A BLUEPRINT FOR LEADERSHIP SUCCESS

Business leaders today face unprecedented change, competition, and complexity. Performance expectations continue to rise and, predictably, the impact of relentless uncertainty and pressure is taking its toll.

The good news, as indicated by DDI’s recent Leadership Forecast 2003 study, is that as organizations are preparing for economic recovery, they are recognizing that competitive differentiation—even survival—lies with investment in and development of their leadership talent. The predicted resurgence of the “war for talent,” coupled with the changing career expectations of both young and experienced professionals, have forced organizations to place greater emphasis on creating environments in which talented professionals want to be leaders—as opposed to preserving environments that are unattractive to potential leaders because they believe they will not succeed or be valued.

Jim Collins’ influential study, published in his 2001 book, Good to Great, adds to the evidence of the profound impact that effective leadership and talented professionals have on sustained organizational performance. Collins’ research, as well as guidance offered by other successful leaders, (e.g., Bossidy & Charan, 2002), have clearly captured the attention of the corporate world. In fact, the Leadership Forecast 2003 study shows that talent management has now surpassed growth as a primary business objective. Unquestionably, there is a renewed emphasis on creating market advantage through enhanced leadership readiness and effectiveness.

But improving trust and confidence in the quality of leaders is no small challenge. Stakeholders, including boards of directors, shareholders, customers, employees, and leaders themselves recognize the importance of strong leadership to the success of their organizations. These stakeholders also want clear “guideposts” to help them understand what is involved in building effective leadership talent—and those charged with building their organization’s leadership capability want to know how to make it happen.

DDI’s Blueprint for Exceptional Leadership (Figure 1), based on more than 30 years of experience working with leaders around the world, provides these guideposts. DDI has been privileged to have a unique vantage point for research and observation of leaders across cultures, levels, industries, and functions. Our observations have contributed to a strong understanding of what produces, supports, and constitutes effective leadership.

The Leadership Blueprint offers a template for success for leaders at all levels. Our model describes core leadership beliefs and values. It is a framework for defining “success profiles” for informal or emerging leaders, people leaders, operational leaders, and strategic leaders, as well as leadership imperatives for success at each level.
It also defines important shifts in behavior, thought, and attitude that are required during key leadership transitions. These transitions include progression into entry-level roles for informal or emerging leaders, as well as the seminal shift from an operational leadership position to senior strategic leadership.

DDI’s Leadership Blueprint is not intended to be a substitute for a leader’s personal journey of discovery or his or her leadership development; however, we do believe that the research and collected wisdom of our clients and colleagues helps frame positive (and negative) leadership behavior, providing insights that can help leaders get the most out of their lessons and experiences.

GUIDEPOST ONE:
VALUES ARE AT THE HEART OF GREAT LEADERSHIP

DDI has studied and researched what competencies make leaders most effective. In the past five years, our research on executive assessments and how to identify potential has expanded our thinking into the realm of personal attributes, executive derailers, and value systems that greatly impact senior leader success or failure. This research, along with a recent update and relaunch of our frontline-to-mid-level leadership development system, Interaction Management®: Exceptional Leaders . . . Extraordinary Results™, has offered a unique opportunity to engage leaders around the world to gain contemporary insights about leadership effectiveness.

With recent public debate about corporate integrity and ethics, it’s not surprising that leadership values emerged from our research as indisputable differentiators of successful leaders. Common themes that came to light included integrity, humility, collaboration, learning orientation, and passion for results.

Ironically, corporate scandals (e.g., Tyco, Enron, WorldCom, Adelphia), and the misadventures in recent years of politicians such as Bill Clinton, former congressman Jim Traficant, and former senator Bob Packwood, have led many to question
whether or not corporate or political villains even have “values.” Of course, every individual has values. The real question is whether these values reflect desirable motivations and attitudes and, in turn, impact an individual’s behavior. For example, Dennis Koslowski demonstrated too strong of an attachment to commercial values when he misappropriated Tyco funds; conversely, he exhibited little personal or professional integrity. Jean-Marie Messier, former CEO of the French media conglomerate Vivendi Universal, apparently exhibited a similar lack of integrity as he was ousted amid accusations that he had reported misleading information on the company’s financial viability. In a more extreme example, Saddam Hussein and his sons were corrupted by power and obviously did not feel circumscribed by any societal values that represented the common good of the Iraqi people.

