet, they were gathered in the conference room making heady decisions. The work of leaders appeared more varied, impactful, and important. But once in the role, they quickly discovered that it comes with pressures from all sides. Leadership is hard. Period.

Yet much of the hardship suffered by new leaders is entirely preventable—often by recognising and addressing shortcomings of their own. New leaders notoriously make things much harder than they need to. They get in their own way—a lot.

Here are a few basic building blocks of being a good leader to get new leaders through the early stages:

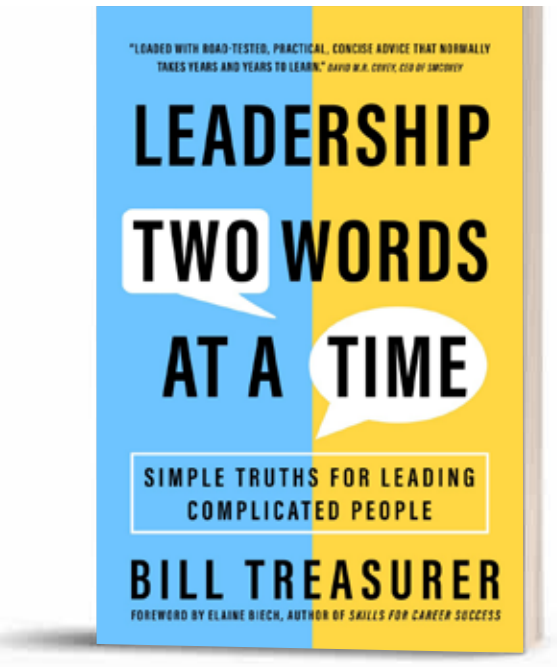
- **Know yourself.** Self-awareness is a key differentiator between successful and unsuccessful leaders. The journey of self-discovery, however, is not just about identifying your strengths and weaknesses. It is also about identifying overuse of your strengths. For example, a person with a

creative imagination might spawn too many untethered ideas that have no practical application. Or, a persuasive communicator might hog the limelight and lose sight of when to listen. As a leader, you are much better off embracing all the dimensions of your humanness, including the use, overuse, or misuse of your strengths.

- **Master time management.** The one thing that effective leaders have in common is mastery over how they use their time. Time 'mismanagement' is common during the early parts of one's leadership career and is often connected to not yet having learned how to delegate. Instead of trying to know everyone's job, you're better off investing time in developing people so you can offload substantial tasks. This not only increases their capabilities and the value they add to the company, but also frees you up to spend more time being strategic.

New leaders are not spending their time trying to get from good to great—they are just trying to make it to the end of the week!

- **Model a strong work ethic.** If you want to gain the respect of your people, the starting point is your work ethics. It is the most visible way of showing commitment and impressing upon them that you do not take your role for granted. As a new leader, you must care deeply about the quality of your work and your growing reputation. That caring is exemplified by your work ethic and will ultimately determine the degree of success you achieve.
- **Preserve personal fidelity.** Alongside the increase in responsibilities as a new leader, understand that there is an increased need to prioritise self-care. You will take better care of others when you first take care of yourself. This requires the personal discipline to prioritise your wellbeing. One manager I know took it upon herself to lead an 8 am yoga class three mornings a week. She figured it would be easier to hold herself accountable by forming a supportive network with others.



- **Work on your skills—continuously.** Leaders never fully graduate. You will never be granted absolution from your obligation to improve. As a leader, you must always care deeply about the quality of your work. When you adopt the mantra of ongoing improvement, you find ways to invest in yourself and add more value to the lives of people and the organisation you serve.

To endure as a new leader, you must continuously earn your right to lead as you build the skills, knowledge, mindset, and wherewithal needed for effective and enduring leadership success.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bill Treasurer is founder, Giant Leap Consulting. He is author, *Leadership Two Words at a Time: Simple Truths for Leading Complicated People.*

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* https://www.ddiworld.com/global-leadership-forecast-2021



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What does it take to become a great leader? Antonio Garrido, Founder and President, My Daily Leadership, discusses common myths in the leadership space and how to overcome them. Antonio is also author, *My Daily Leadership: A Powerful Roadmap for Leadership Success*.

MYTH BUSTER

A leader with difference

MYTH 1: Time is your most valuable resource.

No, it isn't.

Neither is it your people, or money, or even your health. Your most valuable resource, as a manager or leader, is energy. Energy, and the application of it. This is characterised as action bias.

All successful individuals share the common trait of action bias. Whatever their market, whatever their vertical, whatever their business, action bias is a sure-fire guaranteed predictor of success.

To be clear, we are not advocating working harder, trying harder, doing more, putting in more hours, or squeezing more juice out of fewer lemons. No; action-bias is not the same thing as work ethics. Action bias means the preparedness to do the difficult things, the tricky things, perhaps, the things that others are not prepared to do. Action bias can just as easily be characterised as actionable commitment. Commitment is not work ethic, it is turning goals and plans into reality.

To paraphrase many: A goal without action is just a daydream.

This means that great management requires specific and intentional activity, not just good intentions and great planning. The best of the best are able to create action-bias in others too. Action-bias is intentional, it is inspirational, and it is infectious.

MYTH 2: Experience is everything.

No, it isn't.

Wisdom 'does not' evolve as a consequence of experience and time served; it only (yes, only) comes from evaluated experience.

Whenever we interview managers and leaders for our clients, or whenever we coach them, we often see resumés packed with lots of experience carrying with them the hope that this high-level experience somehow qualifies the candidate for their next step up the ladder. When we dig a little deeper, however, we often discover that 'ten years senior management experience' in

reality is simply, "I learned a minimum set of management skills for the first two years, and then I just repeated that stuff five times over." Hmmmmm. Next!

The best of the best take time to be incredibly intentional about their self-development—they do not passively wait to be spoon-fed their development by their organisation; neither do they attempt to learn everything about everything in a random haphazard way like a bee collecting pollen from a field of flowers. Sure, Youtube and TED are great places to make a start, but real learning comes from extremely intentional and structured (guided) programming and reflection—seek out proper development programs that deliver both.

