



WHITE PAPER

Synergistic Resilient Leadership for High Performance Results A New Paradigm for Leadership

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***Synergy manifests in an environment where
wisdom, trust, collaboration, synchronicity and
creative inquiry form the foundation for transcendence.***

Executive Summary

Synergistic Leadership represents a new paradigm - fusing timeless wisdom with modern science to catalyze breakthrough results. It leverages compatibility, trust and shared vision to unlock collaborative power greater than the sum of individual parts. Master architects of human potential, Synergistic Leaders align goals and galvanize innovation across intricate systems.

At its core, Synergistic Leadership recognizes organizational relationships as an interplay of energies to be optimized, not merely resources to be exploited. Key principles include:

- *Four Alignments* – Strategic Vision, Culture of Collaboration, Operational Excellence and Dynamic Realignment - channel focus and flow. A nobly inspiring Strategic Vision sets the direction; a Culture of Trust fuels engagement and creativity; Excellence in Operations translates vision into reality; continuous Realignment sustains fluid adaptation. Synergy manifests where differential contributors are orchestrated & integrated to harmonize around transcendent goals.
- *Compatible Differences*: Varied mindsets and skill sets hold creative tension. Leaders integrate diverse strengths rather than impose conformity.
- *Trust-Building*: Trust doubles innovation, triples implementation speed and halves wasted efforts. Eight principles - Fairness, Accountability, Respect, Truth, Honor, Ethics, Safety and Transparency - cultivate authentic trust.
- *Shared Vision*: A strategically galvanizing and morally uplifting vision focuses team energy. Without vision, activities default to politics and in-fighting.
- *Commitment to Mutual Benefit*: Wise leaders seek "win more-lose less" solutions benefiting the greatest number without harm. This requires resisting self-interest and ego.
- *Sharing Ideas and Resources*: Trusted teams share imaginations, insights and assets to solve problems and uplift humanity. Hoarding constricts, sharing expands possibility.
- *Value Creation & Maximization*: Focusing human energy on creating value that gives meaning and purpose to work, and maximization of wealth for all stakeholders.
- *Conflict Transcendence*: Skilled Synergistic Leaders slow escalations, balance egos and wisdom, show empathy, ask insightful questions, remain flexible, consider mediation, compromise if needed, and focus on forgiveness.
- *Turning Breakdowns into Breakthroughs*: When unavoidable failures occur, synergistic teams reflect, realign thinking, and spur creativity to derive lessons. Blame games undermine morale.

Guided by wisdom, not bravado, and founded on trust, Synergistic Leaders evoke high-performance collaboration even amidst adversity. They architect environments allowing ordinary people to achieve extraordinary outcomes together. Destiny summons these architects of human potential.

Qualities of the Collaborative Leader

The Synergistic Leader

Seeks First to:

- Unite, Not Smite
- Guide, Not Divide
- Inspire, Not Open Fire
- Elevate, Not Denigrate
- Embrace, Not Disgrace
- Enlighten, Not Frighten
- Enthuse, Not Confuse
- Engage, Not Enrage
- Align, Not Malign
- Integrate, Not Segregate
- Lift, Not Rift
- Trust, Not Disgust
- Learn, Not Spurn
- Innovate, Not Desecrate
- Empower, Not Overpower
- Create, Not Hate
- Explore, Not Deplore
- Resolve, Not Devolve
- Demonstrate, Not Castigate
- Understand, Not Reprimand
- Reclaim, Not Blame
- Use Differences as Engines of Innovation,
Not Destruction



Synergistic Leadership for High Performance Results

The purpose of this White Paper Series is to outline a New Paradigm for Leadership Development as a core element of the *Game Changer Strategy of Breakthrough Collaborative Excellence* – a new, next generation, evolutionary form of leadership – bold and powerful, empirically based *leadership system*.

Synergistic Leadership

– Guided by Wisdom – Aimed at Breakthroughs –

Synergistic Leadership engenders the deep wisdom of the ages, intertwined with the most current evidentiary findings on real-world effectiveness for high performance resulting in *Value Creation* and *Competitive Advantage*. Its origin comes from years of *study & usage* of the factors that create synergy:

- **Case Studies:** the compilation of hundreds of case studies where synergy manifested to produce extraordinary results, in business, technology, and complex projects.
- **Testing:** testing of over one thousand best practices in the real world of business, alliances, mergers, and innovation teams to determine effectiveness,
- **Integration of Science & Technology Analytics:** embracing insights from psychology, human behavior, organization development, neuro-science, bio-economic evolutionary science, breakthrough analytics from science & technology, and sports champions.

Architecture of Synergy

The first breakthrough to be delivered to you, the leader of the future is the revolutionary notion that Synergy does not happen solely by chance – it can be designed: there is a profound “Architecture of Synergy” that can learned, used, adapted, and amplified to produce breakthrough results.

Synergistic Leadership is not focused strictly on the Leader -- it’s about getting teams to align and create together, getting differences to become additive, to join collaboratively in an organizational “symphony” integrating harmony, melody, rhythm, beat, counter-point -- each individual’s special personal nature – so that their “instruments” can make real music together, not just a lot of disparate noise.

Synergy is “Aligned Energy that Creates More than its Component Parts

Wisdom is knowledge organized into meaningful patterns, to take the right actions at the right time, bringing out the best in people, while controlled by disciplined emotions.

It’s about Inspiration, Vision of a Noble Cause, Innovation, and building a System of Trust that unleashes and focuses human energy.

*The Revelation about Synergy is that it is, in the final analysis, about “Aligned Energy.”
The only way to align energy to build upon a powerful Architecture of Collaboration.*

When a leader understands how to align differentiated skills, thinking, and the driving forces of human behavior, then the potential of achieving a “Symphony of Synergies” comes within reach. Great leadership stems from within. Leading others starts with leading oneself effectively first by working on their own character, emotional maturity, integrity and then modeling the way.

Mastery as Architects

The pressing challenges of today's rapidly changing business landscape compel modern leaders to expand their capabilities. With rising complexity, accelerating innovation, and heightened uncertainty, traditional leadership approaches no longer suffice. To steer organizations effectively, leaders must become *collaborative systems architects* - adept at fusing cross-functional teams, coordinating networks, and integrating technical and human capabilities.

Architecture makes the invisible visible. Leaders versed in systems architecture can discern unseen connections, interactions, and interdependencies. They comprehend how diverse components synergistically combine into a greater whole. This lucidity is indispensable when coordinating intricate networks of alliances, steering complex multi-partner projects, or realigning far-flung global organizations. Architectural acumen illuminates the obscurities.

Where others perceive disarray, the architect finds order, structuring the intuitive, translating ambiguity into organized action. Frameworks parse puzzles into solvable components; methodologies channel abstract vision into concrete outcomes. Principles impose coherence on chaos. For visionaries overwhelmed by dizzying change and complexity, architecture is a grounded path to possibility.

Architecture displays complexity holistically. Leaders able to visualize entire systems grasp intricacies at a glance that bewilder tactical thinkers. Architectural blueprints provide panoramic perspectives; while submergence in subsets yields tunnel vision. With sweeping comprehension of the interwoven parts, architects maneuver initiatives, technologies, and equities into fluid syncopation. The systems perspective is equally expansive and incisive.

Synergy flourishes in alignments that architecture enables. Leaders enveloped in the entire orchestration optimize the score; those focused on solitary notes risk arrhythmic cacophony. Only architects conducting every section can elicit the masterpiece where convergent contributions resonate in wondrous synchronicity. Though unseen, architecture is the exquisite essence binding scatterings into symphony. A good architecture should be simplicity on the far side of complexity.

Through architecture, the fuzzy crystallizes into the flexible but firm. Leaders grounded in solid collaborative architecture navigate fluid disruptions with aplomb while others flounder. Shifting uncertainties reveal possibilities to the attuned architect; inflexible constructs crumble. Adaptive architecture liberates rather than constrains, channeling forces of change into productive innovation. Leaders fluid in these dynamics guide the perpetual flow.

The architect's palette empowers "paint-by-number" managers to become creative masters. The foundational elements of architecture - elegant frameworks, straightforward principles, fluid methodologies and relational interconnectivities - transform complex systems from bewildering labyrinths into harmonized and synchronized performances. Ordinary people accomplish extraordinary outcomes when leaders share this architectural vision.

All too often leaders run their organizations aground with reorganizations that never produce better results because the elements of synergy such as trust-building, cross-functional integration, and value creation are missing.

Synergistic Resilient Leadership – Guided by Wisdom – Aimed at Breakthroughs

The world urgently requires these systemic restructurings only collaborative architects can manifest. Their blueprints, while revolutionary, reflect universal truths. Leaders must learn this architecture not only for competitive necessity but as moral imperative. Upon this architecture we innovate cures for disease, balance human welfare with environmental limits, elevate human dignity, and link global citizens in bonds of trust. Leadership bereft of sweeping architectural insight end up building for stagnation, internal conflict, resistance to change and obsolescence; but with architecture as ally, leaders design agile organizations, interlinked to create value and massive competitive advantage.

The future demands architects and architecture. Complex challenges require sophisticated solutions. Leaders must set aside the superficial and reactive to focus on integrated and systemic transformation. No single force propels more powerful, sustainable change than leaders embracing their higher calling as Value Creation Architects.

The time has come to architect collaborative systems excellence into the very cultural DNA of our institutions, communities, nations and planet. The opportunity is now; the acclaim awaits exemplars with vision to architect a greater world. Destiny summons architects. Dare you heed the call?

Synergy by Design

Very seldom does synergy happen by accident. First, it manifests because people believe it is possible; they become committed to synergy actually occurring, then, optimally, designing a methodology to make it a self-fulfilling prophesy. To those leaders who think multi-dimensionally, the world is a series of opportunities to build synergistic relationships. This work is not just a business task, but a passionate devotion with its roots solidly set in the desire for "collaborative excellence" to produce breakthroughs.

The mission of a leader as architect is to transcend divergent points of view, thus co-generating bold new futures where differences become the ever-renewable source of creative energy, the essence of innovation, the dynamism of new possibilities. This is a noble endeavor -- designing the synergy of compatible differences. Daily we must use honor and integrity to build the trust that is essential to all our relationships.

Held within the seed of the architecture of collaboration is the power to let us bring a new insight, a new pathway, a new hope, a new spirit, and a new power to our world.

Each day, when we create a synergistic relationships, collaborative innovation evolves. We are contributing to the creation of that higher order of experience and action that makes our workplace a better place to live. Daily we are honing the skills and transmitting the abilities and multiplying the possibilities to spawn a better world around us.

As we expand our system design capabilities in teams, organizations, projects, and alliances, we can use these proficiencies in a multitude of applications – better business, better government, better teams, better families, and better communities. In the large span of things, tep by step, relationship by relationship, we will have created a better world for all of us.

"The best way to predict our future us to create it."

-- Peter Drucker

The Four Alignments

The Synergistic Leader as *master architect*, doing four things consistently well:

- 1. STRATEGIC VISION:** *Set a powerful/noble vision that inspires, and chart an innovative strategy that generates a significant advantage over the ordinary.*
- 2. CULTURE OF TRUST:** *Create trust and organizational values that channels human energy and unleashes co-creativity, which is focused towards the strategic vision and drives out fear.*
- 3. OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE:** *Establish coherent system of processes, measures, and rewards systems that produce concrete results that align with the work force's quest for meaning.*
- 4. DYNAMIC REALIGNMENT:** *Rapid readjustment, agility, and collaborative innovation when circumstances change*

With the widespread application of the principles of synergy, coupled with the architectures of collaboration, in the future, capitalism (which is often hijacked by the powers of fear and greed), has the potential to shift to a new order of value creation, producing far greater prosperity for people around the globe. By enshrining the four alignments into the organization's structure and metrics, leadership succession becomes far less disruptive as the four alignments are universal across the passage of time. Metrics are essential in each of the four alignments to track progress, and ensure organizational health.

Mastering Four Dimensional Alignments

A wise, Synergistic Leader recognizes that harvesting collective potential requires viewing leadership as an integrated *socio-economic-technical system*, not just amassing skills or traits. Four key alignments must fuse for organizations to sustainably unleash innovation solving complex problems. Misalignment among these dimensions slows or even reverses progress. Savvy leaders evolve culturally uplifting environments, strategically channel vision into value, operationally execute with excellence, and dynamically adapt over time to drive breakthroughs benefiting all.

