

# Introduction

*The illiterate of the twenty-first century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn!*

—Alvin Toffler

A NUMBER OF YEARS AGO, at an American Hospital Association Leadership Summit in San Diego, author Jim Collins, of *Good to Great*, *Built to Last*, and *Great by Choice* fame, delivered a keynote address. Collins discussed his friendship with iconic management expert Peter Drucker, and described visiting Drucker's personal library and seeing the books he had written—39 published works on management and society, and two novels—all lined up in chronological order on the library shelves. That is when Collins realized that two-thirds of Drucker's books were published after the author turned 65. Drucker believed that you should never write about a topic until you had attained mastery of it. Evidently, Drucker considered mastery of a topic a lifelong learning process.

The type of lifelong learning demonstrated by Drucker is not a trivial pursuit. In the age of the knowledge-based worker, adaptability and continuous learning define the course of your career. Current reality does not permit us to treat learning as an occasional indulgence. To become an effective leader and stay relevant, you must commit to your own lifelong learning process. Think of all

the jobs and establishments that did not survive the last thirty years (Sadani 2020). Here is a short list to consider:

- Projectionist
- Photocopy center
- Cybercafes
- Video cassette parlors
- Video game centers

In another thirty years, travel agents, librarians, retail cashiers, legal secretaries, telemarketers, postal workers, social media managers, and real estate agents may similarly disappear.

Not only are occupations continually going away, but new jobs are also continually emerging. In 2018, talent management experts Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic and Josh Bersin found that half of the most in-demand skills did not exist five years before. As a result of this rapid and continual change, employers now put a premium on intellectual curiosity and the desire and ability to quickly grow and adapt one's skill set.

The leadership development world does not lack suggestions on how to create a learning culture. Here is a sample of science-based recommendations:

- Reward continuous learning.
- Nurture critical thinking.
- Make it safe for people to speak out and challenge authority.
- Give meaningful and constructive feedback.
- Lead by example.
- Hire curious people and develop them in the technical areas of their roles.

All these recommendations are behavior based as well as science based. None has anything to do with technical skill, process, strategy, talent, or intellect. Executing these recommendations

successfully requires leaders who are behaviorally smart—leaders whose behaviors motivate their team members to higher levels of performance while managing constant change and continuously increasing complexity. Effective leaders are committed to lifelong learning. They are constantly reinventing themselves. They have the ability to connect and ignite the part of their brain that drives continuous growth, development, and performance.

Effective leadership requires the ability to change and innovate (Morris 2015). Consequently, we are advocating for effective leaders to engage in a lifelong learning process that transcends formal learning and encompasses a dream, a curiosity, a passionate desire, and a clear, future-oriented view of an ever-changing world. This type of learning must be purposeful, continuous, and developed over a long period of time. It requires, as Aristotle indicated, dedication to the constant formation and daily practice of good habits. It also requires what we will teach you in this book—learning to lead with your upper brain.

## **BECOMING SMART ABOUT BEHAVIOR AS A LEADER**

You do not become an effective leader without engaging in some kind of leadership development. As CEOs, senior operational leaders, human resource and organizational professionals, you have to understand that highly effective leaders are a rare commodity. Your recruitment and retention strategy requires some leadership development methodologies. But not all leadership development models fulfill their promises of producing the next generation of emerging, effective leaders. To that end, we want you to focus on three key objectives in this book:

1. Developing a systematic, integrated, and science-based approach to performance excellence using the model constructed in this book.

2. Identifying the cause-and-effect relationships between effective leadership, workforce engagement, and high levels of organizational performance outcomes.
3. Discovering how performance is a function of technical skills and behavioral capacity, and how behavioral skills drive technical skills to higher levels of performance.