Lay the hope of absorbing management greatness by some sort of heavenly osmosis, or wishing that it might appear as a consequence of time served, to bed since neither of those strategies will do.

One of the reasons why governments may fear the continuous rise of data and its growing vital importance for all types of activities is that they sense that the talent required to create value out of such data is both scarce and difficult to manage and control.

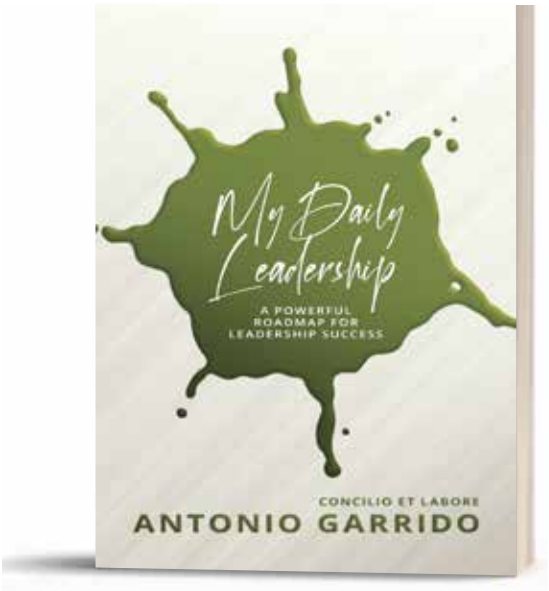
MYTH 3: What got me here, will get me there.

No, it won't.

To paraphrase the inimitable Marshall Goldsmith, yesterday's experiences will not solve tomorrow challenges.

All managers and leaders have a responsibility to future-proof themselves, their people, and their business.

We all want to be the Wayne Gretzky of the business world, right? We want to skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been, nor where it is now. A good hockey player, says Gretzky, skates to where the puck is; a great one, to where it will be.



Great managers must somehow predict where the business and the market that it should serve is going, its trajectory, and they should start moving there in advance of it.

The best leaders predict the challenges that they are going to face—the skills and competencies that will carry them successfully through to the future state of the business and beyond. We all need to become the leader of the future, not the leader for 'right now'. When we become great for 'right now', sometime down the line, the 'new now' will be significantly different again and we will have missed the boat.

You should pay attention to the future leader that you are going to be, that you need to be. Questions that help you unravel the challenges that you will face at some future point are as critical as the issues we

face now.

Find somewhere appropriately forward-looking in your daily leadership journal (what do you mean, you haven't got one? Get one!) and complete this rather tricky thought: In order for me to future-proof myself, my people, and my business, I will need to learn significantly more about these three key issues right away:

1_____

2_____

3_____

MYTH 4: Good managers are naturally good leaders, and good leaders are naturally good managers.

No, they are not.

Leading and managing, are entirely distinct and different entities. Often times, we tend to confuse these two concepts believing that leading is managing, and managing is leading—but they are most definitely not.

Similarly, managing change is not the same as leading change.

Is it possible to be a great leader, or a great manager, or both? Of course, yes, but you have to be intentional with what you are trying to achieve.

Consider this table:

MANAGING	LEADING
Delegating tasks	Delegating results
Directing subordinates	Inspiring followers
Advising people how to act	Teaching people how to think
The use of directed authority	The use of guided discovery
Tactical	Strategic
Conflict resolution	Resource allocation
Delegated instruction/action	Delegated result
Task-oriented	People-oriented
Reactive	Proactive
Lighting fires under people	Lighting fires within people
Raising standards	Raising beliefs
Results and process driven	Culture and values driven
Quality output and control	Quality people and thinking
Doing things right	Doing the right things
Simplify complexity	Simplify uncertainty
Planning for the future	Visualising the future

Most business executives find themselves flipping and flopping between these two lists on a day-by-day basis (sometimes hour-by-hour), since all senior roles require a mixture of these two disciplines. But ask yourself which list you mostly resemble and how you spend most of your time. Do not confuse yourself or others—when you want to manage, manage; when you want to lead, lead.

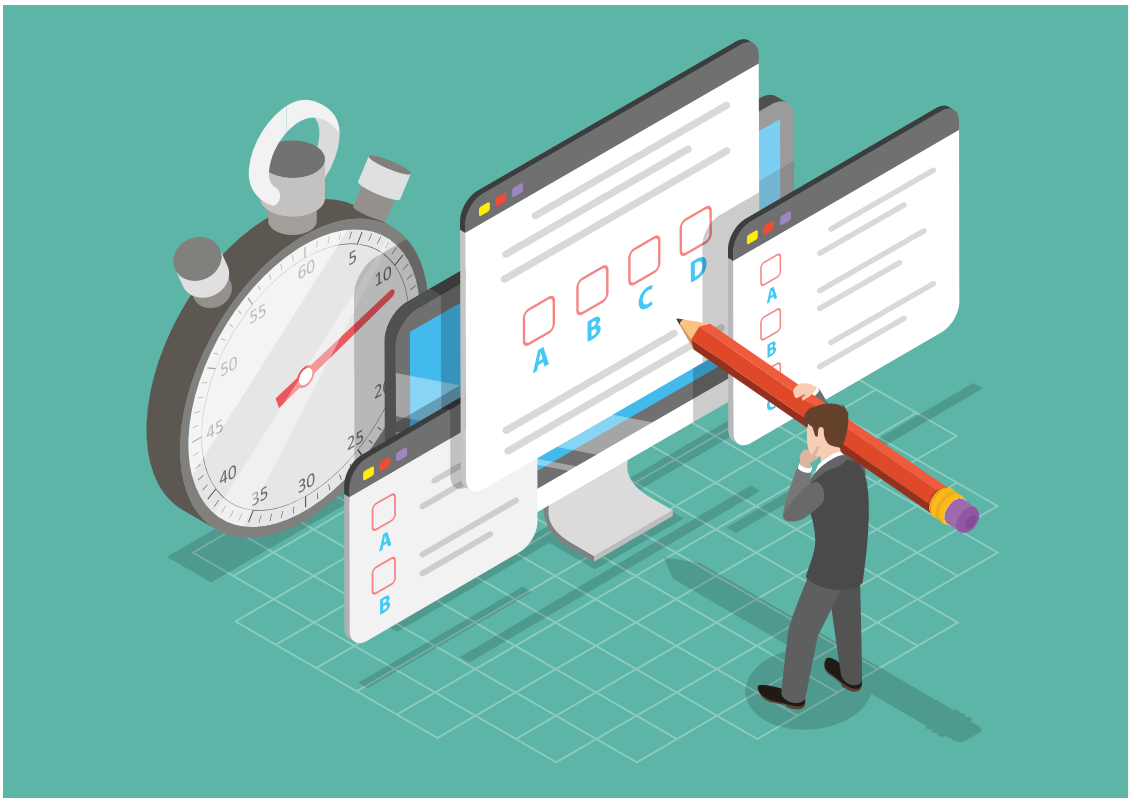
MYTH 5: I know my weaknesses.