1. *Strategic Alignment* sets direction to realize value and advantage. It requires judgment: assessing complex contexts and pivotal forces determining outcomes. Wise leaders frame inspiring visions linked to pragmatic pathways overcoming inertia. They convene diversity to synthesize emergent possibilities with social conscience guardrails. Strategy sustains those led.
2. *Cultural Alignment* centers on earning trust and establishing the right values to liberate human energies. Wise leaders thoughtfully shape conditions allowing staff to align efforts. They role model care, accountability and moral purpose. By upholding ethics and psychological safety facilitating risk-taking, the wise shepherd talent while building resilience to adversity through shared mission. (see **Error! Reference source not found.** below)
3. *Operational Alignment* actualizes strategy through accountability, execution and celebration of milestones advancing institutional purpose. No vision energizes unless made tangible in stages. Wise leaders are savvy to align strategy and culture with hard metrics, escaping complacency. They manage the whole, not just the pieces; across functions, not siloes. Outcomes prove priorities' integrity.

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4. *Dynamic Alignment* replenishes relevance by responsibly stewarding resources. Wise leaders guide constantly evolving ecosystems, discerning when to shift and stabilize, grasping unseen interdependencies. With one eye on urgent crises and the other on the horizon, these helmsmen steer between progress' risks and opportunities with moral compass intact. They uphold light to illuminate the next bend in civilization's winding ascent.

Through these four aligned dimensions progress multiplies and amplifies. But fracture one, the system struggles. Such is the razor's edge. Unlike *transactional* deal-making leaders playing zero-sum games, the Synergistic Leader thinks and conceives widely about *possibility*, not finitely, but with enlightened realism – seeking the corners of this world yet unexplored, all boats rising in with the rising tides. With the buoyance of imagination and inspiration, the wise architect builds beyond self, brick by brick manifesting evolving monuments to dignity's advancement and meaning's fulfillment. The whole transcends any single stone so ennobled.

Such is the four-fold blueprint the Synergistic Leader whose wisdom transcends intuition, translates into roadmaps then journeys. The wisdom-odyssey requires lifelong pursuit of mastery at inner, inter, and extra-personal levels simultaneously. High purpose thus marries bold skill. With soul rightly cultivated, the noble yield is a legacy rooted in elevating human potential, then multiplying it organizationally. The harvest nourishes the next generation of progress.

Finding Meaning & Purpose in Work

Everyone in life wants to know that what they do makes a difference.

The quest for meaning and purpose is deep on the minds of modern man, and the search for answers is of primary importance to a leader seeking to generate trust, performance, and profitability.

To understand the strength of this quest, just look at the sales book, *The Purpose Driven Life*¹ which sold 25 million copies in the first five years after publication, making it one of the most published non-fiction books in history.

Holocaust survivor, Viktor Frankl's landmark book, *Man's Search for Meaning* sold over 16 million copies.² Frankl, in his view of meaning and purpose, advocated that the book was:

“an expression of the misery of our time: if hundreds of thousands of people reach out for a book whose very title promises to deal with the question of meaning to life, it must be a question that burns under their fingernails....

“Life holds a potential meaning under any conditions, even the most miserable ones ... therefore don't aim at success – the more you aim at it and make it a target, the more you're going to miss it.

Failure to make clear the nature and meaning of the thing being produced is one of the surest causes of dullness and failure to learn. – Walt Disney

¹ Warren, Rick; *The Purpose Driven Life*; Zondervan, 2002

²Frankl, Viktor; *Man's Search for Meaning*, Pocket Books, 1946-1984, and according to a Library of Congress survey is considered to be one of the ten most influential books in the United States reported by Fein, Barbara, Book Notes, New York Times, Nov 20, 1991(over 2,000 respondents to a Book of the Month poll)

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“For success, like happiness, cannot be pursued; it must ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side-effect of one’s personal dedication to a cause greater than oneself ... Happiness must happen, and the same holds for success; you have to let it happen by not caring about it.... Listen to what your conscience commands you to do and go on to carry it out to the best of your knowledge. Then you will live to see it in the long run.”³

Why Meaning & Purpose is So Important

With meaning and purpose, work fulfills important needs and drives in the individual. It answers every employee’s deepest questions:

- Do I have some significance?
- Am I making some kind of difference in the world?
- Am I doing something my conscience says is important?
- Am I contributing to the greater good?
- Can I fulfill my obligations and desires to be a useful, productive, honest, economically sufficient, and respected person?

The power of meaning and purpose in life was the subject of a 2010 study of 1675 adults aged 25-74 by Metropolitan Life based on the work of Richard Leider. The study was aimed at determining the importance of meaning and purpose and to understand if people in their 20s, 30s, and early 40s have the same priorities 45- to 74-year-olds. The study’s conclusions are extremely revealing regarding the importance of something beyond money:

- A sense of purpose is integral to leading a “good life” which is defined as having financial freedom ... being mentally and physically healthy ...creating deep relationships and a sense of purpose, and feeling like you belong.
- People who believe they have purpose in their lives are more likely to report being happy.
- Meaning, closely associated with the importance of family and friends, remains the primary component of the good life for all age groups, despite instability in financial and other aspects of their life.
- Older people (age 45–74) focus more on meaning-laden activities like spending more time on helping others and making their community a comfortable place to be than younger people; while younger cohorts plan to spend more time on activities related to generating, managing, and accumulating money.
- Purpose continues to be a major differentiator between those living the good life and those who aren’t living the good life. Over eight in 10 (82%) of those who feel their lives have purpose are living the good life compared to 35% who are not living the good life.⁴

The implications of meaning and purpose on business and the creation of deep trust should be very evident. If a leader is to be highly trusted in an organization, she must deliver to those working diligently at their jobs something more than money. Work is the place where people spend the majority of their lives. Work can be ennui, drudgery and travail, or enlivening, explorative, and connected to the deepest

³ Frankl, p 15-17

⁴ *Meaning Really Matters, How Purpose is Recession Proof and Age Proof*, Met Life Mature Market Institute, July, 2010

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drives in the human spirit. Employees must entrust their leadership and their organization to meet more than financial needs if their loyalty, best efforts, and highest order thoughts are to be contribute to the organization’s future.

Capitalism with a Conscience

From our study of organizations and competitive advantage, it is quite evident that companies and countries with high levels of trust have the greatest propensity to produce the greatest economic advantage over the long term.

Synergistic Leaders are not soft leaders; they are *driven* in the sense that they build trust, demand excellence, align the drives of human behavior, seek synergistic results; and as a result, they perform consistently year after year. In sports and business, Synergistic Leaders consistently outperform their cut-throat counterparts because they bring out the best in others, guide with a conscience, have the courage of their well-founded convictions, and ensure human energy is aligned in teams.

Fork in Destiny’s Road

Based on our understanding of the drivers of human behavior, we can conclude that humans are both collaborative and competitive. To build and maintain trust, it’s important for leaders to understand how to fashion a culture that enables what comes naturally to humans:

Collaborate Internally, Compete Externally.

To often misguided leaders try to use competition internally. However, many leaders are thoroughly confused about how use these two forces effectively, and end up following Yogi Berra’s advice:

When you come to a fork in the road, take it!

While it may work for a while, it eventually eats the soul of the organization as people see each other as rivals. This means organizations must not let internal competition destroy their ability to use the collaborative spirit that spawns innovation and high performance.

It’s time for leaders, and those being led, to become totally familiar with the precepts of Synergistic Leadership, especially developing good strategic vision that aligns people with powerful mission and purpose, as well as understanding the massive competitive advantage created by trust building.

The Darwin Hoax

For too long leaders have been confounded by the Darwin hoax⁵, which has led leaders across the globe to believe falsely that success in the world is a continuous battle for *Survival of the Fittest*. Darwin never believed that human evolution came from a dog-eat-dog attitude. He concluded the evolution of civilization in the last five thousand years was derived from *Thrival of the Collaboratively Innovative* human race; he understood that the difference between humans and animals was the belief in the idea that “do unto others as you would have them do unto you” and the only prosperous path for civilization.

⁵ See [The Darwin Hoax](#), [The Machiavelli Hoax](#), and [The Adam Smith Hoax](#) by Robert Porter Lynch

Synergy & Synchronicity

One of the deepest desires of any normal human being is to be harmonized, synchronized and unified with others, as brother, sister, husband, wife, father, mother, neighbor, or friend. It is this common unity that underpins marriage, family, teamwork, community, organizations, alliances, nations, and the world of humankind. Yet it remains our most thwarted and elusive goal.

The “Quest for Synergy” is, at the same time, mankind’s highest aspiration, loftiest ideal, and most soulful yearning. “Synergy” is the elusive but alluring song of all

teams and alliances. Its archetypal attraction is bound in its possibility of creating something more the sum of its parts.

Synergy captivates all, escapes most, briefly visits some, and for the blessed few, bestows enormous wealth and success.

***Where there is Neither Vision Nor Trust,
Everything Defaults to Power & Politics.***

What then is the magic of synergy? Or is magic at all? The quest of every team or leader is to find this holy grail -- the formula or architecture that will manifest this gallant goddess with singular regularity; to unveil synergy’s secrets like Edison’s applications of the power of electricity or the Wright brothers manifesting man’s ability to fly.

The Illusion -- What’s Missing?

Not understanding the essential nature of synergy results in comments like these:

“We know how to create alliances, but don’t know how to manage them!” reflected one American top executive, who lamented the lack of success in achieving his alliance’s primary goals.

“Government needs cooperation and coordination if we are to be efficient. However, we never seem to get alignment between the Federal, Provincial, and Municipal governments. Sometimes we get in bitter entanglements. It doesn’t look very good when the press gets hold of it,” was the complaint of a deputy minister in a Canadian province.

“Our internal teamwork is terrible. We can’t get any cross-functional group to work. People seem to build internal walls between our departments,” groused a senior executive who watched his company polarize in the face of increasing competition and customer demands.

“It looked great on paper, but it was a terrible fit in reality. Our cultures clashed on every issue from decision making processes to rewarding our sales force;” stated a dejected alliance manager in the pharmaceutical industry.

“During negotiations, the deal makers poisoned the well, and we haven’t yet recovered. We had to undo all the damage caused by the adversary legal jargon;” was the battle-weary response of the president of a multi-billion-dollar international joint venture.

“Alliances are an unnatural act for us. They are extremely difficult to manage; we’d prefer to do acquisitions; that way we can control them, ” complained a senior vice president of a large German chemical manufacturer. Later, he noted that 30% of his revenues and nearly 50% of his division’s profits came from alliances, but “we spend only 5% of our management time on them.” For some inexplicable reason he failed to allocate management resources to the highest profit generator in his business.

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“Our acquisitions are largely a failure. We’ve bought very successful companies, but soon afterward the best of all the newly acquired people drift off into other jobs. Then the real problems begin...customers are lost, profits decline, innovation wanes...” was the sad comment of a chief financial officer.

“We seem to reorganize over and over again, hoping we can attain better teamwork, coordination, and launch new initiatives better. Unfortunately, no amount of reorganization seems to make a difference,” a dejected government leader lamented.

In today’s fast moving, rapidly changing, and interrelated world, organizational relationships have become complex and often confusing. Fundamentally, executives, managers, and civil servants who’ve been managing in traditional hierarchical command and control companies are befuddled when given an assignment that requires them to develop relationships outside their span of control.

The synergy they seek from the relationship remains elusive; cultural differences become insurmountable obstacles; project management turns into problem management; and the bureaucracies of the two parent organizations can become a quagmire of politics.

Secrets of Synergy

Not every complex organizational relationship experiences these impasses.

“I am amazed how well our two companies are working together. We are actually ahead of schedule, and have had relatively few difficulties;” was the delighted comment from the alliance manager of a strategic sourcing venture consisting of a European food service company and a Canadian partner.

“After only 6 weeks of working together, it’s hard to tell the difference between the employees of their company and ours;” explained the alliance director of an international mining company, commenting on his joint venture with an electronics firm.

