THE POWER OF CONNECTION: DRIVING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE THROUGH HUMILITY AND EMPATHY

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Disclaimer: The following remarks are my own and don't represent DON or DOD.

The Power of Connection: Driving Organizational Managing organizational change is complicated. Leaders must align people to the reason for the change, often working against long-standing habits and beliefs. Organizations are more likely to succeed when they engage employees, make humility a priority, and build trust within their leadership teams.

Organizational Leader

- Encompasses a broader scope of responsibility than traditional management/leadership at the technical/tactical level. Organizational leadership communicates the mission and vision, establishes the operational and strategic plan, and inspires individuals to put forth their talents to fulfill the goals aligned with the strategic plan.
- Leads for the long-term success of the organizations by mentoring and coaching organizational team members, by providing for a risk tolerant and inclusive environment.

Professional Stewardship

- A leader is performing the act of stewardship whenever he or she is actively preparing for an organization's future vitality. This act of stewardship takes form at different organizational levels. At an individual level, stewardship focuses on promoting professional and personal development and mentorship for each person within an organization.

What is Humility?

- **Humility** is an attitude of spiritual modesty that comes from understanding our place in the larger order of things. It entails not taking our desires, successes, or failings too seriously. (Positivepsychology)
- **Humility definition is** - freedom from pride or arrogance : the quality or state of being humble.
- **Humility** (Virtue) Humility is the quality of being humble. Dictionary definitions accentuate humility as a low self-regard and sense of unworthiness.
- **Humility meaning**: 1. the quality of not being proud because you are aware of your bad qualities:

What is Humility: An Operational Definition

- Humility is broadly defined as
  - **1) self-awareness,**
  - **2) appreciating others' strengths and contribution, and**
  - **3) openness to new ideas and feedback regarding one's performance**.
- Leaders who are humble have a better grasp on organizational needs and make better informed decisions about task performance.
- They are also better able to ask for help than their charismatic counterparts.
- What's more is that humble leaders help to foster a culture of development with their employees by legitimizing learning and personal development.
- Humility also encourages cultures of openness, trust, and recognition, which are important precursors to success.

Robert Hogan-Hogan Assessments

Why Humility?

- People matter!
- Inclusive and cognitively diverse organizations are more effective over time
  - People Thinking differently
- Humility in leadership also leads to higher rates of employee engagement
  - Greater job satisfaction
  - Lower rates of turnover.

Robert Hogan-Hogan Assessments

Humility as an Organizational Priority

Organizational Humility: a Climate that promotes humility as a key success factor and a source of competitive advantage and viability, and one that institutionalizes seven values and norms:

(1) Professional / Personal development,
(2) Mistake tolerance (risk and experiential learning)
(3) Transparency (Trust)
(4) Accurate awareness
(5) Recognition
(6) Inclusiveness (new points of view)
(7) Embraces innovation (opportunity in change)

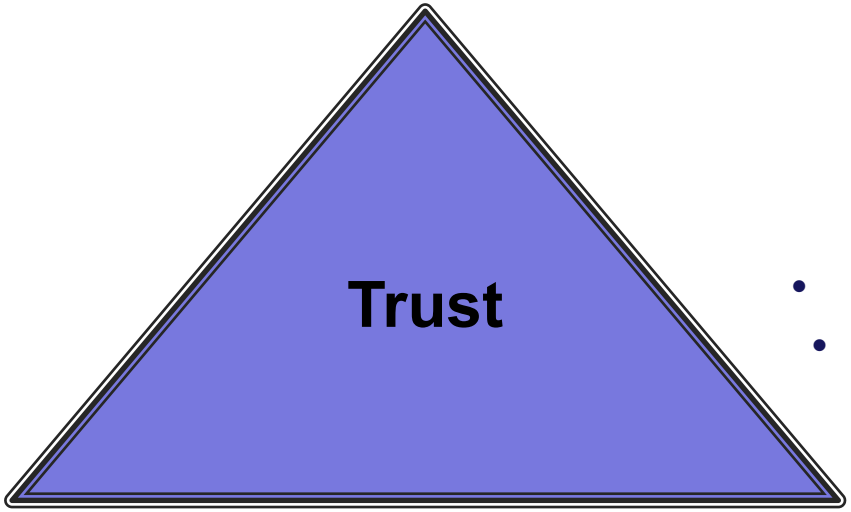
The Trust Triangle Trust has three drivers: authenticity, logic, and empathy. When trust is lost, it can almost always be traced back to a breakdown in one of them. To build trust as a leader, you first need to figure out