No, you don't.

Want proof? Write down your top five leadership or management blind spots in your new journal.

You won't be able to. Why? Because, if you could, they wouldn't be blind spots. QED.

Self-awareness is fundamental management and leadership attribute—but it is, unfortunately, in woefully short supply.



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Leading and managing, are entirely distinct and different entities. Often times, we tend to confuse these two concepts believing that leading is managing, and managing is leading—but they are most definitely not.

The only way to know your weaknesses (including your level of self-awareness) is to take an objective leadership assessment. There are lots to choose from.

Some assessments measure personality types, while others measure communications styles, and others are designed to measure strengths, aptitudes, attitudes, and so on. None of these are what we are looking for.

Find an assessment that measures key leadership building blocks, as well as core skills and competencies, and that gives you a clear self-awareness rating. Try www.mydailyleadership.com/leadershipassessment

Whichever assessment you plump for, it is incumbent upon you to pay very close attention to the results and make a resolve to make some fundamental changes—otherwise, well, why even bother benchmarking yourself in the first place, right?

And please don't be like any of those dreadful leaders with crushingly low self-awareness scores who wholeheartedly agree with all of the positive comments that the assessment reveals, and then, when reading the not-so-positive comments say things like, "Bah! Nonsense. I mean, how accurate are these things anyway?" If you choose the right assessment, it is accurate. Please pay close attention to the results and its recommendations.

To intentionally adulterate and misappropriate the genius of Tom Landry of Dallas Cowboys fame: "A leadership assessment is something that tells you what you don't want to hear, which has you see what you don't want to see, so you can be who you always knew you could be." IM

This means that great management requires specific and intentional activity, not just good intentions and great planning. The best of the best are able to create action-bias in others too. Action-bias is intentional, it is inspirational, and it is infectious.

MYTH 2: Experience is everything.

No, it isn't.

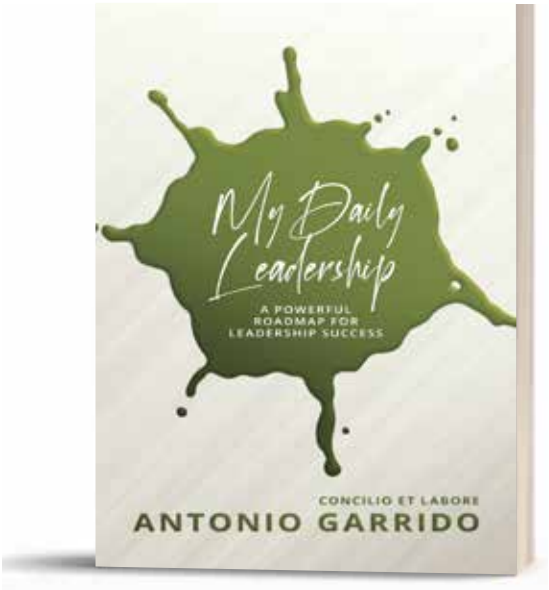
Wisdom 'does not' evolve as a consequence of experience and time served; it only (yes, only) comes from evaluated experience.

Whenever we interview managers and leaders for our clients, or whenever we coach them, we often see resumés packed with lots of experience carrying with them the hope that this high-level experience somehow qualifies the candidate for their next step up the ladder. When we dig a little deeper, however, we often discover that 'ten years senior management experience' in reality is simply, "I learned a minimum set of management skills for the first two years, and then I just repeated that stuff five times over." Hmmmmm. Next!

Yesterday's experiences will not solve tomorrow challenges. All managers and leaders have a responsibility to future-proof themselves, their people, and their business.

The best of the best take time to be incredibly intentional about their self-development—they do not passively wait to be spoon-fed their development by their organisation; neither do they attempt to learn everything about everything in a random haphazard way like a bee collecting pollen from a field of flowers. Sure, Youtube and TED are great places to make a start, but real learning comes from extremely intentional and structured (guided) programing and reflection—seek out proper development programs that deliver both.

Lay the hope of absorbing management greatness by some sort of heavenly osmosis,



or wishing that it might appear as a consequence of time served, to bed since neither of those strategies will do.

MYTH 3: What got me here, will get me there.

No, it won't.

To paraphrase the inimitable Marshall Goldsmith, yesterday's experiences will not solve tomorrow challenges.

All managers and leaders have a responsibility to future-proof themselves, their people, and their business.

We all want to be the Wayne Gretzky of the business world, right? We want to skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it has been, nor where it is now. A good hockey player, says Gretzky, skates to where the puck is; a great one, to where it will be.

Great managers must somehow predict where the business and the market that it should serve is going, its trajectory, and they should start moving there in advance of it.