“I’ve forged alliances internally with our different departments and locations, with our work force, with our suppliers, and with our best customers. It’s enabled us to put new programs into place rapidly. Our sales and profits have increased over 150%,” was the proud statement of a Canadian manufacturer.

“Our team is unlike any other I’ve worked on. Even though the members are very diverse, we trust each other, and work for a common goal and purpose. Our differences are additive, unlike others that seem to be fighting continuously.

These collaborative managers achieved success because they insisted that their joint teams spend ample time understanding the unique aspects of strategic relationships, building cross-cultural teamwork, and establishing processes and skills to access and embrace the unique value of their joint vision and their partner’s unique strength.

Experience has proven that there are invaluable beliefs and skills which are often overlooked that enable collaborative managers to produce high performance results: skills at managing differences, breakthroughs, speed, and transformation.

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The Value of Differences

The fundamental reason why high-performance teams, cross-functional teams, innovation teams, or alliances are formed is to access a capability within other people, groups, or organizations, thus finding the magical synergy, the 1+1=3 (or more!). However, this means capturing the value of differences.

Lying within these inherent differences is the promise of the new team to create bold new futures, or conversely, to implode upon itself as differences turn destructive. Unfortunately, for all-too-many organizations, differences become corrosive, actions become angry, self-protection arises from distrust, and polarization rigidifies points of view. Some people turn to lawyers to generate reams of legal documents to create surrogate contractual trust. Others stand their ground more firmly, often with dire consequences – liberals versus conservatives, Protestants versus Catholics, Muslims versus Jews, capitalism versus communism, blacks versus whites – and the list goes on. Seemingly, the difficulty in managing differences is a relationship problem has gone on since the beginning of recorded time. The Bible is filled with these conflicts, Chinese history records similar conflicts, and even the wisdom of Socrates and Plato did not seem to diminish the carnage.

Traditional approaches to managing cultural differences have focused on becoming sensitive to differences, cross-cultural diversity training, understanding linguistic nuances, and acculturation. While these methods have their worth, a number of very essential approaches are often overlooked that distinguish successful organizational relationships (each element will be explored in detail):

- Power of Shared Vision
- Synergy of Compatible Differences
- Trust Building
- Commitment to Mutual Benefit & Camaraderie
- Sharing Expands Possibilities
- Conflict Transcendence
- Turning Breakdowns into Breakthroughs
- Transformational Flexibility

Synergy of Compatible Differences

Synergy does not just occur as a natural byproduct of a relationship nor from a tough legal agreement, nor by dint of a dream.

Rather, it must be designed with architectural aplomb. But more, synergy must be activated by a powerful set of actions founded upon the understanding of how differentials produce the 1+1=3 effect.

If two people in the same room think alike, one is unnecessary for innovation.

The eminent psychologist, Carl Gustav Jung foresaw the potential of relationships when he said:

“The greater the contrast, the greater the potential.

Great energy only comes from a correspondingly great tension between opposites.”

Joel Barker, in his groundbreaking work on paradigms, recognized that new paradigms originate from outsiders who think differently, not from insiders who see their world from an old and tired perspective. Each of these men understood the profound impact differences can have on the co-creation of bold new futures.

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Invariably, however, ethnocentric or business culture attempts to enforce its mighty and frequently destructive hand. Some team members may begin by making judgments regarding the other side's culture, branding it as strange, wrong, inefficient, bad, or unproductive. As soon as this begins, fear, uncertainty, doubt, and distrust begin to fester, and then the alliance begins to unravel. This calls for strong action.

Adept relationship managers, leveraging the vision for the synergistic value-creation team, will call for creating a “synergy of compatible differences” in which differences are respected as source of innovation, cherished for their ability to break paradigms, and expected to produce creative solutions. The manager's ability to create this new “super-ordinate” culture within the organization enables the relationship to produce at higher performance levels than either individual member can achieve alone.

The Genius of Integration

Much of the Synergistic Leader's organizational success hinges on adept integration - strategically harnessing disparate functions, teams and systems to optimize collective performance.

Because complex organizational relationships, particularly between different organizations, cannot be commanded, the mechanisms for leadership and control are dramatically different compared with most conventional hierarchies. Great Synergistic Leaders tend to be “integrators,” possessing outstanding skills in bridging differences through their ability to translate across organizational and cultural boundaries. The greater the differential, the greater the need for highly skilled integrators.

Yet this “invisible” role of the Integrator is rarely recognized or rewarded, despite playing an indispensable part spurring innovation and navigating complexity. Integrators fluidly translate technical details into relatable concepts, transcend divisions to align goals, and transform corporate red tape into realized strategies. Companies must identify and empower these unsung heroes.

Often the effective integrator will develop custom-tailored principles and values that forge unity of vision and purpose. Integrators empower those around them by recognizing that “people support what they help create.” Thus, they use techniques to unify cross-functional/cultural partners, rather than divide them, to bring out the best in others.

Effective integrators will first focus on developing principles and values for the collaborative cross-functional team or alliance that forge unity of vision and purpose. Integrators empower those around them by recognizing that “people support what they help create.” Thus, they use techniques to join members into a “community” – a “common unity” -- to bring out the best in each of the partners.

Integrators are intolerant of thinking and behaviors that divide people; they respect and cherish differences so long as the differences build trust, not destroy it.

Power of Integration

Integrators share distinct traits - a knack for systems thinking, versatility spanning specialties, emotional intelligence attuning teams, and hard-won wisdom crystallizing knowledge into action. While some interpersonal wiring seems innate, many integrative skills can be strengthened. Senior leaders would be remiss not to foster this capability that unlocks remarkable potential.

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Recent research reveals cross-functional integration boosts efficiency over single-function initiatives by 30-40%. Studies validate integrators' immense strategic value:

- A Harvard Business study found 50% better decision-making and 10% higher profitability by integrating data and analytics across business units.
- A number of other studies have revealed:
 - 20% greater customer satisfaction and 15% faster revenue growth from unified IT and marketing teams.
 - 30-40% increased performance over single-function initiatives when applied across entire enterprises, plus reduced risks and enhanced organizational resilience.
 - supply chain/manufacturing integration yielded 10% lower costs and 15% happier customers.

The results speak volumes about collaborative power. Yet too often, cross-boundary brokers operate uncelebrated and unassisted. That oversight squanders game-changing possibilities. Leadership should spotlight integrators' indispensability and create conduits enabling seamless interplay between silos. With C-suite vision channeling their potential, ordinary teams achieve extraordinary symbiosis. Unleash your hidden titans who architect this alchemy. Powerful new dynamics await leaders who encourage inter-departmental cross-functional integration and inter-organizational alliances.

Synergistic Leaders can use these same principles to double their success rates with mergers and acquisitions.

Unleashing Collective Potential

Navigating relentless change and spiraling complexity, modern institutions strain for alignment to create more innovation, more productive performance, and greater agility to adapt to new priorities and threats.

Yet inside this chaos of change lies hidden order and immense possibility. The essence of wise Synergistic Leadership is the capacity to discern emergent patterns and elevate collective potential for constructive advancement both individually and organizationally.

The genius for masterfully integrating disparate elements into dynamic wholes - forged by trust and shaped by inclusive vision – is what distinguishes the most effective leaders driving agile transformational innovation both socially, economically and technically.

Integrative talent creates synergy - an enlightened approach to catalyzing human energies by appeals to our highest values. Synergistic Leadership is not the brute exercise of will via demands and carrots and sticks, but the art of inspiring others through higher moral purpose, turning them from mere followers into partners, from simply participants into passionate co-creators.

Leadership is thus a creative act, far more than impersonal technique.

Leadership is the most elevating and accelerating of all the arts, for it is the art of mobilizing talent.

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The Qualities Behind Synergistic Leadership Integration

At its core, synergistic integration flows from the leader's spirit. It requires the wisdom of "systems thinking" to comprehend connecting forces; intellectual integrity to critically question assumptions about constraints; and emotional intelligence building bonds of trust across differentials in thinking and culture.

*Integration takes flight on wings of imagination, then migrates to reason.
It lives in synapse more than rote process.
Yet its harvest is eminently practical.*

Truly integrative leaders excel in multiple dimensions that reinforce overall impact:

- *Keen Judgment*: Rapidly assessing complex contexts by synthesizing multiple data points through broad experience refined by curiosity asking the right questions. Integration depends on incisive evaluation of dynamics and possibilities.
- *Contextual Intelligence*: Capacity to probe beneath and beyond surface events and static categories to comprehend relationships, interdependencies and systemic energies determining outcomes. Discerns pivot points applying leverage.
- *Bridge-Building*: Connecting across divides and hierarchies via interpersonal skills, bonding teams, functions, cultures that historically clash. Upgrades perspectives expanding possibilities.
- *Catalyzing Innovation*: Fusing new concepts from disparate sources via open, trust-based environments that liberate thinking and risk-taking. Allows serendipity and opposed ideas to spark breakthroughs through constructive friction.
- *Cultivating Social Cohesion*: Convening talent remains only raw potential without animating spirit of shared mission advancing society's health and promise. Wise leaders nurture emotional resonance and hope that lifts sights from self to higher purpose for the common good.

Each capacity magnifies the effect of others. Intellect fortified by empathy begets insight unifying goals. Broad vision helps align constituencies. And so on. Integrative adepts leverage these interlinked talents to shape events more than react to them.

The Fruits of Integration Masterfully Executed

Across sectors, integrative excellence plays out in leaders bold enough to question old assumptions guiding institutions and societies. Abraham Lincoln, facing history's greatest leadership challenge, wove discordant factions into maintaining a fracturing Union, advancing freedom and dignity. Today impact investors like Danone's Emmanuel Faber pioneer elevating environmental sustainability and social responsibility to equal footing with shareholder returns through a profoundly integrative approach.

But leaders need not be famous to cultivate inclusive environments for human flourishing: Researchers find most successful social change activists draw strength more from interwoven stories than abstract

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ideologies; Global health officials emphasize “One Health” linking medical, environmental and social data to respond to outbreaks; Smart engineering teams know innovation springs not just inventing novel things but weaving supportive relationships across disciplines and functions to build ecosystems for ideas’ uptake.

The common thread is advancing wisdom and knowhow through moral imagination and humane connection. Technocratic exhortations inadequately motivate and unite 21st century talent and partners. But jointly emulating timeless values in solving problems ripe with meaning offers inspiration. Leaders awakening such aspiration realize that noble change emerges not forced but called forth.

In this sense the Synergistic Leader’s signature strength in artful integration remains central to catalysis - upholding light to illuminate possibility then empowering committed souls willing hands in cocreating transformations for the betterment of all. No single heroic figure dictates; rather many diverse contributors’ passion converges through shared ethical commitment to raising up human dignity. By elevating collective potential through masterful integration, the Synergistic Leader’s genius generates sustainable, exponential social value. And progress accelerates.

Trust Building

Wise Leaders build Trust. Ask any collaborative manager about the value of trust in a relationship, and they will wax eloquently about its impact on success. Without trust, relationships fail, period.

Trust is the foundation of all cooperative enterprise.

Trust is the hallmark of the personal relationships between the people who constitute the team. Without this trust, no legal agreement, no strategy, no structure, and no process can achieve its objectives. These personal trusting relationships distinguish great team leaders from their transactional cousins who forsakenly bring the *Fool’s Golden Rule* into relationships:

“He who has the Gold: Rules.”

Instead, the best collaborative relationships tend to use three “metallic” rules:

Golden Rule: *“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”*

Silver Rule: *“At least do for yourself what you would do for others.”*

Iron Rule: *“Don’t do for others what they can do for themselves.”*

Trust is the *glue that binds* personal relationships and the *grease that prevents frictional differences* from becoming fractious.

Trust and Integrity

Trust and Integrity are the threads of the complex relational fabric. Integrity is more than just being honest or trustworthy. Integrity means being true to oneself, to one’s deepest values; and the benefits are ultimately both a divine blessing and a liberating freedom; the result of moral character development.

