

Lore of LEADERSHIP

A Systems Approach to
Leading Yourself and Others

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INTRODUCTION

AN OVERVIEW OF SUCCESS AND SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP

He who knows much about others may be learned, but he who understands himself is more intelligent. He who controls others may be powerful, but he who mastered himself is mightier still. -- Lao-Tsu, *Tao Te Ching* (600 BCE)

Sit down before fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and whatever abyss nature leads, or you shall learn nothing.
-- T.H. Huxley

It is evident that the accumulated body of knowledge on a topic, as held by experts before us, allows us to see even deeper into the topic of leadership. By scouring through hundreds of white papers, article and books on leadership, every previous author's seminal work has become a "participant" in this book. And so the "Lore of Leadership" — the accumulated body of knowledge on a topic as held by a specific group — can be documented and passed on. The word "lore" and "law" have two very different meanings. Lore means, "the accumulated body of knowledge, learning, tradition and facts on a topic as held by a specific group" (Collins, 2008). Having humbly stood on the shoulders of hundreds of leadership authors, drawing on a century of passed on knowledge, the author has synthesised this accumulated body of knowledge — or lore — into a simple leadership system — *The Lore of Leadership*. The challenge in this book, however, was to take this "lore" and synthesise it into a unique model – the TEC Leadership System – that can be practically implemented (ref. Chap 4).

Leadership is necessary for our species to survive. Yet, with our current leadership, do we deserve to survive? This book is about success and successful leadership. As a marketing consultant and a business coach, I have, unfortunately, encountered countless people and companies crippled by their inability to practise what they preach. Consequently, witnessing these situations has motivated me to offer assistance by teaching people about the psychodynamic forces behind leading them and others toward the creation and implementation of strategic plans for growth and change. If we better understood what motivates people to act, leaders and individuals would be in a better position to lead others and themselves. At the heart of this is *neuroscience and systems thinking*. Cognitive neuroscience is the study of the synthesis between our *thoughts, feelings and behaviour*, and our *brain function*. As you will discover, it is this fusion of psychology with neuroscience that is transforming the way leadership should be viewed. Using a triangulation of neuroscience, leadership and business strategy (for both self-leadership and the leadership of others), is what makes this book unique.

In a decaying society, this manuscript gives me hope that a new breed of twenty-first century individuals will rise up; a generation who must embrace the challenge of taking an ethical responsibility for their lot in life, an in so doing will have eliminated themselves from being a burden

to society. Wary of the quality of leadership out there, celebrated leadership expert Warren Bennis believed, '*Our quality of life depends on the quality of our leaders. And since no one else seems to be volunteering, it's up to you.*'¹ With escalating political and economic disorder in the world, we have reached a pivotal tipping-point in our history. Power is fast shifting to the East, street riots abound, and economies are collapsing. Yet the standard advice on success is precarious, at best. We do not, for instance, become what we continually think, as we have been told and have read over and over again in self-help books, but rather what we continually *think, feel* and repeatedly *do*. When leading one's life, a company, or even a country, everything counts. The systemic whole is larger than the sum of the individual parts. To isolate only one individual part and call it the "solution" is not only dangerous; it is in a sense actually a crime of omission – a bit like reading for a half-baked medical degree during Medieval times that only required attention to one part of the body, and not the other.

Leadership, like life, is *systemic*: It is a system-wide, dynamic interplay between forces that govern human thought, emotion and behaviour. Our private lives are inextricably linked to our professional or business environments, which is why this book concentrates heavily on leading the self before we can convincingly lead another. This book is about the soft side of hard management and leadership.

The three-dimensional principles of art can be taught and analysed by using colour, line and form. Likewise, the diverse art of leadership rests on three pillars, if you will (ref. Chapter 4, TEC Leadership Model): Blending *trust (reputational capital)*; *emotional engagement (relational capital)*; and *competence (managerial capital)*. Leadership must also be results driven. According to Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968), '... one of the great tragedies of life is that men seldom bridge the gulf between practice and profession, between doing and saying.' The art of *leadership* is about energising *others* to achieve an exciting, *common* purpose. *Self-leadership* is energising *one* to achieve one's own exciting purpose. So, leadership starts with self-leadership, self-trust, and self-liking – personal mastery – before others will trust and like you.