Performance requires more than your skill, talent, and intellect. Performance requires that you have a highly developed sense of behavior awareness and function as an effective leader. You need to be able to manage in the context of process (technical skills) and of people (behavioral skills). The behavioral skill set is a combination of a leader's ability to manage their thinking, emotions, and behavior. Inability to manage in the context of people using highly developed behavioral skills affects a leader's ability to manage and execute in the context of process. Your technical skill capability will rise no higher than your behavioral skills capacity. When you are aware of your behavior as a leader you enhance your technical skills, resulting in performance at the highest levels.

Your development as a leader, and the development of others as leaders, requires a leadership development methodology and a model that you can use to build your behavioral skill capacity. As a CEO seeking to hire a new chief operating officer, you would likely receive over a hundred resumes from people totally qualified in the job's technical skills. How would you evaluate the top candidates' behavioral skills?

Typically, people get hired because of their technical skills. Professionals rarely lose their jobs because they stop being technically smart. They lose their jobs because they consistently display disruptive behaviors that derail their careers. Becker's CEO Report E-Newsletter provides continuous examples of senior-level professionals who have lost their jobs or received disciplinary actions based on behavioral skill lapses, not technical skill lapses (Ellison 2021).

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AS A STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

A successful leadership development program aligns company strategy with an understanding of the essential leadership behaviors needed to execute that strategy. We often confuse effective leadership with mere execution of strategy and achievement of results. In reality, effective leadership is the ability to inspire others to execute strategy at a high level of performance based on the behavior impact of the leader. No matter what else leaders do to affect the performance of their teams—communicating vision, creating strategy, providing adequate resources—the ultimate success of leaders and their teams is predicated on individual and collective leadership behavior. The foundational premise of this book is that individual leader behavior is the single most important predictor of how a team performs.

In a 2021 report on performance, Gallup found that 70 percent of a team's engagement is influenced by their manager (Ratanjee 2021). Furthermore, the traditional command-and-control management style does not work for today's workforce, which expects the manager to be more of a coach than a boss. Gallup's study of more than 550 job roles and 360 unique job competencies found that leaders who create successful, high-performing teams in thriving organizations display the following behavior skills:

- *Building relationships.* Successful leaders establish connections with others to build trust, share ideas, and accomplish work.
- *Developing people.* They help others become more effective through strengths development, clear expectations, encouragement, and coaching.
- *Driving change.* They set goals for change and lead purposeful efforts to adapt work that aligns with the stated vision.

- *Inspiring others.* They leverage positivity, vision, confidence, and recognition to influence performance and motivate workers to meet their challenges.
- *Thinking critically.* They seek information, critically evaluate the information, apply the knowledge gained, and solve problems.
- *Communicating clearly.* They listen, share information concisely and with purpose, and are open to hearing opinions.
- *Creating accountability.* They identify the consequences of actions and hold themselves and others responsible for performance.

Effective leadership development requires putting people through a set of planned scenarios that require the learners to apply effective behaviors that will drive performance excellence. For example, by learning and applying the techniques of behavior-based interviewing, you acquire the skills you need to hire the most talented people available for any job vacancy in the organization.

To create an effective leadership development program, you need three essential elements:

1. You need a mechanism for identifying your future leaders based on current performance. More importantly, you need to identify criteria for measuring future potential for performance in positions of increasing responsibility.
2. You need to determine the leadership patterns that are most appropriate for the organization, taking into account the purpose and the complexity of the organization. In most cases, you will need a combination of the four leadership behavior patterns in order to align all your strategic objectives with key results. We will discuss these patterns in great detail throughout the book.

3. You also need a comprehensive development plan for leaders at all levels of the organization, including senior leadership. Every leader in the organization needs their own personal development plan, with suggestions and specific action steps for improving their effectiveness as leaders and driving performance outcomes.

We have experienced a great deal of cynicism from senior leaders who resist investing the time and money into the leadership development program we recommend. These leaders have run the gamut of other programs and assessment tools, hoping for a silver bullet to leadership effectiveness but finding only unfulfilled promises. Each new effort and new program seems to meet with the same lack of momentum and result in the same long-term struggles to sustain leadership growth, development, and performance outcomes.