The best leaders predict the challenges that they are going to face—the skills

and competencies that will carry them successfully through to the future state of the business and beyond. We all need to become the leader of the future, not the leader for 'right now'. When we become great for 'right now', sometime down the line, the 'new now' will be significantly different again and we will have missed the boat.

You should pay attention to the future leader that you are going to be, that you need to be. Questions that help you unravel the challenges that you will face at some future point are as critical as the issues we face now.

Find somewhere appropriately forward-looking in your daily leadership journal (what do you mean, you haven't got one? Get one!) and complete this rather tricky thought: In order for me to future-proof myself, my people, and my business, I will need to learn significantly more about these three key issues right away:

1_____

2_____

3_____

MYTH 4: Good managers are naturally good leaders, and good leaders are naturally good managers.

No, they are not.

Leading and managing, are entirely distinct and different entities. Often times, we tend to confuse these two concepts believing that leading is managing, and managing is leading—but they are most definitely not.

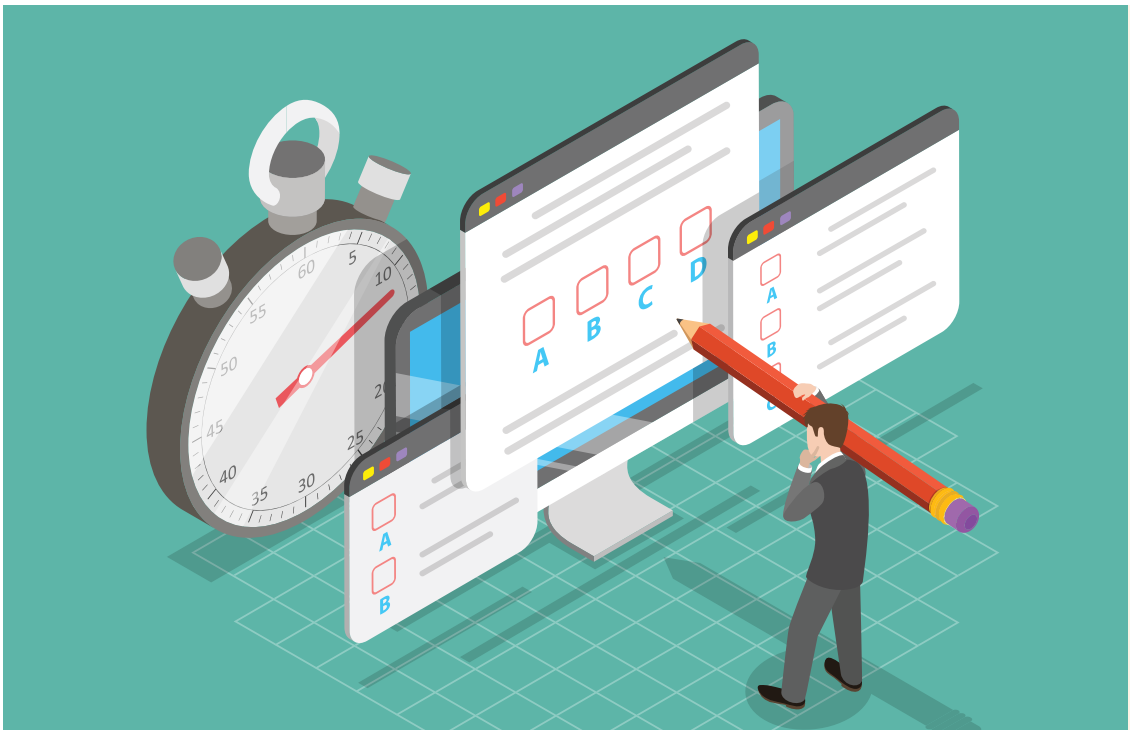
Similarly, managing change is not the same as leading change.

Is it possible to be a great leader, or a great manager, or both? Of course, yes, but you have to be intentional with what you are trying to achieve.

Consider this table:

MANAGING	LEADING
Delegating tasks	Delegating results
Directing subordinates	Inspiring followers
Advising people how to act	Teaching people how to think
The use of directed authority	The use of guided discovery
Tactical	Strategic
Conflict resolution	Resource allocation
Delegated instruction/action	Delegated result
Task-oriented	People-oriented
Reactive	Proactive
Lighting fires under people	Lighting fires within people
Raising standards	Raising beliefs
Results and process driven	Culture and values driven
Quality output and control	Quality people and thinking
Doing things right	Doing the right things
Simplify complexity	Simplify uncertainty
Planning for the future	Visualising the future

Most business executives find themselves flipping and flopping between these two lists on a day-by-day basis (sometimes hour-by-hour), since all senior roles require a mixture of these two disciplines. But ask yourself which list you mostly resemble and how you spend most of your time. Do not confuse yourself or others—when you want to manage, manage; when you want to lead, lead.



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Yash Chittal

Ensuring a safe future for all of us is a joint responsibility of people, corporates, and governments.

✦ KRISHAN KALRA

A chance for the future

We are all witness to the increased frequency of extreme weather events (EWEs) over the last few years. Flash floods, cloud bursts, cyclones, and droughts regularly make screaming headlines in media. All of us feel alarmed and express sympathy with the victims, often participating in campaigns to raise money and other resources for them. Some more energetic ones even travel to the affected areas and provide hands-on assistance. National and state disaster relief outfits have become better organised, being now able to restrict the number of lives lost.

However, all too soon, we forget the incidents, go back to our work, and it is once again business as usual.

What happened in Uttarakhand, Kashmir, Chennai, Mumbai, Kerala, and Odisha is still fresh in our collective memory. August 30, 2022 brought frightening reports on social media:

Bangalore comes to a halt!

Schools and colleges shut; Government declares a holiday while all agencies come to grips with the unprecedented floods following the incessant rains that lashed the city.

IMD issues Yellow alert.