Respect yourself and others will respect you. – Confucius (551 BCE – 479 BCE)

Through leadership, everything either improves or decays

This book delves deeply into the lives of successful people, companies, countries and leaders – exposing the unfashionable truth that there are no shortcuts to success. This book is therefore not for the gullible, quick-fix, mass-market. There are already too many fast-fix books available to perpetuate the myth that fast fixes work. Neither does this book cover wishful thinking, or hurried get-rich schemes. Rather, it is about a lifelong journey of success and personal integrity in all spheres of life. It is about the *best* way to lead – by *example*. It is about narrowing the gap between one's present state of mind, and the position one *wants* in future. It is about crafting *creative tension – calm energy* – to close that gap. As Dr. John C. Maxwell (2008), a leading authority on developing leadership skills, as

well as a world-renowned leadership speaker and author, often repeats Lee Robertson's words, '*Everything rises and falls on leadership*'.²

Money, we are so often told, should be what we seek to obtain in life. And yet, whilst financial prosperity is undeniably important, what is success without health, personal fulfilment, good relationships, peace, and happiness in a country or organisation? How do exceedingly rich people feel once they have destroyed their country or organisation? In a decaying world of enticingly seductive but soul-eroding quick-fixes, this book will introduce principles and insights that will guarantee movement toward true and fulfilling success.

There are guaranteed roads and irrefutable theories to achieve success, but they are *not* quick solutions. As counterintuitive as it may sound, the longer routes work because they are *journeys* that bring irreversible growth through knowledge and embedded experiences in the brain. Character. Scenarios of success and fortune are *not* common by speed or accident. By studying the evidence abounding in biographies, autobiographies, and the history of companies, we soon see that shortcuts, often launched with fanfare and hype, with high hopes and unrealistic expectations, inevitably do not bring results.

Yet it is often the rhetoric about quick fixes that catches us off guard, luring us to abandon all logic, and to avail ourselves of a plan or a strategy that has no real foundation for success. The belief in shortcuts electrifies greed in people, which leads to a "myopia of success", so to speak; and it is this allure that is designed to blur the reality and logic that will determine one's future. It is the initial excitement and hype that makes us so short-sighted. In this intoxicated state, we briefly see our hoped-for future through overly optimistic lenses. Ironically, finding shortcuts will take very long because, apart from pure *luck*, none exists.

So why are we so prone to hoping for the shortcut? Do we perhaps actually believe that there is a magic wand or a lamp with a genie at our disposal to reach our goals? Have we convinced us that most successful people stumbled upon a shortcut – by chance, by luck? We need to investigate why we are so willing to focus on the one-in-a-million stroke of luck of a gambler who wins the lottery, but not on the millions who put down their money and received none in return?

We seem so concerned about the environment, human rights, and the quality of life, yet by observation we are not in the post-materialistic period predicted for the 21st century. There seems to be a correlation between material ambition and stress-related deaths, whilst a new pandemic – a lack of genuine self-esteem – has now overtaken tooth decay as the most common disease on Earth. In the late Princess Diana's words, 'The biggest disease today is the feeling of being unwanted.'³ Further

confused by the mass media pushing us to upgrade to a more expensive “lifestyle” both in terms of possessions and the cosmetic “upgrading” of our bodies, we have unintentionally become enslaved to excessive debt repayment. This heavy borrowing, was in fact, what caused Europe and the USA to flounder in 2007, causing the Great Recession. Thus the hurried mantra of the twenty-first century has fast but wrongly become “*There must be a shortcut.*”

What do the quick-fix solutions promise us? The “promise” is that one can effortlessly manifest *anything* in the Universe that one desires, especially wealth. But why not use one’s logic and speak to self-made, wealthy people ourselves? Ask them how effortless it was. They did not quickly think themselves rich – they thought; planned; failed; and failed again. Yet they got up again and again. They often changed their plans radically, unlearned, altered their routes and agendas, but they persisted, and over many years finally made it. But do not be a fool and carry on regardless either. The American author, W. C. Fields (1880 – 1946), succinctly posited: ‘If at first you don’t succeed, try, try and try again. Then quit. There’s no use in being a damn fool about it.’ No one can succeed at everything in life.