So where do values come from? Can organizations legitimately expect their associates, and more importantly, their leaders, to engender a common set of values?

Simply defined, values are attitudes, beliefs, and motivation that drive preferences and behavior. **Personal values** are formed early in life through family and religious upbringing, and refined through educational, social, and early professional experiences. Personal values tend to drive interests and life choices. Children who are exposed to theater when they are young may be likely to value and support the performing arts throughout their lives. Likewise, those who grow up in the mountains, or whose family vacations centered around enjoying the outdoors, may pursue lifestyles and even life partners who share those interests.

People are generally proud of their personal values, openly expressing and exhibiting them through their interests, career choices, and behavior. For example, an individual with strong altruistic values may be more likely to watch a telethon than “reality” TV shows; he or she may be more likely to volunteer for a community project than to spend an exorbitant amount of time attending parties.

From an organizational perspective, values are convictions that guide behavior and support realization of the overall vision. Most corporate, non-profit, educational, political, and religious organizations aim to shape membership and individual behavior through declarations of sanctioned values. The Boy Scouts of America, for instance, stresses the values of volunteerism and self-sufficiency and expects Scouts to behave in a certain manner that exhibits and confirms those values.

Obviously, there are important, appropriate distinctions between personal and sanctioned organizational values. After all, few corporations demand specific religious values or beliefs from their leaders and associates. Nevertheless, strong corporate cultures, characterized by common sets of values, are consistently shown to drive motivation, behavior, and ultimately, economic performance. Consider that, typically, an organization would desire to have—and benefit from having—leaders and associates who value keeping customers happy more than they value the luxury of being “out the door” each day at the scheduled close of business.

Kotter and Heskett (1992) cite many case studies of high-performing organizations with “strong cultures.” These researchers conclude that a key predictor of success is goal alignment, in which “employees tend to march to the same drummer.” In these organizations, leaders share relatively common
values and approaches to business. In turn, new employees are quickly indoctrinated in these values. While diversity in behavior, and even personality, is healthy, any organization will clearly want all of its associates to have a common understanding of where the organization is going, and how associates are expected to behave in order to help it get there.

DDI’s experience over the last 30-plus years has proved consistent with this research. Our work in strategy execution and performance management has shown that articulating, reinforcing, and holding leaders accountable for promoting values is probably the single most important element in ensuring a high-performance culture. David Packard, co-founder of Hewlett-Packard, recognized that companies have responsibilities that go above and beyond simply making money for their stockholders. His declaration of valued behaviors and attitudes emphasized HP’s responsibility to respect the dignity of associates, in addition to focusing on the bottom line. His actions, and expectations for HP leaders, defined the HP culture and positioned the organization as an enduring “employer of choice.”

Common leadership values and beliefs also serve as a commitment or a promise of behavior that is a prerequisite to retaining membership. For example, Semper Fi (“ever faithful”) is the well-recognized motto of the United States Marine Corps. The Washington Post’s Katherine Graham, meanwhile, gained lifelong respect from her journalistic peers by staying committed to her organization’s values during the Watergate scandal in the early 1970s. She jeopardized both her business and her personal freedom by upholding the journalist’s mandate to protect the identity of information sources. Contrast Graham with Jason Blair, a former reporter for The New York Times, who lost his credibility, his job, and, ultimately, his career when it was learned he had manufactured stories and quotes.

The other essential role of values is to serve as a dependable compass in times of ambiguity, change, or crisis. A great example of the power of values in guiding leadership actions and behavior is the visionary credo defined over 50 years ago by Johnson & Johnson’s founder, Robert Wood Johnson: Put customers first and stockholders last. Johnson insisted that J&J leaders embrace this credo, and apply it daily in running the business. Its value was resoundingly proved during the Tylenol tampering scare in the fall of 1982. J&J leaders, acting in accordance with the credo, made the courageous decisions to pull the product from store shelves until its safety could be assured. This decision created short-term threats to J&J’s viability, but as it amounted to doing the right thing, it inevitably elevated the organization’s reputation. J&J’s leaders made a tough decision, with little if any hesitation, to put the customer first. In doing so, these leaders protected Tylenol’s position in the marketplace and preserved the brand for J&J for many years to come.