We sense that frustration and readily acknowledge it. Nonetheless, the consequences of failing to create effective leaders in your organization can be disastrous. The data show that high-performing and extremely talented people do not quit their jobs; rather, they quit their ineffective leader, manager, or boss. A study by the American Psychological Association found that 75 percent of Americans say their “boss is the most stressful part of their workday.” Another Gallup study found that one in two employees have left a job “to get away from their manager at some point in their career” (Abbajay 2018).

Effective leaders are essential in every organization that wants to hire and retain exceptional talent and release that talent throughout the organization to produce high levels of performance excellence. Our primary reason for writing this book is to assist you in creating an integrated and systematic structure to develop effective leadership behaviors in your organization, which in turn will drive performance.

One part of the human brain, what we call the *upper brain*, is the catalyst for performance behavior. Effective leadership

is the result of a cause-and-effect relationship between performance behaviors that reside in the upper brain (growth and performance) and blocking behaviors that reside in the *lower brain* (fear and survival). Awareness and management of the tension between these two competing operating systems provides the spark to energize, engage, and enhance performance throughout the organization.

A universal truth in the life cycle of high-performance organizations is that individual breakthroughs drive organizational breakthroughs. Reducing the variability of leadership performance is critical to successfully aligning your strategy with key performance objectives and achieving the performance results you desire as a leader. Effective leadership behavior is the means to a greater end, particularly in healthcare—safe practices, high-quality care measures, and positive patient care experiences that create high levels of service satisfaction. You can get everything else right regarding the technical skill elements of performance—recruiting and retaining top talent, having the most innovative strategy and robust financial margins—but if you lack effective leadership behavior, you will never obtain the high level of performance you are technically capable of achieving.

So, the question is not whether you should have a systematic and programmatic approach to leadership development, but whether you will have an approach that gives you a return on investment in creating effective leaders and driving organizational performance. Garland and colleagues (2021, 73) tell us that healthcare leaders need a deeper understanding of leadership development systems and practices that “hold the greatest promise for strengthening leadership and improving organizational performance.” Their findings indicate a link between poor organizational performance and ineffective or weak leadership.

If you are a senior leader, you should consider adding a key objective in your strategic plan: developing effective leaders. If you can set aside any cognitive bias and cynicism you might have



regarding the potential return on investment, this book will help you discover how to leverage the collective technical skill potential of your teams and drive their performance using effective leadership behavior by leading with your upper brain.

## HOW THIS BOOK CAME TO BE

We did not start out knowing the importance of upper brain leadership. Like you, we have been on a journey to understand leadership all our lives, and this book is our next step in that journey. We hope you will join us on this journey to increase your effectiveness as a leader, help your team members discover their purpose, and create great work results.

**Michael:** My journey began in 1955 in a small town in northwest Pennsylvania. There were only 9,000 people in the town where I grew up. There are still only about 9,000 people there today. The main employers at that time were Kendall Motor Oil, the Owens Corrugated Box Company, and Zippo Manufacturing Company, makers of the iconic windproof cigarette lighter.

My path through life has included a variety of work experiences. I started in the janitor closet of my hometown critical access hospital, and moved on to on-the-job training as an operating room technician. I entered the United States Army in the enlisted ranks, earned a leadership scholarship and an officer's commission, then progressed to the C-suite of the premier United States Army medical center. After a 20-year Army career, I spent 12 years in civilian healthcare leadership and operations. I have dedicated the last 12 years to being an educator, researcher, and author on leadership behaviors that drive results to the highest levels of performance outcomes.

As a teenager, I dreamed of serving people in the delivery of patient care. I have been fortunate to fulfill that dream in a variety of military and civilian healthcare organizations all over the world.

Like Drucker, I have waited until I turned 65 to capture my reflections on this lifelong learning journey and my study and practice of effective leadership, human performance, and continuous organizational improvement. It is my privilege to share the experiences and knowledge gained from that journey in this book.