Because of greed, insecurity and a lack of responsibility, it is easy to lull the needy masses into a false sense of security with placebos and quick fixes. By avoiding logic, people easily convince them that shortcuts *do* exist. Even in the face of empirical data, people fail to process why struggling clairvoyants and psychics do not regularly win the lottery. So when their first shortcut (Plan A) is unsuccessful, then another shortcut (Plan B) kicks in. This dangerous, yet addictive and intoxicating approach to gambling with one’s life, company or country only fuels another (and possible unethical) shortcut (Plan C), again built on quicksand, and destined to fail.

The new mindset that focuses on success and ‘get very rich very quickly’ clearly played an instrumental role in the 2009 - 2012 global economic crisis and the unprecedented acts of corruption to make money without work, toil, or risk. A case in point was the mindless rush to become property tycoons overnight in Dubai. Caught in the rush of the hype of “great-destination” marketing, few investors paused to consider that Dubai World was being built on “synthetic assets”. Unlike a gold rush, which is built on solid currency, Dubai World was built on hope and slick talk. Dubai’s beaches are too hot to enjoy, yet an artificial beach house built on an artificial island was selling at a higher price than a good solid home on a hospitable beach. And so Dubai’s inflated economy burst like a bubble in December 2009, leaving investors who took irrational decisions to rationalise what had happened to their money. The lesson is that, whilst it seems easy to fool people with hope of quick riches, ethics and lasting money must be based on a solid commodity, not on pure speculation so typical of, for instance, pyramid schemes. *You cannot create something out of nothing!* Yet so often it seems that when “everyone is doing it”, this “social proof” makes it right. Right? Loaded with

competencies (and the concept of lifelong learning), great leaders are not only *technically* thoroughly qualified for the task at hand, but have tremendous *integrity* too, without which most lives, families, organisations and countries are doomed.

As the world's greed to find instant success speeds up, I'm compelled to rather share with you a systemic framework for long-term success. Rather start the journey on the longer but proven highroad to success now. Having had the privilege of working with thousands of successful individuals and companies as a business consultant, coach and trainer, I can say with certainty that there are *no* quick-fix solutions. After decades of studying the brain science behind peak performance, the celebrated psychiatrist Edward Hallowell suggests, '*You can't sprint to peak performance.*'⁴ What achievers who are fulfilled do, is neither mystical nor difficult to understand. However, they are often so passionately preoccupied with their pursuits that they sometimes battle to articulate which principles underlie their successes. But why do we set ourselves up for "quick-fix" disappointments when we can virtually be guaranteed success by using tried and proven methods? The age-old answers (and a few new ones) lie in this book.

What is Success?

It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society.

-- Jiddu Krishnamurti (1895 – 1986)

What is "success"? Success is a completely personal issue, to the point that it may even be a negative concept to some. This is because success is often associated with the stereotypical Western gauge of prosperity – wealth, power, rank and fame. Carl Gustav Jung (1875 – 1961; Swiss psychiatrist; influential thinker and the founder of analytical psychology) said the following about success: '*The shoe that fits one person pinches another; there is no recipe for living that suits all cases*'. Leaders should therefore appreciate that personal success can be so different to the point that one person's achievement is another's poison.