DDI’s exploration of the importance of values led to our codifying a set of beliefs that characterize effective leadership (Figure 2). In our work with leaders, these beliefs have shown to correlate highly with long-term leadership effectiveness. What is evident as one reviews these beliefs is that they are concerned with one of the most critical functions of leadership at any level—accomplishing goals through motivating and guiding others. The ability to work through others cannot be underestimated, though, at the end of the day, leaders have to face only themselves in the mirror. Therefore, these
beliefs encompass the drive for results, balanced with the ability to do things the right way and with complete integrity and courage. Consider: Leaders that believe in people don’t need to feed their own egos. Instead, they can focus their energies on rallying the troops and on helping their people succeed and accomplish the organization’s goals. They understand that leaders are only as effective as the people they lead, and maintain perspectives that are grounded in the future, as well as the present. Indeed, high levels of integrity are a must for today’s leaders—as is being able to manage ambiguity, spending time in developing talent, and being willing to take action.

In fact, these beliefs can be seen as a “North Star”—offering guidance and confidence in times of change or uncertainty. These beliefs, and the values they encompass, can help individuals figure out where to start, how to stay on course when things are going well, how to maintain focus when confused, and how to chart a course for moving forward during turbulent times.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>EFFECTIVE LEADERS . . .</th>
<th>LEADERS WHO EMBODY THIS BELIEF:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Are Masters at Managing Through Ambiguity</td>
<td>• Build a culture that embraces change.</td>
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<td>• Constantly set clear goals and expectations.</td>
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<td>• Are able to manage across boundaries (and lead others to do the same).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Show connections between individual accountabilities, team goals, and organizational vision and strategies.</td>
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<td>• Set a clear course—even though it may change frequently.</td>
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<td>Inspire Confidence and Belief in the Future</td>
<td>• Are able to articulate a vision depicting where they eventually want their organization or team to be.</td>
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<td>• Exude calm and project optimism in the face of uncertainty.</td>
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<td>• Can engage and inspire employees in their work, connecting their needs and values with those of the enterprise.</td>
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<td>Have a Passion for Results</td>
<td>• Set clear accountabilities and high expectations for themselves and for others.</td>
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<td>• Hire, promote, and reward high performers.</td>
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<td>• Keep themselves and their employees focused on the top two to three customer-driven priorities.</td>
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<td>• Take action on those who don’t fit and/or are consistently not performing.</td>
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<td>• Establish critical measures of success and make sure they are visible to others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are Marked by Unwavering Integrity</td>
<td>• Keep promises and commitments.</td>
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<td>• “Walk the talk.”</td>
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<td>• Give straight, honest feedback.</td>
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<td>• Lead through values.</td>
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<td>• Act promptly if their integrity, or that of the organization, is compromised.</td>
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<td>Set Others Up for Success</td>
<td>• Coach people to succeed before they have the opportunity to fail.</td>
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<td>• Truly enjoy seeing people learn and grow.</td>
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<td>• Reward and/or recognize success.</td>
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<td>• View failures as learning opportunities.</td>
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<td>• Share (rather than horde) talent for the overall good of the organization.</td>
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<td>Have Strong, Rather than Big Egos</td>
<td>• Humbly share credit with others.</td>
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<td>• Never “shoot the messenger.” They encourage open sharing of bad news.</td>
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<td>• Are always asking, “How can we do things better?”</td>
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<td>• Blame themselves before pointing a finger at others.</td>
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<td>• Know themselves and are guided by strong personal values.</td>
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<td>• Listen to understand.</td>
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<td>• Recognize that they, more often than not, are not the ones with the right answers.</td>
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<td>Have the Courage to Make Decisions</td>
<td>• Address issues or problems quickly.</td>
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<td>• Take actions that are right, even when they are unpopular; they act on conviction.</td>
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<td>• Stand by their decisions once they make them . . . even if circumstances cause them to change course later.</td>
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<td>• Take a longer-term view consistent with a future vision.</td>
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Figure 2: DDI’s Leadership Beliefs
GUIDEPOST TWO:
LEADERSHIP SUCCESS MUST BE DEFINED
BY CONSIDERING THE “WHOLE” PERSON