**Robert:** When I was ten, in May of 1992, I moved with my military family to the small town of Wahiawa on the island of Oahu. We lived near the most amazing beach and surfing destination—Hawaii’s famous North Shore. My older brother would pick me up after school and we would spend our afternoons (as well as our weekends) on the beach. It was an incredible experience.

Surfing taught me lessons that I carry with me to this day. You cannot catch waves as a spectator sitting on the beach. If you are going to surf, you need to get into the water and start paddling. There is nothing easy about getting on the board and trying to catch your first wave. Surfing is a lot of work and requires a lot of effort and practice. You have to want to do it. The same principles hold true for effective leadership.

Twenty years later, in the spring of 2011, I was working as senior policy adviser for the governor of South Carolina when my United States Army Reserve unit received a deployment notice to Afghanistan. A year later, I was on a plane returning to the United States, asking myself, What do I do now? I had survived a year as a combat team leader in one of the most violent, kinetic, and hostile environments in Afghanistan, trying to win the hearts and minds of uncooperative Afghans. I was unsure about my future, other than knowing that I had absolutely no desire to return to working in politics.

My father had recently retired from his second career in health-care administration to start a consulting firm focused on leadership development and organizational performance. When I arrived home, he asked me to join him. We joked many times in those early days that we were just “two men and a laptop.” Ten years later, we have built an internationally recognized leadership consulting practice, working passionately every day to help leaders

learn and apply three primary principles to benefit themselves and their team members:

1. Develop an acute sense of self-awareness and self-management.
2. Create an organizational culture of performance, growth, and development for people.
3. Engage performance as a function of technical capacity and behavioral capacity.

Individual leader behavior is the single most important predictor of your team's performance. Your behavior can be disruptive—and even toxic at times—to the performance outcomes of your team. As a leader, you mess with the brains of your people at your own performance peril. Remember, leadership is not a spectator sport. Leading effectively requires you to get in the water and do the work. And if you are going to lead effectively, you have to *want* to do it.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE FROM PAST TO PRESENT**

Our combined professional development careers span the decades from the 1970s through today. The major influences on quality achievement, organizational leadership, and performance improvement during our careers were Drucker, W. Edwards Deming, Joseph Juran, and Peter Senge. We regret that many young emerging leaders lack exposure to Drucker's practical wisdom. He had a penchant for challenging the assumptions and motivations driving people's behavior (Drucker 2008). His wisdom could help solve many of society's problems today.

The 1970s and 1980s were a period of great transformation, particularly in healthcare organizations—motivated, in part, by a massive growth in technology and a major shift in The Joint Commission's survey process. During the 1970s, The Joint Commission

survey typically involved a small number of people, and the standards focused on things that ensured the organization was *prepared* to provide quality patient care, rather than on the actual quality and safety of care that patients received. In 1986, The Joint Commission shifted focus to the quality of the care itself. The Joint Commission went back to its founding principles, following every patient long enough to determine whether treatment was successful. Then they added one more step: If the treatment was not successful, they asked why not, to prevent similar performance failure on the next patient. As The Joint Commission survey process shifted to performance improvement, patient outcomes, and data-driven decision-making, leaders of healthcare systems adapted.

Adding to this shift was Stephen R. Covey's 1989 classic, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. Whereas his contemporaries focused on process, Covey focused on people. The idea that you are efficient with things (process) and effective with people created a perspective balanced between obtaining results and caring about the people producing those results. This began the tension for leaders between process focus (technical capacity) and people focus (behavior capacity).

A year later, Peter Senge published *The Fifth Discipline*, and the "ethos of learning" became the next wave of organizational and leadership transformation. Leaders once again adapted to create learning environments devoted to growth and development at all levels of the organization. Employees attended workshops and courses both on- and off-site. Performance improvement spawned an entire new field of work as consultants lectured to standing-room-only capacity audiences.