Motivational speaker and famous American author, Earl Nightingale (1921 – 1989; American motivational speaker and author, known as the "Dean of Personal Development" and considered the ultimate success expert) defined success as, '... a progressive realisation of a *worthy-ideal*'.⁵ But because only five percent of people know what their "worthy-ideal" is, said Nightingale, it is those same goal-orientated five percent of people who feel motivated and successful. They are the inspired few. How would you know if you had reached "it", if you did not know what "it" was in the first place? This worthy-ideal is key to reaching one's ideal self-worth or self-image – the best platform from which to inspirationally lead others. John Maxwell states, 'Success is ... knowing your purpose

in life, growing to reach your maximum potential and sowing seeds that benefit others.’⁶ This is a great definition of success because it highlights that our journey to success should uplift others along the way.

It is important to define success because, for us to *know when* we are successful, we must first determine what our “worthy-ideal” is. What do we value? A schoolteacher and a mother, for example, are both successful, *if* that is what they had intended to accomplish. Success is certainly not always what society expects us to achieve. An enlightened, high-powered, but physically and spiritually sick lawyer, may find more meaning and value in becoming a spiritual leader. That may be his personal and deliberate worthy-ideal. Yet across town, to feed his family, an equally free-thinking but poverty-stricken preacher may have deliberately decided to become a lawyer to provide for his family. Every person has his or her own “worthy-ideal” for which to strive. A struggling single parent may have ‘seemingly’ materialistic ideals for himself, whereas an affluent, established doctor might have more altruistic goals. Each person is correct in wanting to achieve his or her particular and personal worthy-ideals, irrespective of what someone wearing another shoe may think.

However, a leader has a double responsibility for success in that, whilst he must strive for personal success (his values), he must also manage others responsibly and guide them to success (their values), as well. Leaders can motivate and influence the group context (ref. TEC Leadership model in Chap 4). Though when we consider how difficult it is to lead ourselves, then we will appreciate how difficult it is to lead others. It is not sufficient that leaders know themselves well, but vital, too, that they know their team members’ psyche. But truly, before he can lead others, he must manage himself. Success, then, must first be defined at the most personal level. And whilst determining a worthy-ideal is a starting point, success is not a single concept, but a construct of many concepts. Nor is success static; rather, it becomes necessary to redefine the definitions of success as we grow and develop.

Success is a moving target.

-- Shawn Achor, Author, CEO of *Good Think*, (2012)

So, if you are a leader or a manager, before you embark on the journey of leading others, pause and start thinking about what your personal “worthy-ideal” is. What do you value the most?

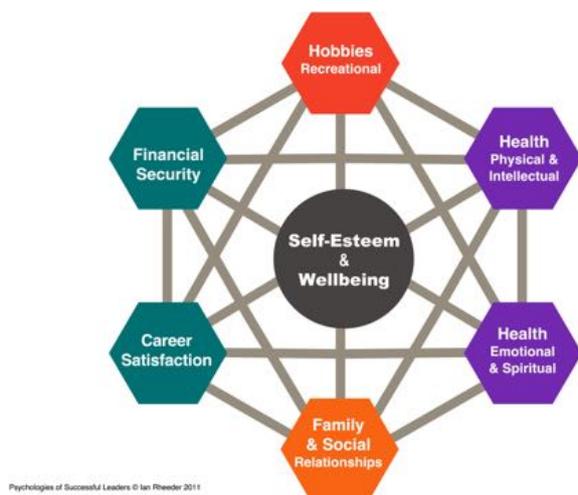


Figure 1.1: Virtuous Circle and Cycle of Balanced Goals for Self-esteem and Wellbeing

Balanced goals for wellbeing and self-esteem

Achieving self-esteem and wellbeing is an in-depth subject that we cover in Chapter 3 and 6. Citing massive global studies across different cultures, scientists Dr. Tom Rath and Dr. James K. Harter singled out the five most important elements: *career, social, financial, community* and your *physical* wellbeing. They found that only 7 percent of the world’s population were “thriving” by achieving high scores in all five of these areas. They singled out that making short-term *sacrifices* was crucial to long-term wellbeing.