Bangalore, as we are all aware, is now literally the showcase city of our country. Almost all 'Fortune 500' companies as well as many leading domestic ones have set up their tech centers or R&D labs here. The city draws probably more attention than even Delhi or Mumbai, as far as business is concerned. So, imagine the collective loss of human hours in reaching their work places, food and other supplies reaching them in time, or missed flights, trains, etc., due to EWEs.

Unfortunately, such EWEs are becoming all too frequent. And, it is not only in India; there are well-publicised international cases: extreme heat in Europe, freak snowfall in Dubai, and devastating floods in Manhattan. Rising sea levels have already claimed many low-lying islands and areas near the oceans. Countries like Maldives face being totally submerged while parts of Bangladesh are not far behind. The EWEs monster does not differentiate between the rich and poor nations!

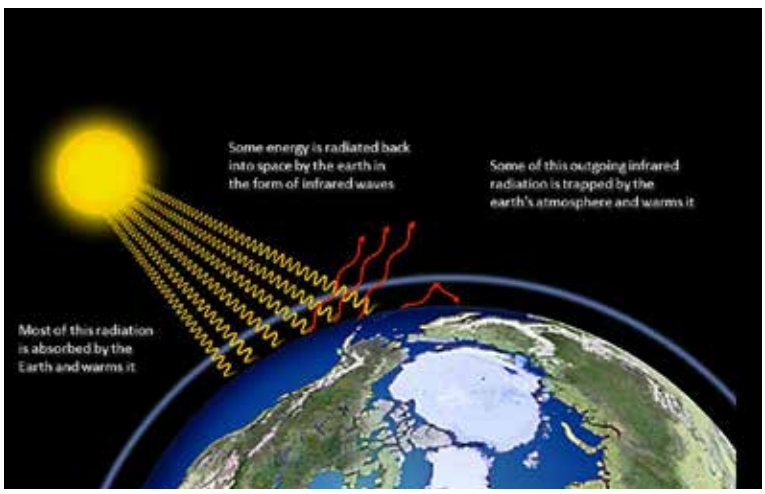
Thankfully, almost everyone now admits that: (a) there is climate change, (b) human action has accelerated it, and (c) human action can help in amelioration of the situation.

This is unlike five to 10 years ago when many people thought all this was the imagination of some mad scientists!

During the last couple of years, there is a lot of discussion on the issue in several international summits to collectively find a solution to slow down the deadly march. 2022 has witnessed 'climate change' on top of the agenda of all governments, corporate world, international institutions, research outfits, NGOs, scientists…really, every one!

News from IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) is keenly awaited. All large companies—even those involved in the energy business—are continuously updating their plans to achieve 'carbon neutrality' or better still 'zero emissions'. It is a truly global problem that all countries have to tackle jointly—the richer ones have to spend more because they are the ones who have caused greater damage.

Very few still question the reasons for the calamities, the science behind the devastation. My only objective is to remind ourselves that human action has indeed played a significant role in accelerating the menacing advance of climate change and human action can certainly help in moderating the situation.



Slide 2

It is also important to highlight the fact that a 'business as usual' approach would lead to unmitigated disaster for all humanity. The possible effects of global warming, say an increase of 2°C in the temperature of Earth—our only home in the vast universe—include a broad spectrum. Expect:

(a) Up to 20 per cent reduction in productivity and 25 per cent loss in nutrition value of crops; meaning, food security goes for a toss;
(b) Huge loss of marine life, a staple food for millions, and again, a serious threat to food security;
(c) Unsustainable water stress leading to loss of millions of lives;
(d) Increased risk of disease; and
(e) Consequent disruptions leading to unimaginable political and social instability.

To be candid, life will just not be sustainable!

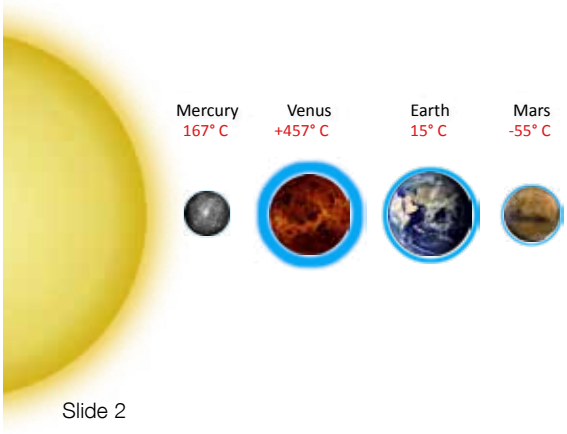
First, a little bit about the science of climate change. At the heart of the matter is the exponential increase in emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) due to irresponsible industrial activity over the last six to seven decades. These gases get trapped in Earth's atmosphere, creating a sort of an annular spherical ring wrapping the planet. The thicker the ring, the greater is the propensity of the planet getting warmer from the energy radiated by the sun.

Slide 1 illustrates how energy from the sun keeps our planet warm and comfortable. Some infrared rays get reflected back from Earth and get trapped in its atmospheric ring. As more rays get trapped, the 'ring' keeps getting thicker.

Look at slide 2 showing different planets. Mercury is a lot closer to Sun compared to Venus and yet, its temperature (167°C) is drastically lower than that of Venus at 457°C!

Reason?

The thickness of the 'atmospheric ring' around Venus is much more.



Slide 2

Slides 3 and 4 showcase the data determined by NASA scientists by drilling 'ice cores' in the Antarctic in 1977. Analysing carbon dioxide content in the entrapped air bubbles over a long period of 6,50,000 years shows that Earth has had the unique good fortune of maintaining an average temperature of 15°C, which is very conducive for sustaining human and plant life and food chains in the oceans.

There is a direct co-relation between Earth's temperature and the carbon content (slide 4) in the air, which has never exceeded 300 parts per million (ppm) over this long period with alternate warm periods and ice ages. Only in the last seven decades has this balance got disturbed radically, raising the carbon concentration to about 450 ppm currently and increasing the temperature of the planet by about 0.5 to 0.6°C. With 'business as usual', the carbon concentration is likely to cross 600 ppm by 2050!