“Integrity resides in the ability to constitute yourself as your word. As such it is a home, an anchor, a self-generated and continuing commitment to honor your word -- despite

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contrary thoughts and feelings if need be. It is a consistency of being, speaking and acting that shapes who you are -- to yourself and to others.” -- Anonymous

Integrity becomes a divine gift by enabling us to touch the deepest yearnings of others around us, thus creating a new set of possibilities filled with hope and inspiration. Integrity is thus expansive, allowing us to become more than ourselves, to create with others, to empower others. Integrity includes setting expectations and consistently meeting them. Integrity marvelously liberates us to live our relationships forward into the future, enabling us to experience the present moment cleanly and without fear that our past will undermine us, corrode our vision, and erode our energy.

The lack of integrity inevitably forces one to look back over one’s shoulder, haunted by a past filled with historic baggage which will harbor tomorrow’s illness, or threaten to destroy one’s false illusions that were invented to disguise the sordid realities of a disingenuous life.

In a fast-moving world, trust and integrity thus spawn a massive competitive advantage, because together they enable the teams to make rapid decisions without the need for a legal contract every time someone tries to make a decision. What’s more, trust and integrity enhance creativity, build teamwork, reduce unnecessary transactional costs (such as memos to protect oneself), and make the relationship more fun, thereby building human energy.

Trust has been elusive; ultimately, no amount of pages in a legal contract can substitute for or replace weak trust. It’s the single most important thing that separates collaborations that thrive from those that fizzle. Trust enables everything to move faster, more effortlessly, and with less conflict. Mistrust causes everything to be more complicated, slower, and far more fragmented. In spite of its importance, trust is too often taken for granted.

The Synergistic Leader that can build a strong relationship of trust creates enormous economic value. Our economic studies have shown consistently that trust can double the rate of innovation, accelerate speed of implementation by two or three times, and cut non-value-added work in half, or more. The economics of trust are compelling, especially considering that it costs little or nothing to create trust, while it is excruciatingly expensive to co-exist without it.

Why is trust so seductively elusive?

Because there has been no clear “architecture” or “system” for trust, it has fallen into a vague and ambiguous area where the mind-set for trust is fuzzy; the skill-set is deficient; and the tool-set inadequate. Alliance professionals need not be trapped this way.

Because trust has been an interdisciplinary target caught between academia’s cracks, zig-zagging the boundaries of leadership, political science, sociology, anthropology, psychology, organizational behavior, and neuroscience, no concrete “trust architecture” has emerged. We aim to change that.

This has left us lost in a multitude of platitudes, slogans, and aphorisms, such as “trust but be sure to bring your lawyer,” “trust but verify,” “trust must be earned,” “be skeptical before you trust,” “be sure to have an exit strategy,” and so on. Unfortunately, none of these approaches really produce any trust.

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[In another White Paper we address the “Architecture of Trust” in a compelling way.]

Because fear is the principal cause of distrust, leaders should be very judicious in the use of fear as a means of motivation – its short term gains may be very limiting in the long run. While fear causes people to withdraw, withhold, undermine, and generate suspicion, trust does just the opposite, being both the *grease making things work fluidly, and glue that binds.*

Embedding a system of trust into your organization and its network of stakeholders yields enormous rewards for all.

Trust unleashes latent human energy and enables it to be aligned on a common purpose. Many leadership situations require influencing without authority, which can only happen when those we wish to influence trust and value us. Trust produces highly effective people, high performance teams, useful ideas and innovations, and people who want to come to work because it is an energizing, co-creative experience. Leaders who want to support collaboration, be considered trustworthy, and trigger innovation should keep the “**FARTHEST**” principles in mind:

- **Fairness** in all your dealings to be sure everyone gets a fair shake. Successful innovation leaders are perceived as being even handed, good listeners, and balanced in their approach.
- **Accountable** for your actions. When you make a mistake, admit it and move on. Accountability is the external manifestation of internal Integrity. Leaders without integrity are quickly dismissed as hypocrites.
- **Respect** for others, especially those with differences in skillsets and points of view is critical. Without respect for others, trust cannot be built. Giving respect is the first step in gaining trust – then moving forward to synergize differences in thinking.
- **Truth** is an absolutely essential component of building the type of trust that triggers innovation. Remember, your emotions or perceptions are seldom real truths. Stick to the facts – things that are measurable or concrete. And remember, a critical comment has about five times the impact as a positive comment. So balance your truths carefully.
- **Honorable purpose** must be the foundation of all your actions. If people perceive your purpose for innovating as strictly for selfish purposes, without a component impacting the ‘greater good,’ you will not be perceived as trustworthy.
- **Ethics & excellence** in standards. Innovation is propelled by the idea of always getting better, improving continually, reaching for the highest level of performance. If anyone sloughs off, they must realign to the highest measures, otherwise others will be resentful or fall off in their performance.
- **Safety & security** are essential to all human beings. This includes ensuring that there is “No such thing as Failure, Only Learning.” Be careful not to punish what might look like a failed attempt at creative solutions; encourage learning from failure. And always avoid the

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Blame Game. Fear does not produce innovation. You will know when people feel safe – they will be laughing. Creativity is not all grinding labor; it's having fun and laughing a lot, spontaneously creating in the moment – that's magical. Research shows that laughter releases endorphins that trigger creativity.

- **Transparency & openness** enable everyone to see intentions, share data, and exchange ideas in a culture that supports challenging of ideas and develops new insights.

Each of the trust-building elements must be grounded with tool-sets, such as communication protocols, meeting frameworks, feedback systems, and rewards/recognition programs.

The Trust Value Proposition

The Synergistic Leader understands the power of trust in value creation and competitive advantage. Studies have show the enormous power of leaders who focus on building trust-based organizations: Compared with employees at low-trust organizations, the high-trust folks had far better performance:

- 76% more engaged at work
- 88% more would recommend their company to family and friends as a place to work
- 11% more empathy for their workmates
- 40% less burnout from their work
- 41% greater sense of accomplishment
- 70% more aligned with their companies' purpose
- 106% more energy
- 60% more job enjoyment
- 50% more productive
- 66% closer to their colleagues

The Power of Shared Vision

The universal vitality of focusing on a powerful common vision, backed up by a dynamic and inspiring value proposition that speaks to the customer shows no cultural boundaries. For example, take this typical vision for a government:

“We will be the leaders in (energy management, or education, or transportation, or public service, etc.).”

It presents a “vision vacuum” by saying nothing, containing no commitments, and inspiring neither the organization’s stakeholders nor its customers nor its suppliers. Devoid of a powerful vision, everything defaults to politics and the blame game along with no sense of real mission and purpose, which then divide the stakeholders against themselves.

As the old adage from Alice in Wonderland states:

“If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.”

And that road will be fraught with in-fighting, subversion, despair, and confusion, all of which will ultimately lead to the ruin of the collaborative initiative.

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Contrast the weakness of a faulty vision with the motivational force of a more commanding perspective:

“Our team will create 10 new innovations each year that will reduce the costs to our customers by 25%, while accelerating their throughput by 50%.”

By having a powerful central vision and value proposition such as this, partners focus differences on how to achieve the joint goal, rather than arguing amongst themselves as to whose way is the “right way.” A shared vision helps ensure synchronicity. Powerful visions are all founded on belief in the ability to discover the unknown, accomplish the seemingly impossible, and overcome the apparently unattainable.

Therefore, strong Synergistic Leadership must be present to build such a vision and to unify and align the team’s differences for a common purpose.

Commitment to Mutual Benefit & Camaraderie

The Synergistic Leader is always looking for mutual benefit – what which creates the greatest good for the largest number of people, without harming or damaging the minority or undermining the future.

This requires a strong mind-set and skill-set and solution-set to serve others first, not oneself. To build unity through a common vision and shared values. This means focusing on the long term, seeing opportunities inside difficulties, searching for synergies inside differentials, finding harmony not harm, and seeking simplicity on the far side of complexity.

Sharing Expands, Hording Contracts Possibilities

In a world where fear reigns, people must spend their time and energies protecting their personal self-interest. Without trust in others, stealing, hording, and selfishness prevail, for to do otherwise might very well result in personal cataclysm.

However, in a world of trust, wisdom, and shared values, a new set of possibilities expands each person’s horizons. Instead of hording, people who trust begin to share resources and their imaginations interact to solve problems, see their world in the long-term, not every day being a fight for survival. Now it’s a commitment to mutual thrival.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish.”

Book of Proverbs (circa 500 BC)

The people, in the embrace of mutual trust, can empower each other to work collaboratively for the collective benefit – the “commonwealth.”

Courage

And more: when people trust each other, they are more likely to act courageously, rather than strictly in their self-interest.

Courage enlarges, cowardice diminishes resources.

*In dangerous straits, the fears of the timid
aggravate the dangers that imperil the brave.*

--Christian Bouvee (1820-1904)

The ancients considered courage one of the highest forms of wisdom based on the difference between *Bravery: the absence of fear* – and *Courage: the commitment to higher values greater than one’s fears*.

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Conflict Transcendence

Getting trapped in long-term conflict saps the Synergistic Leader of energy, sucks money, squanders valuable time, and depletes resources, many of which can never be regained. This presents a quandary: to fight or to use *martial arts of the mind* to subvert, divert, desert, pervert, invert, outskirt, thwart, and emerge unhurt. While there are times when conflict is inevitable, the great Chinese General Sun Tzu put wisdom before bravado when he advised:

*The supreme art of war – the greatest victory – is to subdue the enemy without fighting.
He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight.*

*Victorious warriors win first in their minds, and then go to war,
while defeated warriors go to war first and then seek to win.*

*Bravery without forethought, causes a man to fight blindly and desperately like a mad
bull. Such an opponent must not be encountered with brute force, but may be lured into
an ambush and slain.*

There are five dangerous faults which may affect a general:

- 1) Recklessness, which leads to destruction;*
- 2) cowardice, which leads to capture;*
- 3) a hasty temper, which can be provoked by insults;*
- 4) a delicacy of honor which is sensitive to shame;*
- 5) over-attentiveness for his men, which exposes him to worry and trouble.*

*When one treats people with benevolence, justice, and righteousness, and reposes trust
in them, the people will be united in mind and all will be happy to serve their leaders.*

Managing Conflict Constructively

Our natural reaction to conflict is to get angry, become defensive, stop listening, speed up accusations, propel blame, and attack without thinking.

Then, in nearly a flash, we swirl in a maelstrom of turmoil, trust is destroyed, we say things we wish we didn't, and the other person does exactly the same. Suddenly our egos are dominant and our souls wither under the weight of battle armor and the angst of stress.

In no time, we enter the "Tornado of Distrust" and create circumstances and consequences that are nearly impossible from which to recover. The spiral of chaos, animosity, and turmoil creates its own degenerative energy.

Anger broils and steams and spews at the surface like a violent volcano. The wise Synergistic Leader is aware there are always a multiplicity of issues that supercharge the volcano deep under and considers how to handle each with alacrity and aplomb.

The wise, Synergistic Leader takes stoic view of conflict, knowing how to avoid unnecessary escalation, and seeking a resolution in his or her long view – not succumbing to the emotional moments – always in control of the natural primordial instincts for revenge and retribution. They recognize and understand the difference between honorable conflicts between well-intentioned but poorly advised and misguided leaders and those evil leaders bent on destruction.

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Law of Unintended Consequences

The Synergistic Leader is acutely tuned into the fact that in an environment filled with *adversarial relationships*, innumerable counter-forces will be triggered that let loose an avalanche of resistive reactions bound to spawn polarizations, people picking sides, alliances, coalitions and major penalties. Unlike *collaborative relationships*, when the *Law of Unintended Consequences* is likely to spawn serendipitous and positive outcomes, in an *adversarial* encounter, people will threaten each other, triggering reactions and schemes and plots and protective or aggressive alliances than make things significantly worse very fast.

Trust is rapidly and typically totally destroyed, making it extremely hard, if not impossible to repair. Think of the childhood ditty: “Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall and had a great fall.... All the King’s Horses and all the King’s Men could never put Humpty Dumpty back together again.”

As soon as the Synergistic Leader realizes conflict is inevitable, they often take this course of action:

Steps to Manage Conflict

As tempers flare, everything speeds up. Egos are threatened. The Synergistic Leader’s team or alliances may act like fools, or tyrants, just like their opponents. The best Leaders understand and utilize several methods to transcend the traps of conflict (unless the opponent is truly evil and intent on total destruction).