If I had to summarise all the scientific literature on the causes of human happiness in one word, that word would be “social.” We are by far the most social species on Earth.

-- Daniel Gilbert, author of *Stumbling on Happiness* and Harvard psychology professor, (2012)⁷

However, studying this virtuous circle and cycle of wellbeing and self-esteem (ref. Fig 1.1 above), some areas, like career and finance, overlap heavily, but should be tackled separately. You may, for example, love your career but have financial stress, which is why financial goals should be considered independently. The secret is to set balanced goals in all six areas of one’s wellbeing. We will take an in depth look at these areas later (ref. Chapter 5: *Thinking and Goal Setting*). American author, salesman and motivational speaker, Zig Ziglar (1926 –) rightfully suggested that, ‘... being successful means having a balance of success stories across the many areas of your life. You can't truly be considered successful in your business life if your home life is in shambles.’

It is important to note that these six goals areas generate the inner-circle – the centre of wellbeing – a *healthy self-esteem*. Psychologist and pioneer in the field of self-esteem, Dr. Nathaniel Branden says, “Self-esteem is a necessary condition of wellbeing.”⁸ With each new study, psychologists are

discovering that every aspect of our lives – our success, creativity, relationships, even our love lives – all depend upon that deepest part of ourselves, our self-image of worthiness in relation to others. From what we choose to study, to career choice – our self-esteem is what guides us every day. Without a solid sense of worth, we would be unable to take sizeable risks. Low self-esteem will corrode our leadership abilities, relationships and our sense of wellbeing.

Whilst the definition of success is quite personal, and worthy-ideals vary from person to person, there are two components that are critical to success; to achieving that chosen worthy-ideal:

1. Focus (i.e. a to-do list, the cross-hairs of a telescopic sight); and
2. Energy (i.e. to do it, a lot of lead behind the bullet)

Focus or energy — which is more critical?

Leadership is about raising one's *energy* and then raising the group's energy. Engagement of disengagement. Motivated or demotivated. Clawson (2008) like so many other behavioural experts realised that low energy and high energy is infectious. Clawson also posits that motivation is energy, and thus leadership is about managing energy.²¹

In their studies on the effectiveness of managers, Professors Heike Bruch and Samantha Ghoshal found that only ten per cent of managers and leaders are effective in the workplace.⁹ They discovered that these “purposeful” executives had both the necessary ingredients to be effective, namely *focus* and *energy*. A well focussed telescopic sight and a lot of lead behind the bullet.

The softminded person always wants to freeze the moment and hold life in the gripping yoke of sameness. -- Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968), American civil rights leader, Nobel Peace Prize winner

But too many people overrate the value of *focus*. Even without focus, it is through the exploration of “energised action” that we will naturally find, and then either continue to do or eliminate, what works and what does not. In the same year (2010) Sandra Bullock won a Golden Raspberry for the worst actress, and the following day received an Oscar for the best actress. She was not thinking about acting (*being*), she *was* acting (becoming). Peter Drucker, author of 39 books on management, put his message across most persuasively: ‘*You can either take action or you can hang back and hope for a miracle. Miracles are great, but they are so unpredictable*’. By combining focus with energised action, we are guaranteed results. Drucker says that ‘... effectiveness is, after all, not a ‘subject’, but self-discipline’. The route to success is, of course, a combination of both focus *and* energy – but when forced to choose only one, many people choose just “focus” as their best weapon. However, sloth, or

inactivity, *not* a lack of vision, is one of the seven deadly sins. Hence, after all is said and done, action counts the most. It's important to remind ourselves that, "Leadership is all about results."¹⁰ *Even blindfolded, it is possible to pin the donkey's tail or throw a bull's eye. Working tirelessly, a pool-cleaner who is blind, will eventually cover the surface of the entire pool.*