There are various estimates to indicate an increase of one degree by 2040/50 and another degree before the end of the century. Ready for the calamity?

Biodiversity is another victim of climate change. The study that "one million species of plants and animals are on the verge of becoming extinct" made headlines recently. This alarming increase in the threat of extinction, symptomatic of the human-induced degeneration of the natural ecosystems, is the key finding of the first global assessment on the health of the planet by the United Nations backed Inter Governmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

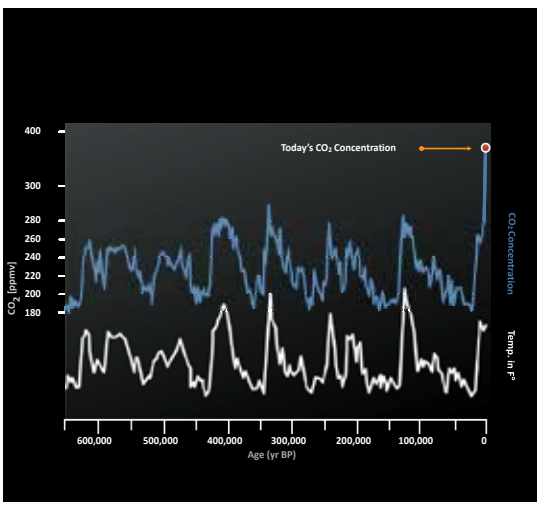
To illustrate my point, let me pose a small question here. All people of the generation born in the forties and fifties would have seen and heard frogs, one of the longest surviving species that has outlived the dinosaurs, near wells and ponds. We have even brought these delightful creatures home as pets.

Quelccaya Ice Cap
Peru, 1977



Lonnie G Thompson

Slide 3



Slide 4

I wonder how many of the current readers have ever seen one?

I haven't for, maybe, 60 years!

Environmentalists have predicted that, in this century, we risk losing 50 per cent all living species! For instance, the mangroves in the Sundarbans, the trees that guard against land erosion in coastal areas, have decreased by 20 per cent in the last 40 years.

Yet, all is not lost. Solutions exist, including some easy ones for each of us. Of course, we have to leave the big jobs for the governments. So let us first talk about what all we can do.

Plant trees. Trees act like a carbon sink and air purifier put together. Besides, trees increase forest cover, providing the multiple benefits of attracting rains, keeping the advance of deserts in check, and compensating for the depletion due to industrial uses. Slide 5 lists the trees to people ration in some countries.



Slide 5

Save water. Fresh water is our most precious natural resource, and we have always taken it for granted. Sadly, we are running out of it! And it is not because of the insufficient total rainfall in the country. We are running out of water because of the grossly inefficient distribution and criminal wastage. As far back as the early eighties, a Nobel laureate, speaking at the 'Water Summit' in Zurich, had made the chilling prophecy that, "World War III will be fought over Water."

He was probably not wrong. Our own NITI Aayog has recently come out with a report saying, "600 million Indians are already facing high to extremely high 'water stress' and 200,000 of them die every year due to inadequate access to it."

We need to save every single drop of water if we want to ensure that our children and grandchildren get at least the bare minimum required for drinking, bathing, washing, and agriculture. Slide 6.

Daily Bath- Example of criminal water wastage

Traditional Bucket Bath	20 liters
Dry Showers	30 liters
Wet Showers	60 liters
Pressure Showers	100 liters

Assuming only 15% people have access to showers

195 Million, avg. 1.5 showers/day, 40 Ltrs potential saving/bath = 4300 MTPA

Slide 6

Collect waste water from your R/O units (reportedly, wastage here is three times the quantity of purified water) and the condensate from air conditioners and use it for washing/cleaning.

Avoid using bottled water; a lot of people will consume only a part of the quantity in the bottle and discard the rest. Besides the water wastage, it also adds to the mounting problem of not-easily-recyclable plastic bottles. Steering clear of bottled water helps you kill two birds with one stone.

Each house/office/factory must religiously install a proper rain water harvesting system on the premises and ensure that every drop of rain water is channelled into the system to help recharge ground water aquifers.

Save energy. Switch off all unnecessary lights, fans, appliances, air conditioners even if you are stepping out for a few minutes. TVs and other gadgets on stand-by mode also consume some power, which when multiplied by a few million does add up to significant amounts.

Use LED bulbs. Give up your 'love for 18°C '; many of us like to set the air conditioners at the minimum possible 18°C and wear jackets and ties in the office and use blankets at home at night. Crazy as it sounds, they even sell 'A/C blankets' in the market!

Believe me, when you are sleeping, the combination of 26°C on the A/C with the fan on is quite comfortable for the average human body and you will be able to save large amounts of power and also money on the electricity bills. Japan has mandatorily stopped the use of jackets and neck ties in government offices, and this simple step has permitted them to increase the thermostat settings by 2°C, leading to huge saving of energy.

Soak pulses and beans overnight so there is need of less gas for cooking. Clean stoves consume 50 per cent less fuel and give out 80 per cent less emission.

Using thick glass on windows, reflective tiles on the roof, and white paint on external walls will amount to amazing savings on the heating and cooling load of your building.

Every kilowatt saved means a small dent in the harmful emissions! A recent study showed that India can save a mind boggling $42 billion annually with optimally enhanced energy efficiency.

- **Use public transport.** Try to commute by 'public transport' like the metros. It helps control vehicle-related emissions and traffic snarls caused by too many private vehicles on the road.
- **Do not waste food.** Our craze of outdoing each other makes us all party to obscene food wastage at social functions. Everyone takes pride in talking about their wazwans and '100+ dishes including 25 desserts' buffets without giving a thought to the gross wastage and the energy consumed. Think of water pumped for irrigation, fuel consumed by tractors and harvesters, trucks and wagons used for transportation, cold rooms for storage, etc, in growing every kilo of food. Not to forget the resultant addition to toxic emissions. Also, think of all those poor people who go to sleep every day without having a meal!
- **Manage your waste.** Segregate all the waste generated at home or in the office and possibly compost it. It ensures that very little reaches the landfills that are forever releasing toxic gases like methane into the atmosphere. This fact is besides the problems of their leachates polluting underground water and their mountains of garbage becoming breeding grounds for mosquitos and flies.