In healthcare, not only was there a renewed emphasis on the quality of care provided and on patient outcomes, but there was also a direct link created between the delivery of high-quality healthcare and patient satisfaction. Patients, viewed as customers or consumers, provided feedback on their care, which organizations used to identify performance improvement opportunities and target improvement actions. These improvement activities were

supported by the scientific method of measurement and observation. The scientific method now governs all performance improvement activities—at least from the process side.

As a capstone to all these paradigm shifts, Daniel Goleman published his bestseller *Primal Leadership* in 2002. In it, he sounded a clarion call to leaders to stop ignoring the link between emotions and business performance and make emotional resonance their first priority. Doing so, he said, would allow people to flourish in their work and produce the results their leaders desired. Emotional intelligence—becoming smart about emotions, in Goleman’s model—really matters for leadership success.

We want to take Goleman’s concept to the next level. We want to shift from being smart about emotions to being smart about behavior—specifically, effective leadership behavior that drives performance.

Throughout these decades of change there have been discussions about the need to move away from the traditional command-and-control leadership that dominated the latter half of the twentieth century. Uhl-Bien, Marion, and McKelvey (2007) note that the historical models of leadership, particularly bureaucratic command and control, are more suited for physical production and manufacturing than for the knowledge-based work of the twenty-first century. They propose, as we do, that elements of leadership effectiveness must include aspects of organizational learning, innovation, and adaptability, each of which focuses on the leader’s behavioral skill, not technical skill.

Since the early 2000s and Goleman’s influential book, a host of scholars, researchers, and consultants have urged leaders to move away from acting as an expert who tells a team what to do to get results. In the emerging model, the leader is a coach who guides a team through open-ended questions to desired outcomes. With our behavior-based approach to leadership effectiveness, we tend to avoid these either/or contrasts. A variety of contexts, situations, and crises can make leader-as-expert behavior necessary and relevant to optimize the outcome.

We recognize the tension between the traditional expert leader (telling) and coach leader (asking), but we will demonstrate that leaders can adapt themselves to a variety of behaviors depending on what is most relevant to the challenge of the day. Most importantly, advances in neuroscience allow us to account for situational and environmental variables that influence effective leadership behaviors. This results in a predictive model of behaviors that will be effective for leaders and team members, especially during times of extreme stress, frustration, and conflict. An effective leader responds with effective behavior most suited to any situation or environmental variable by leading with the upper brain.

## **A NEUROSCIENCE MODEL FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR**

Attempts to catalog human behavior into specific patterns and match those patterns to advances in human development go at least as far back as the Chinese in 2200 BCE. In ancient Greece, Empedocles created a behavior classification system in 444 BCE, and the four-quadrant model developed by Hippocrates in 400 BCE has strongly influenced modern four-quadrant models (Hamilton 2010). With the advent of technology that permits us to see the brain functioning in real time, we can now prove or disprove many of the assumptions in these types of theories.

Landy and Conte (2014) identify certain leadership theories as highly suspect in their explanation of or correlation to effective leadership, and in particular their business applications for performance outcomes. For example, great man theories examined the lives of respected leaders for factors contributing to the person's success and greatness. While popular and appealing, such theories have no supporting scientific research. The trait theory of the early twentieth century proposed that leaders possessed certain characteristics that nonleaders did not. The trait theory has made a comeback since 2000, and has broad appeal. Researchers have studied

more than forty such characteristics but still struggle to identify what each trait actually means. Without scientific research to support its claims, we should remain skeptical about adopting a trait approach for leadership effectiveness.

Constant change and increasing complexity require leaders to have a variety of complex technical and behavioral competencies. We define *competencies* as a set of behaviors, learned by practice and experience, which are necessary to achieve a desired organizational outcome, objective, or result. To be highly effective and behaviorally smart, leaders need to learn how to lead from the upper brain, which drives performance behavior and protects the lower (survival) brain from antagonism that drives survival behavior. As you will learn, the brain excels at creating performance and at sustaining survival; it just is not good at doing both at the same time.

