



## LEADERSHIP LESSONS DURING THE TEN CRUCIAL DAYS

### **Accessing Conditions**

1. *True leaders, often without formal authority, act to build and inspire collective action needed to achieve great change. (Asking troops to remain after their enlistments expired).*
2. *Leaders at every level must ensure that subordinates have the authority to do what is being asked of them and to remedy situations in which responsibility exceeds authority and resources.*
3. *Structures and processes for obtaining and interpreting data, turning that data into useful intelligence to reduce decision risk, and disseminating refined information are fundamentally important in the competitive environment faced by any large organization.*
4. *Despite their original brilliance, strategies used against a thinking adversary in war or business rarely play out as envisioned but rather require frequent assessment, learning, and adaptation. Leaders and organizations that fail to learn and adapt can find themselves more irrelevant by the day.*
5. *A competitive environment will rarely proceed strictly in accordance with one side's design or plan; thus, an organization must be structured and positioned to adapt to changing dynamics and seize opportunities as they arise.*
6. *An organization guided by a senior leader's intent, filled with experienced people (who are imbued with the right to use their own judgment to meet that intent), and built on a culture of moral courage should encourage and reward disciplined initiative.*
7. *The personal example and presence of a leader is critical in challenging situations. Leaders will be judged by what they do rather than what they say and their personal presence in areas where they can have the most impact.*

### **Accessing Team Dynamics**

1. *Providing clear guidance and intent while encouraging initiative empowers and energizes subordinate leaders in their efforts to attain organizational goals. But leaders must monitor organizational progress to ensure their guidance is followed.*
2. *Knowing that fear of the unknown is omnipresent and utterly human, leaders can reduce the debilitating effect of fear by rigorously preparing the organization, training subordinates, planning contingencies, and leading by personal example.*
3. *Leaders must create a shared sense of effort and purpose in their organization. Flattening an organization to achieve agility and initiative will work only if that organization is imbued with shared intent, trust, and experience. In many cases,*

- achieving unity of effort requires a sense of subordination, if not to a strict chain of command, then at least to shared organizational goals and intent for action.*
4. *Engrained biases markedly color human perception of reality to include excessive optimism that not only cloud judgment but affect how new information is viewed and weighed. Leaders should construct their advisory and intelligence apparatus to challenge, not confirm, those biases.*
  5. *Resist the lure of creating a superstar team for a single event unless you can give that team well-respected and effective leadership, the time needed to build trust, and the cooperative spirit needed for coordinated action.*
  6. *Because an organization's culture and traditions create considerable inertia, leaders seeking to innovate, and change must account for their gravitational pull and not let either one derail needed improvements.*
  7. *As problems become more complex and the resolution of those problems tends to become more dependent on disparate groups, leaders without formal authority must collectively establish common frames of reference and goals and then inspire coordinated action to achieve unity of effort.*

### **Taking Action**

1. *The physical reality of an event often takes second place to the interpretation of that reality by various audiences. Thus, leaders must proactively plan for and shape the strategic narrative.*
2. *Exceptionally challenging situations often involve the competing interests of multiple constituencies and a lack of directive authority by any one actor. An inclusive and flexible leadership style coupled with the ability to convince participants of the imperative for coordinated action can often achieve unity of effort and purpose.*
3. *Leaders matter and must be found or developed, especially in a new organization. Still, the wisdom of every appointment or promotion will not be known until the organization is put under duress. Processes to judge the quality of leadership and manage talent cannot be an afterthought.*
4. *While "all-hands-on-deck" sprints are inevitable for organizations, resources, and energy must be sustained for the long haul. Senior leaders must meter organizational energy for both the short and long term.*
5. *While a strict hierarchy can stifle innovation and initiative, collective action toward grand goals requires some subordination and an alignment of personal desires and goals for the collective good.*
6. *To turn good ideas and visions into results over the long haul, leaders must put effort into the systems and management processes that provide sustenance and vitality to an organization.*
7. *Finding and leveraging talent among subordinate leaders is one of the most important tasks for a senior leader to oversee personally, especially as the organization grows in size and as an initiative at lower levels is increasingly required in uncertain and changing environments.*
8. *Perseverance, nobility of purpose, and sheer hard work can overcome an organization's difficult challenges.*

## **Accomplishing the Impossible**

1. *Self-development must be integral to holistic leadership development programs that often include formal training, job progression, and work experience.*
2. *Astute leaders know that they alone cannot solve all of the difficult problems facing their organizations and thus have the moral courage and wisdom to empower subordinates to use disciplined initiative to accomplish the most challenging problems.*
3. *Successful leaders make their own luck and achieve great accomplishments for their organizations by creating imaginative plans, doing the hard work to prepare for action, and inspiring their subordinates to achieve unity of purpose and effort.*
4. *Leaders must put their energy into creating a strategic path toward victory, looking to seize opportunities that place opponents at a strategic disadvantage and trusting that well-prepared and well-led subordinates will do their jobs.*

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