1. *Slow down TIME*

The best thing is to imagine time in very slow motion – reflect on what’s happening

2. *Let your EGO talk to your WISDOM*

In the brief moments of “slow time,” try to let your Wisdom speak to your Ego.

Seek advice from the divine wisdom for counsel.

3. *Don’t ESCALATE unless it will prove Beneficial to Resolving the Conflict*

Try to see yourself on a chess board imagining what will be the consequences if you respond with different moves.

Don’t respond “tit for tat” – you don’t have to beat back every form of your opponent’s aggression with a battle axe unless they are physically assaulting you.

4. *LISTEN & ENGAGE*

Great leaders acknowledge they have two ears and one mouth – use them proportionately. Listen actively, try to understand their position and repeat back what you thought you heard them say without sarcasm or disdain.

5. *ASK QUESTIONS*

Disarm them with wisdom, not weaponry.

As questions in a matter-of-fact tone without any hint of threat.

Learn something and let your opponent know you learned something you didn’t understand before.

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6. Show EMPATHY

Indicate that while you might not yet agree, you can understand why and/or how someone feels about the matter. You understand that giving their point of view their response is normal or at least comprehensible.

7. Be FLEXIBLE about your position/perspective

If you want another to be flexible, you must likewise be so. Indicate you'd be open to some new or innovative or creative ways to approach the problem.

8. Speak HONESTLY about what is needed for Resolution

Resolution and Reconciliation is not surrender and submission. Be clear about the terms, conditions, and boundaries need for you to feel safe and secure in any solution.

9. Consider engaging a MEDIATOR

A mediator is not like an arbiter who divides the pie. A good mediator seeks to create a fair deal, or a creative resolution that meets the needs of both parties.

10. Seek INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS, but consider COMPROMISE

Remember the definition of insanity – doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result. Use Wisdom's divine creative power to inspire you and others to come up with new ideas, new possibilities, and new shifts in thinking.

But if this doesn't work, be willing to a win-win compromise and revisit the issue again in the future.

Synergistic Leaders understand it's essential to manage conflict constructively. Unresolved or poorly managed conflict can harm relationships and lead to more distress.

Transcending Bitterness:

Hatred only begets more hatred, so too does anger, despair, and revenge beget more of itself, expanding without bounds, continuing the death-spiral of harm until consumed in a cataclysmic fire.

Forgiveness will invariably require transcending bitterness and hatred. Often forgiveness may be incredibly difficult, especially in the face of significant wrongdoing, choosing not to let resentment define one's inner life is a powerful act of personal freedom.

In sports, coaches warn players not to let a bad call by a referee get into their heads, otherwise they are not focusing on the essentials of winning the game. Leave the wrong in the past, learn from it, but don't linger on it unless the perpetrator is bent on repeating the transgression.

“Let the sun set upon your wrath”

-- Ephesians 4:26

It's an old saying that says you should not rise the next morning with anger and hatred, which will trigger *emotional mind warping*, clouding and even over-riding all the sensibilities of wisdom-guided leadership. Let it go.

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Heroism is an act of transcendence, overcoming commonly debasing passions like revenge, hatred, anger, and retribution to achieve a much higher goal or inspirational state of mind, being and action.

By engaging in the enterprise of wisdom, Synergistic Leaders transform vision into good works, values into opportunity, and inquiry into innovation. Engage the wisdom connection; it's more than just a request for divine wisdom, but much more: and expresses mindfulness and transforms faith and insight and knowledge into into good works.

For example, one Synergistic Leader was General George Marshall, who, as Senior Commander of the military in World War II, lost over a quarter million soldiers, sailors, and airmen. However, he transcended bitterness, conceived of the Marshall Plan to resurrect Germany and Japan after the war, transforming them into peaceful allies for the future.

Shaping Culture to Liberate Human Potential:

Astute leaders understand that culture fundamentally shapes thinking, behavior, and outcomes. Inherited assumptions drive institutional inertia. Deeply embedded norms resist even the most well-intended change efforts. Yet shifting culture rests at the heart of achieving agile, innovative, and responsible organizations where talent thrives in service of society. The essence of Synergistic Leadership lies in elevating human dignity by fostering liberating cultures that channel collective potential toward the greater good.

Centuries of scholarship concur that shared beliefs determine civilizational rises and falls. Amid the glories of 5th century BCE Athens that birthed Western drama, philosophy, democracy and scientific stirrings, citizens internalized cultural values like arete (virtue), philotimo (love of honor) and sophia (wisdom) binding elevated ethics to inquiry and achievement. The flowering resulted. Later eras regressing into distrust and division - whether Rome's disintegrating empire or Europe's fractious Middle Ages - slid into darkness and decline, forgetting ennobling cultural inheritances.

Enduring high-performing enterprises reveal similar patterns. Iconic brands renowned for purpose-inspired innovation, solidarity and resilience through upheaval trace back to architects embedding animating cultural values early on. HP's "HP Way" binding employee fulfillment to customer needs fueled decades of tech breakthroughs. Disney parks' continued magic grows from Walt Disney's obsessive 1950s dedication to uplifting family experience. Southwest Airlines' investment in egalitarian culture and empathetic service helped it thrive where most startups falter.

But many leaders treat culture as intangible abstraction, not strategic priority. Converting espoused PR values into lived experience depends instead on thousand subtle signals daily that shape assumptions and habits over years or decades. Here the Synergistic Leader's commitment to aligning organizational culture with liberating human potential becomes central to outperformance.

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Shaping High-Performance Culture

Synergistic Leaders steeped in classics from Aristotle to Lincoln grasp culture's power to extract either our higher or lesser angels. Their strategy as stewards thus lies in seeding ennobling cultures that channel inspiration and meaning into solving collective challenges. Practices include:

- Clarifying and communicating animating purpose not as top-down platitudes but appeals to conscience embedded holistically in policies, practices and processes elevating human dignity - the metric for cultural alignment.
- Scanning underlying assumptions that constrain possibilities or diminish staff through lenses like equity and psychological safety to fuel continuous culture shaping.
- Role modeling vulnerability, accountability, inclusive curiosity and moral courage in own actions to give staff permission to take risks and grow within a caring community.
- Leveraging symbolic moments with uncommon grace to etch cultural touchstones revealing character and priorities, whether responding to disasters or celebrating victories.
- Studying organizational models beyond quarterly earnings that further employee welfare, community sustainability and innovation solving global problems.
- Keeping the arc of history in view to help teams feel connected through time to the great chain of human progress advanced by rising to meet each age's unique challenges.

Through such cultural leadership - not executive decrees but appealing to hearts - the Synergistic Leader nurtures the interpersonal soil enabling human energies converging to blossom. Once established, liberating cultures become the operating system perpetuating excellence as staff intrinsically uphold peer norms lauding purpose-aligned behavior.

But culture requires ongoing vigilance. As Lincoln warned, appeal to "the better angels of our nature" remains ever precarious; slippery is the slope to division and demagoguery. Synergistic Leaders stay bound to humanistic cultural cornerstones as beacons for right action amidst uncertainty. By shaping cultures that treat staff with dignity, embrace equity, and link daily tasks to transcendent meaning, the Synergistic Leader unlocks vast collective potential to responsibly elevate enterprise and community to unprecedented heights, bettering society as global citizens.

The Synergistic Leader's Performance Genius

Astute leaders grasp the premise that cultural "force fields" shape human behavior, determining organizational outcomes more than individual personalities.

Shaping Cultural Force Fields for Breakthrough Results

Consider that the number one determinant of human behavior is culture, not personality. Cultural, like radio waves, is inherently invisible, but humans are "tuned" to adapt to their culture just a radio is tuned to receive a signal. Like master physicists, Synergistic Leaders artfully mold these invisible workplace

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forces - values, communications, rewards, core beliefs, expectations, punishments, and key messaging - comprising this cultural “field.” They re-contour its “electromagnetism” to elevate collective potential by emphasizing *human dignity*. Aligning cultural forces creates breakthroughs once considered impossible. Misalignments waste vast energies. Therein lies the Synergistic Leader’s essential wisdom connection – it’s invisible, thus hard to duplicate – competitors cannot rip off its Intellectual Property.

The Synergistic Leader’s genius lies in insightfully discerning emergent cultural field patterns then deliberately reweaving them to empower greatness. They fathom how circulating cultural “charges” bind employees episodically while greater purposes seldom cohere assets into transcendent capabilities. Workplace cultural forces mostly flow without conscience; yet shaped wisely, they energetically lift all talent and brilliance amidst untapped possibilities.

With art and heart, the wise leader reorients values and behaviors until signals bolstering innovation, agility, and paradigm-busting prevail over messages undermining collective advancement. They seed anchors for nurturing awakened cultural “fields” uplifting collaborative promise. Once coherent patterns crystallize, participants’ higher qualities magnetize around shared missions advancing common good.

But culture shaping requires courageous clarity. Synergistic advocates neither impose wholesale revolution nor tolerate creeping dehumanization. They walk between chaos and order - listening, understanding hopes; weaving threads of meaning with gentle authority and timed boldness into tapestries envisioning destinies benefiting all. Where bondage lurks cloaked in legacy beliefs, they illuminate truer liberty and purpose. On this wise path, continuity anchors amidst change.

Such culture shapers excel through heart joined to head. By never asking of others what they would not do themselves, they stir followers towards actualizing inborn greatness. They appeal to conscience before manuals. Rules then guide, not override decency. They know market forces and competitive pressures test principles most; when anchored in moral courage, the worthy organization withstands gale winds better. They lead by liberation’s light.

And by bravely confronting cultural “fields” inertia, these synergistic culture artists unlock exponential human currents. Fresh pathways emerge; doubts in what’s possible fade. Once visible, employees’ gifts magnify. Advancement accelerates; positional hierarchies matter less when each contributes wisdom. That is the fruit of leading amid trust, not fear; harvests multiply when all own innovation. Positive energies co-elevate all to greater stature, pride and meaning.

Such is the culture shaper’s work. With patient discernment they first gently grasp invisible cultural “fields” determining institutional destiny. Then stroking here, massaging there, realigning elsewhere, they elevate vision, ethics and aspirations until human dignity surges through. By career’s end they birth a legacy - the impossible now visible, luminous monuments to progress stand where once loomed but rigid edifices suppressing untapped talent.

Collaborative Capitalism - the Synergistic Leader's Economic Gift

Three Faces of Capitalism & the High-Performance Company of the Future

With the demise of Communism in 1989, Capitalism has reigned supreme. It's now time to challenge the future of capitalism by scrutinizing its effectiveness in creating competitive advantage.

1. *Competitive Advantage*: Capitalism's underlying strength comes from its ability (when operating in free and honorable markets) to base the future performance of any company on its ability to create competitive advantage from the perspective of its customers. Competition is the grindstone that hones the razor-sharp edge of advantage. Without strong competition, the weak and unworthy survive, which provides no value to customers.

2. *Lack of Moral Imperative*: The Future of Capitalism will not be determined by government intervention nor by moral judgments about what is "right" for society. In fact, if the last two decades are any indication, a relaxation of laws regulating business seems to be a stronger trend, despite any criticism of deregulation during the last three decades. While every idealist wishes the moral path of ethics, fair play and righteous action to prevail, a long history of human endeavor favors competitiveness.

3. *Three Faces of Capitalism*: Capitalism is not a monolithic form of economics. There are actually three different competing capitalistic business models, each quite different, each founded on different beliefs and strategies: *Adversarial Capitalism*, *Transactional Capitalism*, and *Collaborative Capitalism*. Each produces very different results. These three forms are ill-defined and not clearly differentiated in the minds of most business leaders, resulting in a fourth version: *Muddled Capitalism*.

4. *Creative Destruction*: Capitalism derives its fundamental power from the impact of "Creative Destruction" – the relentless replacement of the old with the new. This requires a constant upgrading of thinking, new innovation, improvement in performance, and better business models. The only sustainable capitalism of the future continually produces better results than preceding generations.