Success Profiles

Over the last several decades, various individuals, groups, and organizations have tried to portray leadership in terms of competencies, roles, experiences, tasks, personality traits, and values. DDI, too, has explored various approaches for describing successful leadership while conducting thousands of studies of supervisor, manager, and executive behavior. Many of these approaches have produced insights that have bolstered our understanding of leadership; however, we have identified a need to simplify the abundance of research and concepts in a simple framework (relevant across leadership levels) that offers a holistic “wiring diagram” for profiling leadership success.

DDI’s research and experience, as well as that of others (McCall, [1998]; Borman & Brush, [1998]; Bray & Howard, [1988]), demonstrate that leadership success can best be predicted through collective consideration of four key descriptors described below in Figure 3:

Success profiles form the basis for selection, development diagnosis, job placement, and promotion in a comprehensive personnel system.

Evaluations against success profiles offer information essential for a solid understanding of a leader’s developmental strengths and weaknesses and/or his or her readiness for a role or promotion. Success profiles target essential preparatory experiences (what one has done); organizational knowledge (what one knows); behaviorally defined competencies (what one is capable of); and personal attributes, which can include derailers for senior-level leaders (who one is). Success profile requirements will vary by level or position, at times by job function or role, and by the particular organization’s strategy and culture.

The leadership level also plays a role in the relative importance of the four descriptors. For example, experience with critical job challenges (such as international experience) often is a determinant of promotability for high-potential individuals to senior strategic roles. Many organizations simply won’t entrust major, high-risk assignments to people who haven’t “been there, done that.” Organizational knowledge must run deep for success in certain roles, particularly relative to products, systems (budgeting, long-range planning, etc.), and processes and functions (sales, production).

Personal attributes, especially executive derailers, also increase in importance as an individual rises to the executive ranks (Hogan & Holland, [2003]; Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, [1994]; McCall, [1998]). “Executive derailers” are commonly used to describe dysfunctional behaviors that individuals are predisposed to demonstrate because of underlying personality traits.
These traits (or tendencies) are the senior leader’s Achilles’ heel, and can lead to failure—even when leaders may have the necessary competencies, job challenges, and organizational knowledge required. In fact, derailers often occur when an executive overuses a strength, such as when high standards manifest themselves through overcritical, perfectionist behavior, or when assertiveness crosses the line into defensiveness. Other derailers include being volatile, risk adverse, eccentric, etc. These derailers often emerge under high-pressure situations, such as when a leader is transitioning into a more challenging role, and are not always directly observable—as are competencies, job challenges, and organizational knowledge—until they wreak havoc on the individuals’ own career, or worse yet, the careers of those around them. Consider the example of Bill Clinton. It was not his lack of skill or knowledge that hurt him the most. Clinton’s recklessness, impulsiveness, and arrogance made him believe he could live by his own standards and ultimately led to his historic impeachment. Ken Lay and his colleagues at Enron were certainly knowledgeable and skillful but they, too, gave into their own worst personality traits—and ultimately destroyed what had been perceived by many to be a highly successful organization.

For early leadership roles, such as informal leadership roles or people leader roles, competencies (what one is capable of) tend to be most relevant for predicting success. Competencies are clusters of skills, behaviors, and (technical) knowledge. They capture what is needed for success in interpersonal relationships (Building Partnerships), leading others (Coaching, Delegation/Empowerment), and management (Decision Making, Planning and Organizing), among other important leader functions. Competencies are important for identifying strengths and skill gaps at senior levels, and also provide an invaluable common language and behavioral standards for foundational skills that make or break lower-level leaders, especially those who are at an early stage in their careers.