Michael E. Porter, leading strategist and professor at the Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness at the Harvard Business School, states that "action steps" (a to-do list) are the bridges between strategy and implementation.¹¹ That is to say, *activities* are the secret bridges between a plan in one's head and the desired results. It is these missing steps of *action* that shed light on why the majority of great plans are so very seldom successful. Even an average plan implemented well, is far better than a brilliant, strategic plan left on the top shelf. Writing a plan does not make a leader any more effective than a racing driver standing in the pit of the Grand Prix. We *must* climb into the driver's seat and *do* something. Richard Tanner Pascale and Jerry Sternin, well known for their work on transformational change, hammer on this fact: '*People are much more likely to act their way into a new way of thinking than to think their way into a new way of acting*'.¹²

With the progression of cognitive neuroscience, we are getting much closer to understanding behavioural psychology. In neurology, advanced brain scanners have been developed to scan the entire brain. The consequences of this technology or science [henceforth referred to as "neuroscience"], has not only caught up with the relatively undiscovered "science" of psychology, but neuroscience is in the process of fast evolving psychology, and illuminating startling new concepts, whilst also dispelling myths and false claims.

Work and Hard Work

If people only knew how hard I work to gain my mastery, it wouldn't seem so wonderful at all. -- Michelangelo (1475 – 1564); Renaissance painter, sculptor, architect, poet and engineer

We often know what works, but we choose not to do it. If you are not yet convinced, let us look at surveys revealing how managers and CEOs actually destroy firms by means of inaction and flawed strategy:

- A survey by *The Economist* (2004) of 276 top operations executives from large North-American firms discovered that 57 per cent were unsuccessful at the *execution*¹³ of strategy.

- A study of 275 managers cited that ability of a firm to *execute* strategy was far more important than the strategic plan of the firm.¹⁴
- Even more disconcerting was a cover story in *Fortune* magazine, namely, *Why CEOs Fail*, in which it was determined that CEOs wrongly believed that their failures were due to a poor strategy whereas, in reality, 70 per cent of the CEOs just did *not get the strategy implemented*.¹⁵
- Walter Kiechel, in the article that he wrote for *Fortune* – *Corporate Strategists under Fire* – estimated that fewer than 10 per cent of strategies implemented were actually *effectively* implemented.
- Research undertaken in 2004 suggested that 90 per cent of all company strategies fail, and 95 per cent of employees admitted that they did not understand the strategy of their company. So, the next major blunder after not implementing strategy, is a fuzzy and misguided strategy, when people do not know why, how or where to start implementing the strategy.¹⁶
- In the book titled *Predictable Results in Unpredictable Times* (2009), written by Stephen Covey, Bob Whitman and Breck England, it is proved that only 15% of the 150 000 employees interviewed could list the main goals of their companies.
- A Gartner survey revealed that only 26 per cent of employees had aligned themselves to the goals of the company, but disturbingly, 19 per cent were actively working against the desires of their leaders! In another survey 30 percent will resist change programmes and even deliberately attempt to make the initiative fail.¹⁷