5. *Competitiveness in a Fast Moving, Complex Business Environment Requires Collaboration*: Our analysis shows definitively that Collaborative Capitalism is the only model that consistently produces superior competitive advantage. While, fortunately, this type of capitalism is far more beneficial to the whole of society, it will not prevail because of its macro-benefits, but because it's the most competitive (most effective, efficient, sustainable, adaptable, profitable).

Conventional economics dwells on scarcity. Resources become scarce; demand escalates cost. Prices rise, quantities shrink. Governments ration. The system strains. But a paradox lurks within capitalism's creative engine: Abundance hides in plain view where camaraderie prevails and synergy is activated. Collaborative synergies multiply value exponentially. The wise leader liberates such bounty.

Most still play by antiquated rules though. Transaction governs exchange: "more for me, what you get is your business, not mine." Employees comply. Suppliers reduce quality as profits pinch. Short-term bargains yield long-term troubles. The game assumes rational self-interest while actual humans desire value creation first, which translates later into money. Distrust drips; potential dwindles.

Like physicists probing quantum strangeness upending known laws, pioneering Synergistic Leaders penetrate capitalism's deal-making façade to reveal a parallel economy awaiting activation. The currency is unbounded creativity. Resources expand via human ingenuity induced by aligned purpose

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and ethical behavior. Innovation arises spontaneously when barriers fall between silos. Risk dissipates as candid cooperation mitigates hazards. Markets surge on responsibly elevating the creative talents and aligned energies when human dignity reaches its heights.

Synergistic Leaders unlock this collaborative advantage intuitively. They seed enriching cultures honoring labor's sweat as much as capital's risk-taking, aligning returns with contributions. Progress quickens since everyone gains. This win-win strategy multiplies goodwill along with tangible value. Staff bring passion, customers offer loyalty, vendors share ideas as profits grow for all. The rising tide lifts each boat. This collaborative ecosystem operates by abundant, not limited, thinking. Its renewable resources replenish from sharing knowledge that compounds insights when applied across an empowered network's reach.

At the heart of this bountifulness lies trust as enabling human catalyst. Trust greases innovation's gears by easing joint risk-taking. Transparency breeds accountability yielding bolder commitments. Candor spurs learning while camaraderie fosters fluid teamflow. Hopes coalesce around transcending me for we - activating peak performance by arousing communal actualization that, curiously, circles back to enrich individual meaning too. The intimate linkage between inner purpose and collective advance sustains transformation.

Leading through trust thus unveils vast stores of cultural capital and creativity repressed by old assumptions. But belief in human capacities must precede policy specifications. The Synergistic Leader steps ahead by faith in the abundance seeded from unleashing full human potential. The rest unfolds accordingly. Our need for control is replaced by strong adherence to values and integration of once stratified silos. Character proves the key that unlocks this brighter realm - if we are firm in our adherence to lifting managers and employees above and beyond shadows where prospects multiply.

Such is the blessing of synergistic economics the wise leader invokes - the freedom found when all boats rise in communal tide. Stocks gain value but souls overflow. Material statistics capture but one slice of expanding value pie; the nectar of flourishing community holds sweeter wealth stealth indicators struggle to quantify. Still, this hidden abundance animates those companies sustaining excellence over decades, despite technical disruptions that cripple many firms. Something deeper abides. The future calls leaders able to liberate human capacities for collaboration and innovation and adaptation toward common uplift. And civilization progresses one uplifted organization at a time.

With the widespread application of the principles of synergy, coupled with the architecture of trust, in the future, capitalism, which is often hijacked by the powers of fear and greed, has the potential to shift to a new level of operations, producing far greater prosperity for people around the globe.

Triumph of Small Numbers

Synergistic Leaders understand transformation entails achieving a lot of small wins – the small numbers that quickly add up to big numbers, making continuous improvements that eventually lead to breakthroughs. These small numbers manifest in many elements of the organization, including:

- Increases in Innovation, Speed, Productivity
- Stronger Customer Solutions & Retention
- Lower Turnover, Better Decision Making
- More Successful Partnering & Teamwork
- Better Cross -- Functional Integration
- More Creativity & Less Conflict
- Reduction of Non -- Value Added Work
- On Time/On Budget Project Delivery
- Which translate in Greater Profitability

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Value Creation & Maximization

The Synergistic Leader is always looking to Create and Maximize Value. However, in the past this has been an ambiguous concept lacking coherent architecture to guide strategic implementation. This gap causes haphazard cost-cutting disconnected from value, sub-optimal supply chain relationships, and failure to capture full competitive advantage.

Value Creation & Maximization aims to maximize sustainable value for all stakeholders – customers, investors, employees and suppliers. It links strategy, culture and operations into an integrated value-focus permeating the entire chain. Four pivotal perspectives have shifted:

1. Business purpose evolves from profits to value maximization. This expands the pie so more wealth is created and captured.
2. Competitive advantage stems from entire value chains outperforming rivals. Internally and with key suppliers, collaboration and trust replace adversarial transactions.
3. Value is situational, multidimensional and defined by results that solve user problems. It requires aligning needs across functions.
4. Cost-cutting requires analyzing value drivers, so muscle isn't sacrificed while trimming fat. "Strategic Cost → Value Management" optimizes investments through synergies.

Tactically, companies are applying Value Maximization by:

- Building Alliances and Partnering arrangements to expand the impact of Value Networks
- Tiering suppliers: 5-7% are strategic partners meriting collaborative cost optimization.
- Conducting joint Total Cost of Ownership reviews exploring holistic savings.
- Using Target Costing, Value Analysis and other methods to boost innovation.
- Forming collaborative cultures centered on trust and shared risk/rewards.
- Simplifying contracts and platforms to prevent value-sapping complexity.
- Ensuring cash flow sustainability, particularly for smaller partners.
- Benchmarking relevant metrics like quality, speed and reliability.

The payoff is competitiveness, profitability and customer loyalty viable through business cycles – the hallmarks of companies built to last. Value Maximization's unified architecture provides the blueprint.

From Eco-Systems to Value Networks

Ecosystems are like swamps, populated with a range of adversaries and collaborators and everything in between. Thus, ecosystems lack sharp focus, tight integration and deliberate design needed to consistently catalyze innovation and shared gains. Their sprawling nature breeds uncontrolled complexity rather than leveraging compatible differences.

In contrast, purpose-built value networks concentrate complementary capabilities for flexibility, speed and impact. Their aligned governance, shared infrastructure and collaborative culture foster synergies impossible in ecosystems' tangled web. Tight integration accelerates communication, problem-solving and adaptation. With leadership optimizing contributions, value networks elicit participants' peak performance. Thoughtfully architected, using alliance best practices, they catalyze exponential value surpassing any sums of individual parts.

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Fastime: Speed & Time for Value Creation

The concept of "Fastime" refers to speed and time compression as a critical asset for business success in today's fast-paced environment. Key points:

- Speed and accelerated timelines confer significant competitive advantage by enabling firms to capitalize on opportunities rapidly, reduce costs through streamlined operations, boost customer satisfaction via responsiveness, and outpace rivals.
- TIME is an asset that is equally distributed yet can become abundant capital when multiplied through integration, amplification, extension, leverage, scaling, and synergizing organizational capabilities. Collaborative leadership and trust are pivotal enablers.
- Acceleration strategies like aligning to customer needs, embracing innovation, forming interdependent value networks, investing in enabling technologies, empowering employees, fostering urgency, and celebrating speed wins can develop speed capabilities over time as a differentiator.
- Integration acts as a force multiplier of velocity by optimizing interconnectedness across functions, systems, processes, relationships and more within an enterprise. Research shows integration substantively improves speed.
- Historic examples demonstrate how technological leaps fundamentally redefined speed and time compression - revolutionizing industries and remaking civilization. Current digital transformations echo the past.

In conclusion, speed and temporality represent essential lenses through which firms today must reimagine strategy. By instilling acceleration and integration into the organizational DNA, leadership can seize the exponential opportunities of the future.

Socio-Eco²-Technical Systems Perspectives

Revitalizing Wisdom

After WWII analyzing interactions between people, technology, structure, and environment in workplaces. Instead of optimizing machinery efficiency alone, progressive companies deliberately designed social systems alongside technical systems to uplift employee fulfillment as productivity drivers. Self-managed teams exemplified success.

However, the approach waned forty years ago as shareholder primacy doctrines dominated, bureaucracy ossified systems, and technology outran human needs. But Socio-Technical Systems insights on aligning cultural and technical dimensions resonate with Synergistic Leadership wisdom realizing human potential, but now coupled with collaborative economic and ecological insights.

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Wise Leadership Reconciles Social, Economic, Ecological, and Technical Imperatives

Synergistic Leaders appreciate that breakthrough innovation requires artful orchestration of relationships, tools, data and incentives between unique humans collaborating in complex cultural, economic, and ecological contexts - not just technical optimization. Workplace technology serves all stakeholders, including employees, suppliers, customers, communities, and the environment, not just investors and senior management. When people feel respected and heard addressing socio-technical challenges in teams, they apply their full capabilities. Trust, not control hierarchies, elicits excellence. Fear blinds. They model courageous candor and moral imagination.

They thoughtfully marshal technology's exponential advances to enrich how people ethically cooperate at scale, not diminish human empowerment and dignity.

Partnering with Artificial Intelligence

Visionary leaders recognize AI's vast potential for catalyzing innovation and competitive advantage.

Yet wielding its full capacity requires a nuanced Synergistic Leadership approach. Rather than regarding AI as just another technology to deploy, astute leaders build true partnerships between man and machine to leverage complementary strengths.

Combining AI's untiring computational power, pattern intuition and continuity with uniquely human judgement, ethics and creativity births novel synergies unachievable by either alone. Leaders focused on the greater good guide this collaboration via trust and wisdom.

Together, AI's digital dexterity and humanity's analog ingenuity unlock new realms of value unattainable through mere automation. Architecting this symbiosis, Synergistic Leaders blaze trails to extraordinary possibilities.

Stewarding Trade-Offs Is Central to Systems Integration

All complex systems involve trade-offs around priorities as environments change. Beyond tactical metrics, the wise shepherd technological, cultural, quality-of-life, economic and environmental factors holistically by uplifting conscience. This ethic sustains solidarity when optimizations collide. Broadly shared prosperity, not isolated wealth creation, becomes the outcome.

Courage & Positive Adversity Response Generates Synergy

Resilience and the Nobility of Courage

Courage – *Strength of Heart* – creates synergy by generating trust, amplifying potential, and expanding resources; while Timidity and Cowardice depletes vitality. In dire circumstances, courage empowers, while cowardice compounds dangers and risks. In times of adversity, great leaders energize with boldness of vision and strength of character.

Courage marshals might against injustice, yet carefully tempers strength with mercy. The courageous see light piercing new paths as bleak nights become dawn's early light. But the courageous, guided by a moral compass, find passageways through treacherous mountains and across foreboding rivers, transforming their fears into valiant deeds. History's heroic leadership legacies endure as guideposts for humanity's long climb upward.

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Integrating Nobility of Courage and Positive Adversity Response

Proactive "Integral Resilience" is the union of the character trait "Nobility of Courage" with the mindset of a "Positive Response to Adversity."

Because great leaders use moral character as their foundation of thought and action, the nature of collaboration and trust drives the Law of Unintended Consequences to produce synergistic, symbiotic, and serendipitous outcomes.

Resilience Grounded in Courageous Nobility

Nobility of courage channels conviction with discipline – overcoming fear with a higher-order commitment to wisdom in action in service of higher good. Courage goes beyond initiating disruption to enduring setbacks inherent in transformation.

Positive Adversity Response

An upbeat response reappraises stressors as opportunities for development rather than drains or threats. The critical element involves generating meaning from misfortune - extracting profound life lessons to transmute loss into gain. Crafting redemptive narratives that bend toward light functions as a powerful leadership tool.

Combining boldness of vision with pragmatic coalition-building and infectious optimism, great leaders motivated citizenry to arise to better future versions of themselves - a dynamic of leader character that stimulated widespread character-building.

Integrating Courage and Positivity for Synergistic Resilient Leadership

Synergistic Resilient Leadership ultimately weds courageous commitment to worthy mission with positive framing of - and resourcefulness in - surmounting barriers along the way. It derives meaning from the struggle itself as much as end rewards.