Obviously, success profiles are far more comprehensive than most competency models in that relevant knowledge, experience, and personal attributes (which include values, motivation, and derailers) provide complementary data to pure competency models, thereby increasing the predictability of success.

GUIDEPOST THREE:
LEADERS MUST BE EQUIPPED TO RECOGNIZE AND EFFECTIVELY PERFORM FUNDAMENTAL AND TRANSITIONAL “LEADERSHIP IMPERATIVES”

Leadership imperatives are those key roles/tasks that leaders must perform well in order to be effective. These “imperatives” drive effective leadership early on and continue to be important—though the specific imperatives will change—as leaders progress upward within their organizations.
Some of the imperatives (see Figure 4) remain constant even as leaders step up to strategic roles. After all, even at the C-level, executives still need to coach their direct reports for results. Other imperatives will evolve, particularly as leaders transition from the operational to the strategic level. For example, as leaders enter more strategic-level roles, the frontline and middle manager need to drive team performance becomes a need to execute the business plan. While people leaders must manage work, operational and strategic leaders must mobilize resources to accomplish objectives. At the strategic level, leaders encounter imperatives that are unique to that level, including the ability to be a global thinker and/or an entrepreneur. The change driver imperative also is one that rests primarily with senior leaders, as they must be catalysts for change and innovation. Strategic leaders combine this change driver imperative with the need to build their employees’ enthusiasm and attain their commitment to a new goal. Success profiles need to be based on the imperatives associated with a given leadership level.

Leadership transitions present a significant crossroad. The readiness of leaders to reframe their thinking, and adjust their behavior and leadership styles, can greatly impact their career, and ultimately, the performance of their organizations. These leadership transitions and the unique challenges presented by each organizational “step up” have been described as “passages,” “defining moments,” “key events,” and “making a turn.”

DDI’s research and that of others (Charan, Drotter & Noel [2001], McCall [1998]; McCall & Hollenbeck [2003], Lombardo & Morrison [1988]), suggest at least three essential paradigm shifts that will occur over the course of a leader’s rise to the top of the organization. These shifts occur early in their careers as they assume initial people leader roles, when they rise to and take on operational assignments, and when they are promoted to the strategic leadership ranks.

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**Figure 4:** The Transition of Imperatives Across Leadership Levels
Key Transitions: Levels of Leadership

Informal and emerging leaders are “leaders in training” who eventually will become leaders for the first time. Though not yet in formal leadership positions, these leaders may still be charged with leading teams, special projects, or task forces. For example, an individual contributor might assume a pivotal role on a team that plans a special event for employees and their families. Or, perhaps, the individual might be called upon to be the point person who gathers data and assembles a proposal.

A challenge often faced by emerging and informal leaders as they move into initial formal leadership positions (at the people leader level) is that the way in which they accomplish work must change. As they transition into a formal leadership role, they must be able to accomplish work through motivating and guiding others, as opposed to focusing solely on their own personal responsibilities and performance.

Early people leader roles provide the first formal opportunities for leaders to get work done through others. Effective motivation, planning, coaching, and responsibility for evaluating others’ performances require both value (i.e., emotional) and skill adjustments. The transition from an individual contributor role to a people leader role also offers individuals a chance to determine if they are suited to leadership, or if they would be happier reverting to work as an individual contributor (or perhaps an informal leadership role).

As individuals shift into operational leadership roles, they may manage managers, and/or be asked to manage beyond their own functional areas or experience, (e.g., a production operations manager being responsible for managing engineers, local purchasing, human resources, and production team members). They often are focused on optimizing processes and the performance of their unit. A key transitional challenge at this level is to balance short-term functional concerns with the need to sustain and drive competitive advantage. To accomplish these objectives, individuals need to mature in their communication and leadership skills, and to develop sound delegation skills. Operational leaders often report to multifunctional general managers, and are likely to work with other functional managers supporting the business.

Strategic leaders require significant adjustments in their frame of reference. In order to drive execution, they need to reconcile and connect strategy (e.g., markets, products/services, competition), organizational capabilities (processes and infrastructure), and organizational culture (people). As they progress to increasingly senior roles, they may create future strategy, make difficult choices to focus on core strengths, and develop a communication style that inspires and energizes diverse audiences. They also need insights into how their businesses can make money.