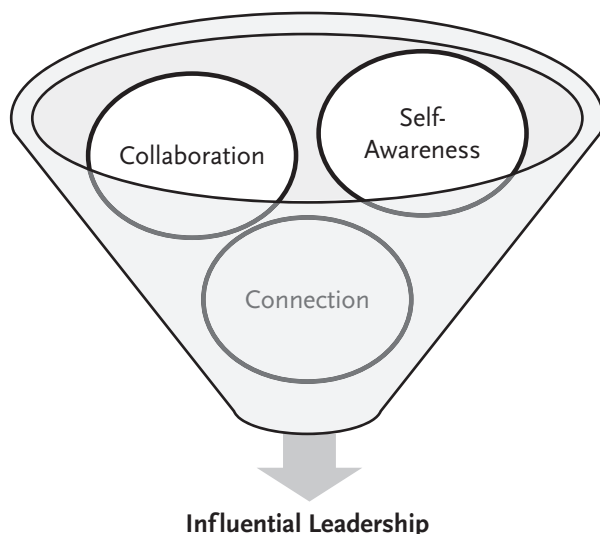
Identifying your authentic self, behaviorally speaking, and managing that behavior consistently from one context to another is the key to your leadership success. No organization can become in performance what its leaders are not in their behavior. We believe that the most forward-thinking business leaders today should encourage and support business educators in teaching the importance of effective leadership behavior.

This book will explain how the human brain works in practical terms and help you use this knowledge as leverage to increase leadership effectiveness and drive performance outcomes. Key leader behaviors can improve or impede human performance. Our approach is science-based: By focusing on behaviors that are physical, observable, and measurable, we can improve leadership effectiveness and drive outcomes in a tangible and meaningful way.

For years, we have been teaching this approach in our keynotes, seminars, and workshops and using it in our executive coaching practice with great success. In our previous book, *Influential Leadership: Change Your Behavior, Change Your Organization, Change Healthcare*, we identified three fundamental principles (see exhibit 0.1) that create and drive leadership influence: self-awareness, collaboration, and connection (Frisina 2014). Leaders who have studied, developed, and

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## Exhibit 0.1 Fundamental Principles of Influential Leadership



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Source: Frisina (2014, 3).

applied these principles have achieved significant personal growth and attained remarkable performance achievements in their organizations.

Human performance is predicated on the ability of the human brain to function in certain ways to produce the outcomes you desire. The concepts and principles you will learn in this book and apply in your own work are the products of decades of actual practice in our own professional work and of evidence-based data from advances in neuroscience.

That is what makes this book different. Rather than applying the scientific method to process, we are going to apply it to people—specifically to leaders—and to their brains. When leaders behave in ways that allow people’s brains to focus on growth, development, and achievement, then we increase the level of performance in patient safety, quality outcomes, and patient experience that healthcare leaders require and patients deserve. This scientific approach is applicable to leaders and their teams in other industries, as well. There is a clear correlation between performance



behaviors and performance outcomes in any enterprise. We are providing a science-based methodology that governs performance behavior activities and is applicable to any organization.

Since our passion and purpose has always been the delivery of patient care, we will illustrate the model and principles of effective leadership using healthcare examples. Where appropriate, we will also use examples from other fields to demonstrate the universal application of our model to education, manufacturing, finance, and service organizations as well.

With the growth and development of neuroscience and real-time imaging technology, researchers have improved our understanding of the human brain and created a new vocabulary for discussing human performance. Terms such as *brain elasticity*, *epigenetics*, *dual-process theory*, and *default mode network* describe how the brain enables growth, development, and achievement on one hand, and how it enables survival through its reactions to threat, fear, loss, and anxiety on the other.