The resilient leader holds steady at the wheel amidst Volatility, Uncertainty, Chaos and Ambiguity (VUCA) that would otherwise drive reactive herky-jerky course corrections. Fear, Doubt, Distrust, and Divisiveness are conquered by qualities of Character, Wisdom, Inquiry, Collaboration, Fidelity, and a Positive Adversity Response.

Synergistic Resilient Leadership requires the integration of courageous nobility of purpose with positive adversity response that extracts growth from grief. Such alchemy occurs through disciplined self-regulation and sensemaking in the heat of stressful experience.

Adversity is Normal

Adversity is everywhere in life. Mastering the capability of consciously and proactively choosing your reaction to calamity and stress will propel you to the top one percent of humans, and make life an enlightening experience.

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When we transform our pains of the past into our mission and purpose for the future, we use adversity positively. We can't change the past, but we can convert how we view the past and what meaning it gives us to propel us to a more honorable and enlightened forthcoming.

Adversity is a Glorious Opportunity

Adversity can be perceived negatively as an obstacle, impediment, and trauma, or positively as an opportunity for rising higher, for demonstrating one's highest self. The distinction: it is your choice and your choice alone on how you see the adversity.

Shifting from a victim mentality to a hero mentality requires a conscious effort to reframe one's perspective. It involves acknowledging personal responsibility, embracing challenges as opportunities for growth, and cultivating a belief in one's ability to overcome adversity.

The real potential is not just to bounce, but to use the adversity experience as propulsion to a higher level. In other words, let the adversity become a transformational experience -- to be born again at a higher level.

Cultivating a belief in one's ability to overcome adversity is essential for embracing the hero mentality. This belief system fosters a sense of self-efficacy, the conviction that one can succeed despite obstacles.

Character Becomes Destiny

Positivity as Purveyor of Possibility

Synergistic Resilient Leaders' constructive framing of adversity as adventure forges solidarity in collective striving. By defining challenges as temporary crucibles for elevation rather than permanent crosses to bear, they shape interpretive templates empowering inventive solutions.

The power of affirmative mindsets and practices to fuel peak performance has been used by athletes and sports performance coaches for decades. Emphasizing strengths, co-creating uplifting images of future, and connecting around core purpose correlate with upticks across motivation, collaboration and innovation metrics.

How Resilience Generates Synergy

"Courage enlarges, cowardice diminishes resources" (Bovee's insight) cuts to the core of Synergistic Resilient Leadership's power to generate synergy in groups.

Courage's synergistic quality stems from its meaning-making and mobilizing potential in uncertain times. Those who stand resolutely behind values in the breach provide both symbolic and strategic focal points for right action.

Synergistic Resilient Leadership grounded in courage thus regenerates and propagates by illuminating a community's capacity and focusing its identity with a powerful vision and strong values in moments when hope hangs in the balance.

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Synergistic Resilient Leaders understand that the amalgam of Courage, Character, and Collaboration not only produces better results, but also lowers the risks of any dicey endeavor.

Synergy & Paradigm Shifting

Integral Resilience and Positive Adversity Response is the evolutionary (and often revolutionary) quality of leaders who are "enlightened realists." They use their positive adversity response to turn breakdowns into breakthroughs, to seek new paradigms from which to solve old problems, and to create synergies where fragmentation, conflict, chaos, and distrust proliferate.

In an era rocked by instability, Synergistic Resilient Leadership's ability to stoke synergies of spirit and strategy has never been more essential. Principled visionaries who stay faithful to future's call while nimble in steering steady course forward serve as vital port in storm.

Resilience's noblest gift is redeeming hardship as fulcrum for mass healing and heroism - revealing reservoirs of shared purpose through nature's wildfires. Synergistic Resilient Leaders shape crucibles into chrysalises for transformation by calling forth latent genius.

What distinguishes such leaders is capacity to elevate "power to" paradigms of ingenuity over "power over" paradigms of domination through volatility - nourishing seedbeds of synergy in fields of struggle. Amid a vortex of destructive forces, beacons of resilience show up as regenerative forces for life through luminous presence alone.

Turning Breakdowns into Breakthroughs

Most people are surprised to learn that high-performance teams have more breakdowns than low performance team. The difference is that low performance teams usually have mediocre leaders, low trust, and little synergy, thus they engage in the "blame game" when a breakdown occurs. The result is an ever-widening spiral of disillusionment.

High performance teams set higher and higher standards of excellence. But, with each breakdown, they examine how to be better coordinated, change their thinking, even shift paradigms in what they believe, perceive, conceive, achieve, and receive for results. (learning loop).

They engage with their trusted comrades – remembering a trusted teammate is a wise friend. If there is a trust-breakdown, they seek their counsel to determine the best ways to rebuild trust in the world around them. They recognize there is good and evil, beauty and ugly, light and dark, and truth and deceit in the world and many shades of grey in between.

Synergistic Leaders bond mission and vision with performance, asking a simple question:

"How can we turn this breakdown into a breakthrough?"

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Great leaders imagine themselves rising from the ashes like a proverbial phoenix; transforming breakdowns into breakthroughs becomes a real “joint quest.” Rather than asking “what’s wrong” or pointing fingers and engaging in the blame game – all of which keep people stuck in the same paradigm of thinking and doing the same thing over and over again expecting a different result, Synergistic Leaders ask:

- “What’s missing?”
- “What’s possible?”
- “What shifts in thinking do we need?”
- “What is holding us back?”

Synergy manifests in an environment where wisdom, trust, collaboration, synchronicity and creative inquiry form the foundation for transcendence.

They Imagine writing a story that creates a new narrative about the trauma of failure, embodying a reframing of the reality into one where their team is the hero and the wisdom becomes their guide.

Understanding Human Fallibility to Rebuild Trust:

Synergistic Leaders consider that all human beings have potential for both good and evil; acknowledging the flawed nature of humanity; recognizing that everyone has their struggles and imperfections can contribute to a more compassionate perspective when grappling with the need to move on through the fog and frustration of difficulty, or even defeat, while leaving revenge and retribution behind. Keeping such animosities in one’s head limits the possibility of transcendent victory.

Seek the humanity even in those who commit transgressions where possible. The Synergistic Leader avoids and neutralizes evil by a formidable force of teams and alliances of crusaders with character. And they will consider rebuilding some form of relationship with someone (who is not evil, but misguided at worst) who done harm in the past. This was the basic strategy of the Marshall Plan after the Nuremberg Trials condemned evil leaders in Germany.

Overcoming Resistance to Change

Most Synergist Leaders are far more adept than their counterparts at shifting their organizations, encountering far less resistance to change.

Most “change management” efforts fail, mainly because they overlook the factors outlined in this paper and because leaders overlook the critical need for people to understand the strategic meaning, purpose and need for shifting to a higher level of performance. This leads to misunderstandings, false expectations, poor leadership, and often, loss of jobs, credibility, or influence.

Synergistic Leaders catalyze change through four key forces: riding crises, elevating ideas, harnessing social/market/financial trends, and leveraging political/regulatory events. However, people often resist change due to poor execution on the leader's part.

Common pitfalls include failing to clearly communicate the value proposition, not addressing fears & uncertainty, allowing too much complexity & ambiguity, excluding key stakeholders from planning, exhibiting weak leadership, lacking evidence that changes work, and misaligned incentives retaining status quo behaviors. Synergistic Leaders orchestrate transformation and overcome resistance through eight steps:

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1. Craft a compelling rationale with a sense of urgency, articulating the gap between today's realities and tomorrow's visionary requirements.
2. Unite leadership voices with commitment and a can-do attitude focused on the change strategy.
3. Set a clear strategic vision and pathway to achieve defined goals and targets.
4. Maintain integrity between words and actions through engaged leadership modeling desired changes.
5. Proactively build a foundation of trust and psychological safety regarding changes.
6. Get ahead of resistance by training for new skills, lowering risk thresholds, simplifying where possible, and releasing resistant personnel causing cultural drags.
7. Develop pilot projects to create rapid evidence that the changes work as intended when applied correctly.
8. Realign organizational measures and rewards to reinforce new behaviors required by the vision.

With the strategy and culture aligned between leadership and staff, change initiatives then cascade into adaptable operational alignments. Strategic intents manifest in accountable projects incorporating learnings from piloting. Leaders maintain vigilance to turn breakdowns into breakthroughs via innovation. Finally, sustaining change requires continuously realigning structures, processes, measures and systems to support the transformation.

When all four alignments interlock - strategy, culture, operations and dynamic realignment - organizations can navigate the winds of change toward greater adaptability, innovation and prosperity.

Trust and Collaboration Reduces Risk

Collaborative leaders understand risk increases in *adversarial* and *transactional* cultures, which fail to use critical factors for success such teamwork and joint problem solving to reduce risk. Furthermore, low trust cultures tend suffer from the intrusion of adversarial process designed to shed risk and punish failure to perform. This is especially amplified in complex projects where low levels of collaboration and mistrust will cause the collapse of innovation (which can be further induced by legal processes designed to constrain shared risk).

Failure to put a high trust/ teamwork culture in place triggers poor quality, grievances, sabotage, labor strikes, employee disengagement, absenteeism, employee turnover, non-value added work, lack of foresight, poor communications and coordination, low performance and productivity, silo mentality, lack of innovation, and slow speed -- all ultimately leading to cost overruns and schedule breakdowns. Seeing these risks is the essence of *holistic* risk management.

Our evidence, based on a study of over 200 complex projects, shows that the collaborative advantage results in a 5X improvement in on-time/on-budget project delivery. Collaboration is both a risk mitigator and reward enhancer, as one senior executive explains:

Sharing risk and creating value together helps build trust. When solutions are created collaboratively, it lowers our risk.

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We cannot be caught in a blame game, that just increases the risks. We need to work as a team in the supply chain; a team in the development phase, and a team in the project rollout – we work like a network. That helps them recruit and retain a highly skilled labour force, which helps reduce our exposure to risks.

If we can find partners for the long-term journey, we can create something special. We can manage risk together, share learnings, knowledge and observations of what’s going on in the marketplace. That can yield a truly rewarding relationship.

Fostering Synergistic Champions

The Synergistic Leader know the importance of developing emerging leaders who are true champions - energetic, visionary leaders focused on results – so critical to collaborative organizational success. Without a flow of new champions, the chances of sustaining and transforming an organization is very limited. Champions seize the high ground then ask for support, rather than wait for anointment. They lead through vision and achievements, not position.

To be effective, champions build great teams blending creative thinkers, helpful skeptics, facilitators and implementers. They pull together compatible differences to experience the “chemistry” of synergy. Champions don’t rule teams but integrate goals while honoring diverse perspectives.

Trust is the foundation of cooperative success. Champions set the tone by maintaining integrity and keeping commitments even in adversity. They build trust through open communication, respecting partners as equals, focusing on shared goals over personal agendas, doing the right thing regardless of risk, and listening with an open mind.

Champions maintain resilience - a flexible outer core enabling fluid adaptation paired with an inner core of steadfast values and principles when circumstances change. They see failures as opportunities for learning and humor.

Rather than isolated creators, champions are co-creative synthesizers who link innovations from diverse sources into bridges and breakthroughs. They manage the creative tension of differences to shift thinking and spark innovation.

During ongoing negotiations, champions seek win-win partnerships with reciprocal investments in each other’s priorities. They put themselves in the shoes of both partners, avoiding win-lose negotiations which have the likelihood of degenerating into lose-lose catastrophes.

Because champions are always “stirring the pot,” they need to have the protection of a top-rank “godfather’s support” is critical so champions can confront resistance to change and introduce new ideas. Without air cover, they risk rejection as radicals or subversives when disrupting the status quo.

Paradoxically, champions balance consensus-building with impatience for results, change trauma with change pain, and tempering vision with reality. Despite frustrations, seasoned champions ultimately move boldly toward the vision.

To leverage champions fully, leaders must grasp their unique change-agent roles, support them despite unconventionality, set clear boundaries, and make them catalysts for breakthroughs. Though eccentric,

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champions uplift organizations to greater potential. Destiny pairs visionary causes with courageous champions.