As alluded to earlier in this white paper, the irony in this transition is that some personal attributes that made a leader effective at the operational level may actually derail him or her at the strategic level. Given that some attributes will be necessary for success while simultaneously representing a potential case for derailment, how leaders rely on these attributes should be evaluated as individuals assume senior leadership roles.

More than ever, strategic leaders need to attend to the leadership imperatives. DDI and other thought leaders (Bossidy & Charan, [2002]; Collins, [2001] have
demonstrated their importance to successful senior leaders and their utility in helping organizations place the right individuals in these critical roles.

**LEADERSHIP IMPERATIVES BY LEVEL**

**Informal and Emerging Leaders**

When assuming leadership roles, even on a temporary or interim basis, informal and emerging leaders often must be able to **coach for results, partner within and across teams, manage work** (their own and others’), **influence through personal power**, and **inspire loyalty and trust**.

This set of responsibilities represents a subset of the imperatives associated with the first formal level of leadership—the people leader level.

As mentioned above, the move to formal people leader roles requires that individuals develop the additional skills needed to successfully lead a team, as well as acquire a more team-oriented perspective. In addition, individuals will begin to understand whether or not they are a good fit for a leadership role, based on how much they enjoy coaching and working through others.

**People Leader Imperatives**

The frontline or people leader level is where leaders are concerned with tactical tasks and with the accomplishment of team goals and objectives. People leaders must become adept at managing the activities and performance of their direct reports. Their focus is tactical in that the tasks they supervise tend to be the day-to-day activities of running a business, such as research and development, providing services directly to customers, sales, and engineering/manufacturing. They also may be tasks associated with support functions, such as finance, human resources, accounting, management information systems, etc.

People leaders spend the majority of their time leading small groups or individuals to achieve performance expectations that contribute to their unit’s success. They spend considerable time **selecting talent**, and **coaching for success** to develop subordinates. They are successful when they attain the proper balance between achieving results through managing work and leading others in a way that supports the organization’s cultural strategy (values). People leaders **drive performance** by holding both their direct reports and themselves accountable for results and for desired behaviors while staying focused on their customers and desired outcomes. In today’s lean, matrixed organizations, they also need to rely on their ability to **influence people through personal power** rather than position power, often **partnering within and across teams** to accomplish goals. People leaders are the frontline points of communication with employees and, consequently, their ability to **inspire loyalty and trust** becomes a key—if not the key—component in the organization’s overall leadership effectiveness. They perform the seven key imperatives, described in our model (see sidebar on page 7), to succeed in their roles.

**Operational Leader Imperatives**

Operational leaders have a broader range of responsibility than do people leaders, but are still focused on achieving the shorter-term goals of the organization. They manage people leaders and assume responsibility for a wider scope or organizational systems or processes. They focus on major projects, initiatives, or processes that
ultimately determine goal achievement for the organization. They can be in any functional area, and deal with more complexity than people leaders in terms of data, partnering with other departments, system or process issues, and resource and material allocations.

Operational leader roles can range from mid-level managers to department heads, or even to heading up small divisions. In any of these positions or roles, the focus is on operational results versus longer-term results.

A key transition needs to occur as people leaders move up to an operational or mid-level management position or role. Upon making this move, they will still lead people, but not as much in a “hands on” manner and not so much toward the completion or execution of frontline tasks. Their perspective and, consequently, their behavior, needs to adjust to this broader operational role, or else they could potentially become micro-managers who negatively impact the people reporting to them. They need to begin thinking more systematically about both work and people. They must become advocates for talent development, process improvements, change, execution effectiveness, and organizational culture. Their imperatives include some of the same ones associated with people leaders—coach for results, influence through personal power, partner within and across teams—but from a more organizationally focused perspective.

At the same time, as they move to senior operational roles they likely will pick up new imperatives—drives execution, mobilizer, and change driver—matching their broader role in the organization (see sidebar on page 8). As they move to these senior operational roles, they also may part with some of the imperatives that defined jobs or roles they held at a lower operational level.