*Leading with Your Upper Brain* will explain why people must be able to connect and engage with their leader to connect and engage with their work. When a leader exhibits behavior that promotes psychological safety, team members' brain responses trigger their ability to focus on their work and produce results at a high level. When a leader's behavior does not promote psychological safety, team members' brains will focus on responding to fear and threat, diminishing performance. *Toxic* is the word used in the research literature to describe this kind of leadership behavior.

Wilson (2014) describes the psychological and physiological effects of ineffective leadership behavior on team members' engagement and their ability to perform at high levels. An evolutionary biologist who focuses on applying the principles of life science to business practices and organizations, Wilson believes that ineffective, toxic leadership is a plague in any social organization that lacks the mechanism to control it. In chapter 3, we will expand on this concept and how it affects our ability to drive individual and organizational performance to the highest levels.

Based on our research, effective leadership is the dependent variable that drives culture to create engagement. Engagement is the foundational behavioral skill that drives technical skills to their highest levels. Performance outcomes are the combination of three science-based behavior performance equations that create the results leaders desire and add meaning and value to people's work.

Our behavior performance model is systematic in that it links leadership behavior directly to employee engagement, which links directly to business outcomes and performance. The model is integrated in that it cascades across all leadership levels of an organization. Finally, it is backed by data, research, and performance metrics from field testing with clients to validate performance outcomes. The structure of this book reflects the behavior-based performance equations that make up our model (exhibit 0.2).

Part I, "Effective Leadership," explains the first of the three behavior performance equations. Effective leadership describes and demonstrates behaviors that focus on aligning the key objectives of the organization to the performance outcomes that leaders desire. Effective leadership also promotes the well-being and

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#### **Exhibit 0.2 Three Behavior-Based Equations for Performance**

$$\text{Performance} = f(x) (\text{technical skill}) \times (\text{behavior skill})$$



$$\text{Engagement} = f(x) (\text{culture}) \times (\text{effective leadership})$$



$$\text{Effective leadership} = f(x) (\text{self-awareness}) \times (\text{self-management})$$

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interests of the members of the organization. Leaders face a challenge: focusing on both performance objectives and the growth and development of people in the same organizational culture. The two goals need not be mutually exclusive. We will show you how effective leadership behaviors can accommodate both cultural requirements.

Part II, “Engagement,” describes the second science-based equation for performance. You do not get performance without engagement, and you cannot create engagement without effective leadership and a consistent, value-based organizational culture. Engagement is people’s willingness to come to work and fulfill the interests and objectives of the organization. Engagement requires an individual to choose to subordinate self-interest to organizational goals. The greater the need for individuals to preserve self-interest, actual or perceived, the more difficult it becomes for leaders to create engagement.

According to Gallup (2017), just 33 percent of American workers are engaged by their jobs. Fifty-two percent say they are “just showing up,” and 17 percent describe themselves as “actively disengaged.” Most employers have a lot of work to do to unlock the full potential of their workforce. Effective leadership provides the psychological safety necessary for people to focus on the needs of others. It is a function of leaders behaving in a way that allows the brains of others to focus on performance rather than individual survival, creating a natural pathway to engagement and higher levels of performance.

Part III, “Performance,” deals with the capstone equation of our performance model. This section combines the elements of the previous chapters into a cohesive methodology. By using our performance model, leaders will drive higher levels of performance and simultaneously create conditions for their team members to discover meaning, value, and purpose in their work. When combined, the three equations in our model play a powerful role in overall well-being. Whenever performance does not match potential, it indicates a gap between how we are actually performing and

what we could be achieving with the appropriate levels of effective leadership and personal engagement. In healthcare, when our performance does not match our potential, people suffer real harm. We are not talking about what we hope we could achieve in our level of safety, quality, and service performance. We are talking about achieving what we are already capable of doing to create a higher and consistent level of performance outcomes.