Comparing Synergistic & Servant Leadership

Servant leadership and wise Synergistic Leadership share common ground in their focus on empowering others, ethical integrity, and uplifting human potential. However, Synergistic Leadership provides a more systematic framework for achieving sustainable, transformational outcomes benefiting all stakeholders. Let's compare their contrasts:

Similar Ethical Core

- Both servant leaders and Synergistic Leaders act as stewards prioritizing their teams' growth. Humility and empathy drive them more than ego. Care for people comes before power.
- They share moral compasses grounded in humanitarian values like equity, dignity, and justice over ruthless self-interest. Ethics anchor decisions.

Greater Strategic Purpose

- While servant leaders channel service ethos locally, Synergistic Leaders pursue higher-order synergies liberating collective potential to tackle complex societal problems.
- Servant leadership lacks defined architecture to fuse vision, values, and capabilities to address escalating planetary crises and advancement. Synergistic Leadership articulates this.

Long-term Orientation

- Synergistic Leaders balance urgent demands with long-horizon possibilities, guided by a moral compass seeing beyond quarters or years to consider legacy and broad welfare.
- Critiques find servant leadership sometimes makes social responsibility secondary to immediate organizational interests in competing.

Innovation Acceleration

- Synergistic Leaders expressly harness diversity of thinking and collective intelligence to fuel breakthrough insights and solutions to grand challenges difficult for individuals.
- Servant leadership's localized service mentality risks being incrementalist, not harnessing differences as assets to spur creative disruption improving lives exponentially.

System Integration Advantage

- Synergistic Leadership offers a coherent framework aligning cultural trust-building, strategic direction-setting, operational execution, and dynamic evolution to sustainably realize transformation.

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- Servant leaders excel interpersonally but often struggle systemically - collaborating across functional divides, leveraging technology, etc. Synergistic Leaders do both.

In essence, Synergistic Leadership advances the moral foundation of Servant Leadership by integrating a versatile system architecture, inclusive innovation methodology, and long arc of history sustaining a thriving civilization where economic interests don't eclipse collective enlightenment.

Transformational Wisdom

The Gift of Wisdom-Guided Leadership

Essentially the wise leader grasps leadership's socio-technical nature. They insightfully navigate relationships, tools and networks to synergistically channel collective potential towards ethical aims improving life. People meaningfully grow together. By artfully aligning social and technical dimensions, breakthroughs benefiting all emerge. Everyone leads, wisdom guides. Wisdom is not the province of AI.

In the final analysis, the Synergistic Leader is the Wise Leader who relies on deep insights about humanity to guide his or her assessments of reality, and take action that will have the most beneficial impacts. It is often transcendent and transformational, much like the Marshall Plan after WWII. General George Marshall, the highest-ranking military leader in the United States, built upon his highest values of *forgiveness* and *love thy neighbor* to restore Germany and Japan to strong, vibrant nations, despite having had to destroy his evil enemies first. He brought out the best in the German and Japanese people, turning them into peaceful, economically thriving nations.

Wisdom is knowledge organized into meaningful patterns, and controlled by disciplined emotions. It focuses on aligning one's beliefs and perceptions into conceptions and actions that propel progress, while at the same time encompassing a deep understanding of unique human dynamics of situations.

Wisdom activates of the value at the head of the list of all intangibles -- *human dignity*. Wisdom is a manifestation of maturity of character to face, with steady-fast courage, the hardships, hazards, and calamities of life itself. The hallmark of the Synergistic Leader is defined not by how they succeeded but by the way they transformed ill-begotten fate, rebounding from defeat attaining a higher destiny.

Synergistic Leaders have a depth of *Perspective* upon which to draw -- broadening and lengthening experience far beyond boundaries, in either time or space, knowing how history doesn't repeat itself, but it does "rhyme."

Wisdom in leadership draws heavily upon *Disciplined Emotion* which derives from a foundation of clearly refined and defined *Values*, the ideals derived from *Moral Character Development* which are the conditioned reflex that align beliefs with attitudes, perceptions and conceptions and with one's actions – an "integral alignment" -- fundamental elements that lead to *Value Creation* and *Competitive Advantage*.

Leaders hold specific core values like equality, integrity, justice and unity. At defining junctures, they translate principles into policy once seen as only impossible dreams.

Synergistic Resilient Leadership – Guided by Wisdom – Aimed at Breakthroughs

True wisdom is neither fallacious nor flaccid. It requires *Initiative* and *Perseverance* – demanding the exercise of both the mind and spirit and applying it to the large strategic issues, the everyday necessities, and the opportunities for dynamic realignment as the world changes around us.

Wisdom's primary goal is to *Inspire, to Reawaken Courage, and Energize the Spirit of Human Dignity*. The emphasis must always be to shift from life's shortcomings and failures – from the descent into sordid manipulations -- to the triumph of lofty ideals as leaders emerge as “enlightened realists.”

The Value of Wisdom-Guided Leadership

Synergy manifests in an environment where wisdom, collaboration, trust, synchronicity, and creative inquiry form the foundation for transcendence.

A wise leader wields rare judgment, foresight and discernment, gathering and empowering wise counsel rather than insular groupthink, to guide organizations to exceptional innovation, effectiveness and shared prosperity without ethical compromise.

Wisdom calls forth truth-telling powerhouses of diverse opinions able to prevail against inertia and cowardice for transcendent renewal. Wise leaders skillfully orchestrate wise counsel dynamics that pierce echo chambers with bold ideas rejuvenating institutional vigor. They foster contention, debate and vital dissent, understanding new synergies emerges from reconciling differentials in thinking.

Wisdom exponentially drives innovation velocity, breakthrough thinking and pioneering business models by integrating disparate insights into unified forward vision. Multi-threaded counsel expands possibilities while moral purpose prioritizes breakthroughs empowering those historically under-appreciated, and even oppressed.

With an ethical north star calling them to embolden overwhelmed voices and temper brute force, wise leaders transcend constraints. Wisdom strengthens collaborative capabilities enabling leaders to align complex systems, rally talent, and forge enduring alliances that heighten agility and creative synergy.

Wisdom equips leaders with economic principles leveraging multiplier effects, emergent possibilities, and human-centered technology for outsized, returns benefiting multiple stakeholders.

In a fast-moving, rapidly-changing, unpredictable world, wisdom is a leader's greatest asset.

In essence, wisdom guides leaders to elevate everyone in transcendent innovation beyond what the science of management predicts. By accelerating their impact through discerning judgment, wise decisions amplify human potential not constrain it. It is the apex fusion of heart and mind – virtue empowering mastery. And in wisdom, enlightened leaders unlock synergistic powers within their realm. A “skilled leader” is, first and foremost, a “wise leader.”

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Overall, wise leaders have a massive advantage – typically 25% - 100% -- over those who only have skills. This is one of the primary reasons why so many CEOs fail and so many of their initiatives fail.

Truly great leaders will have a stronger moral character to prevent the run-away divisiveness and descension in our world going forward. They thwart Machiavellians by creating trust that builds teams and alliances that resist being subjected to manipulation.

*The number one quality that emerges from moral character is courage
– one’s commitment to an ideal greater than one’s fears.
This quality, coupled with the strength under adversity, wisdom and trust
that accompanies character are cornerstones that best resist the deviousness.*

Moral character is not an intangible concept, it manifests in leaders, who, by becoming the living proof, set the example of holding steadfast in times of challenge, the demonstration of core values that generates powerful learning for the other leaders, managers, government employees, and voting public, playing a pivotal role in shaping a more enlightened form of leadership in the 21st century.

The value of the Moral Compass is not to create total conformity, but to create synergistic alignment – getting people working for a common good, a shared purpose, for the greater mutual benefit, often referred to as the “commonwealth.”

Building Better Leaders with the Wisdom of Positive Power

Leadership Development has not fulfilled its promise to produce great leaders.

The problem is compounded by the rapid change in the structure of commerce and society as a whole.

Leadership development desperately needs better strategies, practices, methods, and tools that are more powerful and transformational.

Power is the ability to influence, to activate, to make things happen.

Inherently, power is, neither positive nor negative. Positive or negative simply defines the intent and outcome of how the power was used.

*Negative Power is used to destroy, to hurt, to deny, to diminish.
Positive Power is used to create, to enliven, to access, to build.*

Offsetting Negative Power with Positive Power

How anyone uses power is a matter of choice and intention – something that should be done with conscious awareness of the consequences. This is the guidance wisdom provides.

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There will be many times in the course of human interaction when negative power will be used against people. When negative power is used against someone – such as another leader, team, organization, or alliance, the wise leader has far more options for response compared to the foolish, arrogant, or evil leader. The range of response can embrace the choice of resisting and retaliating with negative power, or using positive power, such as those listed here:

Negative Adversarial Powers

1. Power to Dominate & Violate
2. Power to Exclude & Oppress
3. Power to Manipulate
4. Power to Deceive & Divide
5. Power to Criticize & Castigate
6. Power to Coerce & Undermine
7. Power to Demand & Threaten
8. Power to Antagonize & Tyrannize
9. Power to Humiliate & Degrade
10. Power to Trick & Trap
11. Power to Overwhelm & Devastate
12. Power to Corrupt & Conceal
13. Power to Enslave & Imprison
14. Power to Confuse & Confound

Positive Collaborative Powers

1. Power of Trust & Truth
2. Power of Vision, Values & Purpose
3. Power of Human Dignity
4. Power to Unite & Co-Create
5. Power of Listening & Language
6. Power of Joy & Well-Being
7. Power of Design/Architecture
8. Power of Collaborative Intent
9. Power of Commitment & Consensus
10. Power of Safety without Fear
11. Power of Discovery & Inquiry
12. Power of Fairness & Equity
13. Power of Differentials for Innovation
14. Power of Integration across boundaries

By using positive power, you have an excellent chance of shifting the interactions and negotiations climate from combative to a higher order (collaborative and co-creative). Leadership Development is needed now more now than ever to respond to changes, often adversarial in a world that needs more collaborative excellence. Today's problems and obstacles present opportunities to invigorate the leaders and organizations who are now in charge of our horribly [failing institutions that few continue to trust](#).

Wisdom is intended to reframe the mindsets of both leaders and managers guiding our organizations and institutions – addressing the very fundamentals of a new vision for collaboration as a strategy for society, including business, government, and communities.

The last century has been one where institutions have disintegrated, education has lost its gravitas, leadership has degenerated, and people's faith in democracy itself has eroded. To heal these rifts and wounds, Wisdom Guided Leadership opens the mind while engaging people, forming the foundation stones of a Collaborative World of the future, and spawn a far more synergistic capability in our society, and our organizations, large and small, private and public.

The Vital Role of Wisdom in Leadership Capability Building

Wisdom provides enormous value to leaders because it focuses the mind and human energy just like the banks of a river distinguish it from a swamp – creating flow. However, according to Artificial Intelligence responses, AI is not capable of wisdom, that is still the purview of humans when they choose to use it. Here are the key points on why cultivating wisdom should be central to leadership:

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1. **Wisdom Provides Perspective**, going beyond short-term awareness to understand historical context, long-term patterns, and the "eternal verities" that lend insight into present challenges. Leaders need this expanded worldview.
2. **Wisdom Entails a Strong Moral Compass** and "accent on values," discerning right from wrong to guide decisions. Amid complexity, values steer leaders' choices where knowledge alone falters. Virtue sustains democracy.
3. **Wisdom Requires Self-Discipline and Courage** to uphold one's principles under pressure. Wise leaders inspire by example, standing firmly on conviction not convenience. They appeal to people's noblest intentions.
4. **Wisdom Seeks Truth**. It avoids simplifications, critically examining multiple angles. This intellectual integrity earns credibility central to leadership influence. Wise leaders invite dissent to forge durable, ethical solutions.
5. **Wisdom Balances Realism and Idealism**. It recognizes change emerges gradually in society through compromise. Wise leaders are "enlightened realists," reformers not reactionaries, pushing boundaries while securing broad alignment behind progress.

In essence, wisdom is the fullest realization of human potential –

"Wisdom of the Multitudes is the welfare of the world."

Elevating wisdom develops mature, discerning leaders able to overcome fear and unite people towards moral purpose during trying times. That is precisely the quality most needed - when truth, liberty and civic unity hang in the balance.

Wisdom belongs at the heart of leadership education.