Strategic Leader Imperatives

New strategic leaders require major adjustments in their frame of reference. Their focus is on the long-term view and on ways to enhance the organization’s capabilities and valuation. The degree of complexity and ambiguity they encounter increases dramatically over what they faced at lower levels. In turn, to drive more effective execution of business strategy, senior leaders must create clarity for accountability and measurement systems that keep key organizational priorities on track.

They spend a considerable amount of time as strategists, focusing on markets, products/services, distribution channels, customer relationships, and people. While formulating and driving strategy for their area of responsibility, strategic leaders also grapple with their responsibilities as enterprise guardians, as they weigh the implications of organizational structure, technology, and culture. They must put aside parochial interests to make the sometimes difficult financial and personnel decisions that ensure the long-term viability of the business and culture.

While strategic leaders still coach for success and select talent, senior executives spend considerable time as talent advocates, focusing on broader organizational readiness issues, deployment decisions, and career development efforts, especially succession management. One high-profile senior leader, Rick Wagoner, chairman of General Motors, estimates that he spends up to 35 percent of his time on people-related initiatives. Fujio Cho, meanwhile, president of Toyota Motor Corp., not only set up an in-house
executive-education program, the Toyota Institute, but also takes an active role in the program by serving as a lecturer.

Depending on their role, strategic leaders are required to adopt perspectives that allow them to be **entrepreneurs** and/or **global thinkers**. Organizations depend on the creativity and market insight of their senior-level “entrepreneurs,” who must constantly seek out opportunities to grow the business, while considering economic realities and competitive threats.

McCall and Hollenbeck (2002) speak to the importance of the global thinker role for organizations that operate in our “borderless international economy,” which today includes most large, multinational organizations. Success for these organizations, with cross-cultural markets or operations, as well as customer, vendor, and employee bases, often hinges on the caliber and global acumen of their key senior leaders. Global thinkers must incorporate, or at least facilitate, the integration of strategic initiatives within the context of the global stage.

Finally, great strategic leaders must capture the hearts and minds of associates. **Captivators** build passion and commitment to common goals by creating a vivid picture of the future, inspiring hope and excitement, and helping associates see the “WIIFM” (what’s in it for me). Martin Luther King’s unparalleled “I Have a Dream” speech and the manner in which it catalyzed a nation to take action to promote civil rights, is one of the best examples of the captivator role (imperative) in recent history.

**GUIDEPOST FOUR:**
**LEVERAGE THE LEADERSHIP BLUEPRINT TO DRIVE EXECUTION OF BUSINESS AND CULTURAL PRIORITIES**

DDI’s Leadership Blueprint ties together the various elements comprising effective leadership, defines key beliefs and values, describes a framework for success profile development, and identifies performance imperatives for the various leadership level and the transitions associated with them.

But how can the model be leveraged to create a game plan that transforms your leadership into a competitive advantage?

Obviously, an important first step is to clarify where your organization is going (its direction, the organizational vision) and the key strategic and cultural priorities that will drive competitive advantage (reduce sales costs, innovation, etc.). An important part of this process involves explicitly articulating and reinforcing the way your organization’s leadership team ideally will be **seen by others**—reflecting both strategy (the **what**) and **how** leaders are expected to execute the strategy.

Leaders are responsible for harnessing the collective energy of their employees to execute winning strategies to realize success. Therefore, crafting and communicating a version of the Leadership Blueprint that is tailored to your organization’s business strategy will facilitate effective execution—by creating a clear picture of what leaders in your organization should stand for, what they should believe in, and what they need to do to help the organization succeed.

In addition, the Leadership Blueprint model can help you align your organization’s leadership development and accountability systems to better support and build the confidence of those who want to lead (your informal and emerging leaders), as well as those high-performing individuals who already are in critical leadership positions. In turn, this model can serve as a foundation for an employee value proposition for attracting talented people to your organization and for fostering a dynamic environment in which they will want to stay and grow, creating shareholder and market confidence in the caliber of your leadership assets.
REFERENCES