## **BECOMING A MORE EFFECTIVE LEADER**

We believe that we are on the verge of yet another transformation in how effective leaders will lead their organizations to performance excellence. As we encourage you to adopt this model, we acknowledge a debt of gratitude to those leadership practitioners, researchers, and scholars who preceded us in this work.

We are convinced that emerging leaders will be most effective when behaving in ways that lead the brains of their team members to higher levels of performance. These leaders will learn and apply the principles of neuroscience detailed in this book and will change the way they think about themselves and their roles. They will change the way they currently communicate purpose and will create organizational cultures that focus on the growth of individuals while advancing the key objectives of the organization. Finally, these effective leaders will provide people in their organizations the ability to discover meaning and value in their work—the ability to change the world for good. You can be that kind of leader. Your journey to leadership effectiveness starts now.

## **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- This book fills the gap between traditional leadership theory and thinking about performance as a byproduct of

technical skills, strategy, and individual talent. We offer a new way of thinking about performance that combines technical skill capacity with behavioral skill capacity, supported by neuroscience research.

- The highly effective leaders we studied for this book all have a common behavioral habit of lifelong learning. These leaders have an insatiable thirst for finding ways to continue improving in the face of constant change and increasing complexity in the world.
- When people work for an ineffective leader, their performance is always inconsistent and at levels below their potential, their capabilities, and their personal desire to achieve outcomes.
- When you have a performance system that clearly defines roles, goals, and expectations and aligns employees' work to your objectives and key results, and when you conduct regular coaching sessions with the people doing the work of the organization, you will drive performance to higher levels.
- Knowledge-based workers will resist control; they are motivated by meaning, value, and purpose in their work, not personal financial profit.
- Leadership theories of the past that lack scientific support should be approached with some skepticism.
- People who occupy leadership positions of power and authority tend to change their ineffective behaviors when they understand the effect of those behaviors on other people, how those behaviors disrupt performance, and the lost opportunities for their own continuing performance and promotion opportunities.
- Not every ineffective leader has the desire to change their behavior, regardless of the negative outcomes their behavior produces.

## PUT IT TO WORK

1. As a leader, you occupy a professional position. That professional status requires you, first and foremost, to behave in a way that acknowledges your stewardship responsibility to sustain the welfare of your organization and your organizational members. Consider and respond to the following self-reflective questions:
  - Have you ever completed a 360-evaluation tool? If so, how do you use that information to manage your behavior day-to-day?
  - Do you give people opportunities to offer you feedback on your behavioral lapses? If yes, how is that working for you? If not, why would you not want to know how your behavior is affecting other people?
  - You cannot change what you do not measure, and you cannot measure what you do not know. How do you measure your level of leadership effectiveness? Do you have a development plan for becoming a more effective leader? If so, does your development plan include
    - challenges that make it difficult for you to effectively execute your job responsibilities;
    - things you could do to improve your performance or meet your objectives more effectively; and
    - development goals with specific behavior objectives to raise the level of your performance effectiveness?
2. Are you constantly engaged in your own lifelong learning journey?
  - Do you have a personal set of core values? If so, what are they, and are they consistently evident in your behavior? If not, would you be willing to engage in a

values discovery exercise? (Here is an excellent resource to guide you: [www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED\\_85.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_85.htm).)

- Do you commit a certain part of your day to learning something new about effective leadership? The cumulative effects of 15–20 minutes a day working on your personal leadership development can be transformational. The following suggestions all can take less than 20 minutes a day:
  - Listen to a TED Talk.
  - Listen to a leadership podcast.
  - Read ten pages of a leadership book.
  - Read a leadership blog.
  - Read a leadership newsletter.
- 3. Effective leaders have a clear set of personal core values. They have formulated a personal purpose statement that keeps them mindful of their organizational duties and responsibilities. They take responsibility for ensuring that their teams, as business units, achieve expected results.
  - What is the status of your organization’s leadership development program?
  - How do you assess your leaders’ performance gaps to guide their improvement?
  - Is leadership development a strategic objective of your organization?

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