Authenticity

- The real you
- Actions and words are in alignment

Logic

- Sound reasoning
- Survives good faith debate or dissent

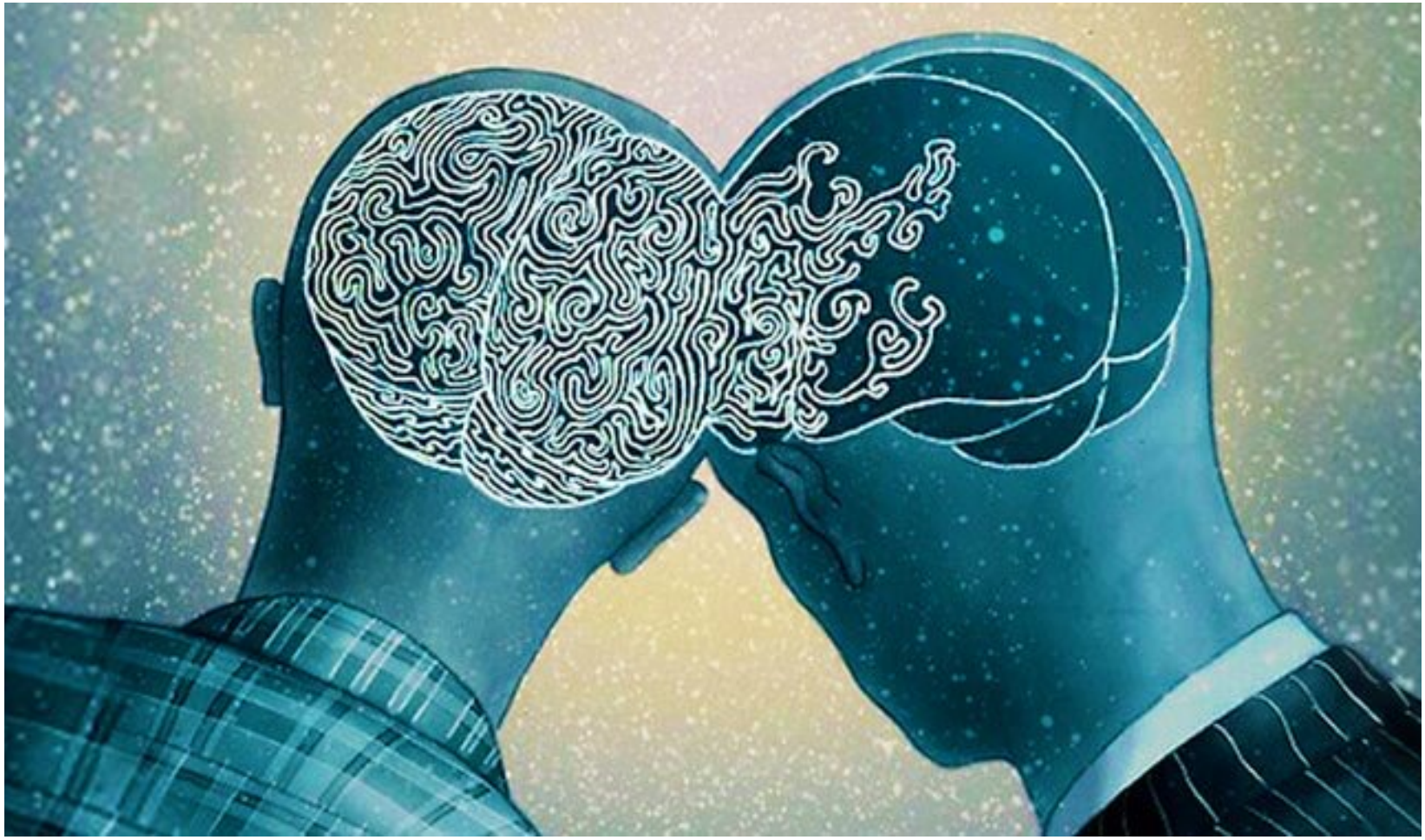


Empathy

- Cares about others
- Willing to engage

•The first step to becoming a genuinely empowering leader by Frances X. Frei and Anne Morriss

What is Empathy?