If we can all do these little things with enormously large benefits, the governments will hopefully take care of the bigger jobs like-

- Linking of rivers where necessary and feasible;
- Making irrigation more water efficient, plugging leakages and theft in public supply of water and electricity;
- Quicker switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy options like hydel, solar, wind, and biomass—an initiative where India is already ahead of the world.
- Stricter implementation of laws governing mandatory rain water harvesting, affluent treatment of industrial waste, compulsory water recycling and dual connections for fresh and recycled water and sewage treatment plants; and
- Revitalisation of lost water bodies, building check-dams, preventing blockage of natural drainage channels, etc.

Let me close by quoting Mahatma Gandhi, an environmentalist before we had even heard of the word. He said: (a) Earth has sufficient for everyone's need but not for greed; and (b) We have inherited the planet from our ancestors and are merely its trustees, and it is our duty to ensure that we hand it over to our future generations in a little better shape than what we got.

Disclaimer: Figures cited are estimates based on government reports.. IM



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Krishan Kalra is a past president of AIMA and member, BOG IIMC. He is Trustee, Climate Project Foundation India.


Yash Chittal

Controlling the 'threat brain' is of utmost importance in order to work and lead effectively.

✦ PHILIP ROSS AND JEREMY MYERSON, CO-AUTHORS, *UNWORKING*

The office of the future

If you want to get a handle on the office of the future, just take a look at what has been happening in 2022. This year, we have seen millions of workers around the world mandated back to the office by their employers after the global pandemic, but many have resisted doing so. In the UK, senior government ministers have left unsubtle calling cards on the desks of work-and-home civil servants, demanding they return to Whitehall as soon as possible.

Companies have started investing heavily in all types of smart technology, including VR headsets, video suites, and even the metaverse, as they try to find ways to enable a remote workforce to collaborate more effectively in a 'hybrid' model.

Employers have started paying unprecedented attention to the mental well-being of their workers, not just their physical safety. And designers have started remodelling office space with a focus on hospitality, socialising, and customer experience.

After a century of rigid working life with the office building at the centre of its universe, professional workers are now moving towards a more flexible anytime-anywhere workstyle. It represents the biggest shake-up for a generation, and corporate decision-making bodies are struggling to cope with the enormity of the change.

To experience office life in 1922 was to be part of a machine—to be a cog in a mechanical system using the industrial technologies of the day, the light bulb, typewriter, telephone, filing cabinet, and elevator. The office was the stable, immoveable fixture of the working week.

To experience office life in 2022 is to spend a large chunk of the week avoiding it altogether, working instead at home, in a café, or at a co-working lounge, using a new set of digital technologies to connect.

We have reached such a different place in the evolution of the modern—physically, conceptually, and philosophically—that a new way of thinking is required to grasp the scale of the transition currently underway.

We describe the term 'unworking' as unravelling how we work, unbundling the assumptions baked into the modern office, and unlearning the habits, management styles, and workplace cultures that traditionally defined our behaviour at work.

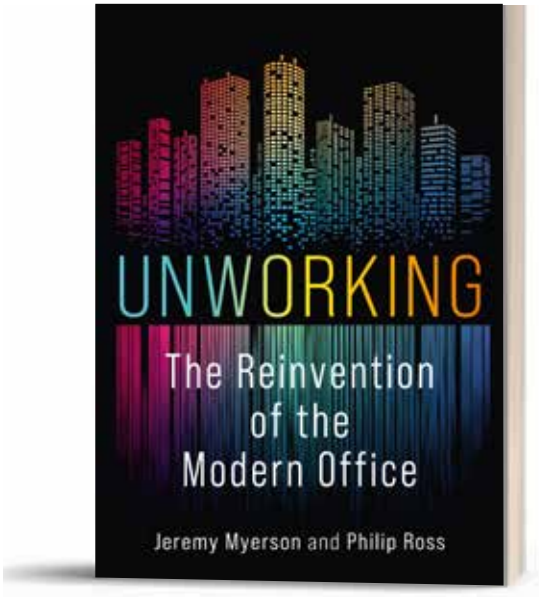
The purpose of 'unworking' is to reimagine what the future workplace could be like. It is not

an easy task, as companies in India and elsewhere are discovering. So, what aspects of the office should CEOs and their teams seek to unlearn?

Here are three key shifts to consider:

1) From process to experience. First, there should be a customer-centric focus on providing a great workplace experience for employees who now have a choice of where to work. Company leaders should stop obsessing about what people do (process) and give more consideration to how they feel about it (experience), using techniques derived from hospitality, retail, and entertainment.

This will place more emphasis and resources on improving satisfaction and well-being across the workforce as the first step to raising performance. It will also help to build culture and purpose. We are already seeing new job titles such as 'chief experience officer,' 'head of team anywhere,' 'chief heart officer', and 'head of dynamic work' emerge in organisations. These new titles reflect how difficult it is to manage a more distributed workforce.



US tech companies, such as Google and Zappos, have studied the Burning Man Festival in a bid to find ways to build more effective teams. Burning Man is an exceptional art festival



© Shutterstock.com

experience which attracts more than 50,000 participants each year in the middle of the Nevada desert. Burning Man's education director Stuart Mangrum told us, "Behavioural psychology in the workplace has largely been Pavlovian and Taylorist—to get people to do what you want them to do. Burning Man is about intrinsic motivation and radical inclusion. The downside is that we are inefficient, but we are intentionally inefficient. We are building a lasting culture."

2) From efficiency to effectiveness. This leads to our second point. The future workplace is likely to focus more on what is effective than what is simply efficient. One size does not fit all; it never did, but even less so now in the hybrid work era. Company leaders have therefore got to wean themselves off adherence to blunt economies of scale, universal planning, high density open plan, and so on, to embrace a more heterogeneous approach.