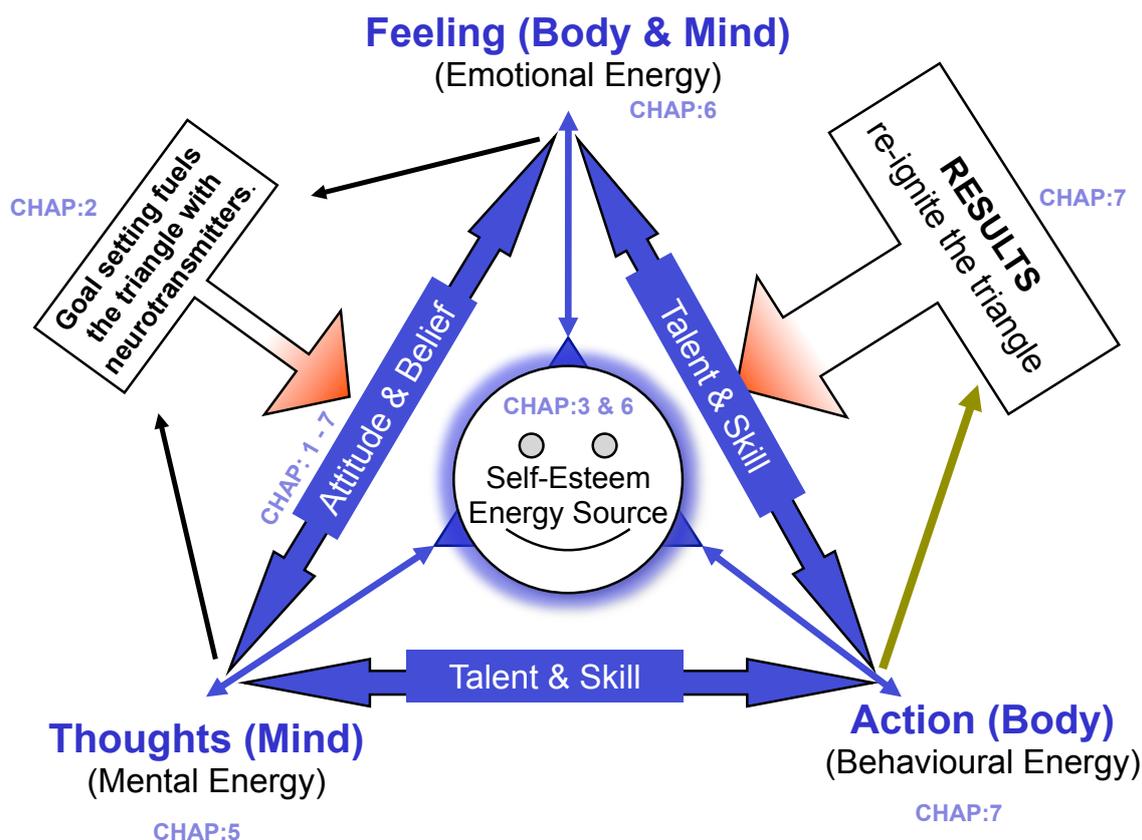


Figure 1.2: Golden Triangle of Systemic Energy

The diagram above – The Golden Triangle of Systemic Energy – is a *systemic model* (*all parts are connected*), which assists in explaining how to raise our different energy levels. Part One of this book (Chapters 1 to 4) is an introduction to the psychodynamics and neuroscience of these building blocks of successful leadership. Part Two (Chapters 5 to 7) deals with *achieving success*. As we see in the above diagram, at the heart of the way one *thinks, feels* and *acts*, is the central secret: one's *self-esteem*. Self-esteem, self-worth, or self-regard is at the centre of one's energy system, because it *constantly* affects one's entire body and mind with either a toxic or a constructive force-field, which in turn will affect every future thought, feeling and action. One's thoughts, feelings and actions, then determine the inner part of the golden triangle – one's self-esteem, emotional intelligence and wellbeing.

TALENT AND HARD WORK

Talent is a dreadfully cheap commodity, cheaper than table salt. What separates the talented individual from the successful one is a lot of hard work and study. -- Stephen King

We all naturally think, feel and behave differently. This is our talent and personality. Reaching our potential requires applying our natural talents; and the best part is everyone has great hidden talents. Therefore, uncovering our most dominant talents is one of life's greatest gifts. There are many ways to make money, but to be truly successful at certain disciplines such as dancing, music, art, ball sports, accountancy, arithmetic, or law, requires a certain depth of innate talent. It's a complete myth that with the right amount of desire anyone can get through medical school. For example, there are golfers who have put in 50 000 hours of proper practice but still cannot break an 18 handicap; yet others, with relatively little effort, are scratch golfers. Tiger Woods demonstrated his core talent at the age of two, and was a scratch golfer at age thirteen. Others *never* excel at golf. Our dominant talents are often spotted by parents, teachers, coaches, friends, and even psychometric tests. Whilst these opinions and tests are useful, one cannot solely rely on them for direction. We should rather experiment with sports, hobbies, and various other interests, as we will be astounded at where our true potential, passion and talents lie.

There is no royal road; you've got to work a good deal harder than most people want to work. -- Charles E. Wilson (1886 – 1972; CEO of General Motors who served President Truman as Head of the Office of Defense Mobilization).

And it is also at this point where many New Age books and much advice are rendered useless – they do *not* emphasise how much *talent, energy, strategic planning, skills development, time management, determination, self-discipline, persistence, courage, perfect timing, and just plain old hard work* are required to achieve personal and organisational goals. Thomas Edison (1847 – 1931), one of the most prolific inventors of practical electrical devices in history who often worked 40 hours without sleep, was certainly no fool when he said, 'Genius is 1 per cent inspiration and 99 per cent perspiration'. Legendary golfer, Gary Player, put it this way: 'The harder you practice, the luckier you get'. When it comes to achieving success, *if you think that discipline is painful in the beginning, try regret for the rest of your life.*

Let us *conquer* mediocrity and discover mastery. Malcolm Gladwell's study of successful people in his book titled *Outliers*, found that experts in their fields, even child prodigies such as Mozart, spent

10 000 hours honing their talent and skills before they became truly successful. ‘Achievement is talent plus persistent preparation’, says Gladwell.¹⁸ He further quotes neurologist Daniel Levitin as saying: ‘In study after study of composers, basketball players, fiction writers, ice skaters, concert pianists, chess players, master criminals, and what have you, this number [10 000 hours] comes up again and again. But no one has yet found a case in which true world class expertise was accomplished in less time. It seems that it takes the brain this long to assimilate all that it needs to know to achieve true mastery.’¹⁹ *As they say, if you want to live like a king, you may first have to work like a slave.*

But be careful. The saying “Practice makes perfect” is not necessarily entirely correct: Thousands of hours of suspect practice do *not* make for perfection. Tiger Woods, a brilliant golfer, had to unlearn an improper swing and re-practise the correct swing before reaching his full potential. A better saying would be, ‘*Proper practice makes perfect*’. Albert Einstein (1879 – 1955; German-born American physicist who won the Nobel Prize for Science in 1921), remarked that insanity is ‘... doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results’. If you want different results, you probably need to start practising properly.

No matter how hard we try, *not* everyone can become a scratch golfer or an opera singer. *Life is too short, in any event, to mess around in one’s fragile zone of weaknesses.* We all have a myriad of weaknesses. And, true, you cannot simply become anything that you make up your mind to be. That is the very essence of being human: We all have *different* fingerprints and talents. Diversity is the one thing that we all have in common, but we do not all share the same strengths. *The desert is the date palm’s paradise, but a peach tree’s hell.* We need to align our inner strength zone with the appropriate outer zone. Believing that you can become *anything* you choose, is merely setting yourself up for failure, but by initially presupposing that you *can* do anything, is a great premise to discover your true potential, and that is why this inaccurate yet seductive advice, “... you can become anything that you choose” is still out there. In the same vein, world renowned psychiatrist Edward Hallowell warns, ‘Taken by itself, “Follow your dream” could be the most dangerous advice ever given.... “Follow your dream” is good advice, but, unexamined, *it can destroy lives.*’²⁰

People can’t be anybody they want to be, but they can be a lot more of who they already are.
-- Tom Raath, Gallup global practice leader, (2012)

We now know that there are many forces that collectively motivate us to act, and to offer the reader a fuller understanding of these, I have borrowed heavily from many fields. No single author can claim to have the perfect formula, and neither will I. But I do hope that my posited framework, exploration and research will overturn some commonly held mis-beliefs and misconceptions – and motivate you to *think, feel and act.*

As you discover a new array of forces that lead to success and successful leadership, I can assure you that your thoughts and feelings on achieving fulfilment and success, will be changed for the better, for life, rather than merely in the short-term. So, if you truly want to learn and invest in a richer life, here's to really advancing your success and your organisation. This is your opportunity. Open the curtain, strike up your band – and seize the day!

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