Future workforces will be multi-generational and more diverse in terms of age, ability, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Workplaces will need to be inclusive so that everyone feels welcomed and valued irrespective of their differences. There is little point in recruiting more diverse talent with a wider perspective and capacity for innovation if the office is not itself inclusive of their needs. As Kay Sargent, Director of Workplace at US architects HOK, told us: "Diversity is about counting the people, but inclusion is about making the people count."

3) From dumb to data. In the recent past, company leaders have tended to view office buildings as dumb containers for work, a cost rather than investment because they yielded little actionable data that could be useful to the business. The office of the future will be much smarter than before. It will provide constant data flows that can inform evidence-based decision-making on everything from HR policies and office redesign to corporate strategy.

Data analytics, spatial intelligence, and sociometric technologies will transform how we measure performance and engagement in the workplace. Sensors and cameras will capture every move and give unprecedented insights into company behaviour. Dashboards showing real-time data on occupancy level and environmental conditions will allow managers to 'fine tune' their resources.


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The cover of *Unworking*—a graphic evoking a skyline of office towers passing down through a shredder and emerging as software code—is a fitting metaphor for the office as a software solution in the 21st century as opposed to being all about place (a 20th century idea).

The office, no longer the all-powerful setting for work, is now morphing into something else. We predict the future workplace will become more sustainable, sentient, social, and personalised, in a magnetising response to people having a choice about whether or not to come to the office whereas before there was simply no alternative. IM



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Jeremy Myerson is co-founder, the WORKTECH conference and WORKTECH Academy. He is co-author, *Unworking: The Reinvention of the Modern Office.*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Yash Chittal

Challenging as it may be, human resources management is an interesting job, provided one does it with passion and patience.

✦ J DEVAPRAKASH, TARAPUR ATOMIC POWER STATION

A matter of empathy

Twenty-first century is witnessing the age of robotics and artificial intelligence (AI). With an exploding growth in the digital field, computers have begun to influence human life deeply, replacing them in numerous industries. Robotic surgeries have become common in the healthcare sector. Robots and AI are ruling our homes too—from the vacuum cleaner to mood-based lighting system, mankind's dependency on machines is surging largely. What's more, robots that can mimic many human activities, have already been put into service.

Still, human brain is the best in the world. With about 100 million neurons—the information messengers—the mind of a human is superior to a computer in many aspects. It has the ability to think and has senses like logical reasoning, judgment, and creativity. Besides, emotions make humans a breed apart. So, handling of humans, particularly in organisations, is no simple task. When handling a machine or a computer that does not think, the human operator remains authoritative, but when handling a human who has cognitive abilities identical to any other human, the manager or the handler goes diffident.

According to whatishumanresource.com, there are five 'M's—management, money, machines, materials, and methods—in an organisation. Human resource management (HRM) is all about first M, the men. From recruitment to retirement, HRM is involved in every facet of the workforce, but this is not an easy task. Every individual is unique, and has with the ability to manipulate the other four 'M's, which makes HRM a crucial aspect of any organisation. Smooth handling of HRM also streamlines other aspects such as production, sales, marketing, purchase, etc.

Over a century, HRM has been studied in depth and practitioners of human resources have developed numerous strategies to effectively deal with workforce which is the foremost asset of a company. Here are some of the ways HR managers can rely upon for fruitful human resource management:

- **Listening is caring**

  We have two ears and one mouth. If these are used in 'this same proportion', particularly by HR managers, it will

lead to genial employee relations. Listening is the key to problem solving. Even if a manager is in a helpless state, if he just listens to the employee, the situation he could turn the situation from hostile to placid. Showing interest in understanding the issue will give the employee a feeling of repose.

- **Make them feel comfortable**

  Often, employees visit HR department when they believe that some injustice has taken place—toward themselves or towards other employees. During such truculent times, the HR manager must remain calm and attempt to make pacify the complainant first—get them seated, offer something to drink or eat, etc. Once peace prevails, the HR officer can crack a conversation in a calm tone. Respect is always a two-way street; being an employee manager, you make the start. And you will see the flow of respect from the other side as well. This may guide to a good-tempered conversation. If their issue is genuine, it can be taken up to the management. Else, things can be put in the right perspective.

- **Align decisions with values**

  At times, people blow up trivial things—particularly a new decision of the management—into a big controversy. HR managers have to make the employees understand how important that decision to the organisation and its growth is. They can also try to connect the decision with the organisation's values and the long-term benefits of that decision. Besides, HR managers can elucidate how important the employees' role is in executing the decision.

- **General to specific**

  HR analysts believe that not understanding or half understanding of HR functions by others is one of the major reasons why HR is always blamed. Because of this, an employee may beat around the bush. But, the employee may wait to catch some point from the discussion. During such circumstances, the HR manager may try to avoid general discussion and insist on to be specific. This will help avert unnecessary confusions.

- **Keep your personal emotions aside**

  Remember, as HR manager, you are dealing with human beings, who too have emotions. If your personal emotions crop up, it may lead to embarrassment. The anger or displeasure of an employee is not on you, but on the system or on policy or on something else. You may be right, but exhibiting your emotional outburst will only worsen things rather than dousing the fire.

- **The art of saying no**

  As a human resource manager, one cannot say yes to everyone every time. Owing to lack of clear policy or inadmissibility, the HR person may sometimes be coerced to say no to the employee. Hearing "no", especially when said bluntly or authoritatively, can cause dejection or even unrest among employees. But, if the rejection is announced sympathetically, in a non-imperious manner, respecting the feelings of employees, it is quite possible to placate them, or even make them agree with you.

These are some of the best means for effective human capital management. However, some or all of these will not work in case an employee is a pessimistic moaner (who complains about everything every time) or a stubborn non-listener.

Though challenging, the handling of human assets is an interesting job, provided if one does it with passion and patience. IM

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