What is Empathy is and Not

- Empathy is the capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within their frame of reference, that is, the capacity to place oneself in another's position

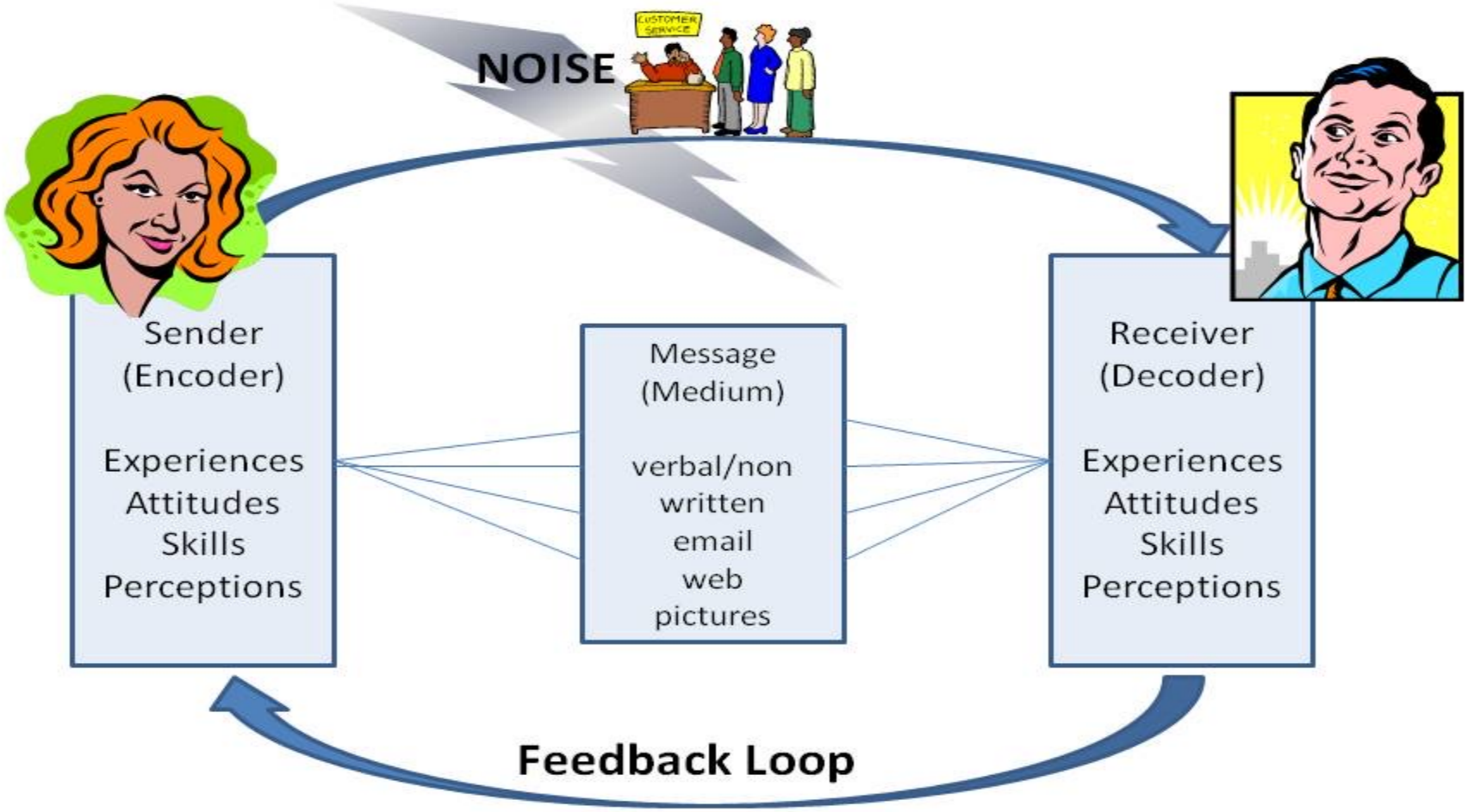
And Not

- Sympath**y**, constructed from the Greek "sym," meaning together, and "pathos," referring to feelings or emotion, is used to describe when one person shares the same feelings of another, such as when someone close is experiencing grief or loss. *Empathy* is a newer word also related to "pathos," but there is a greater implication of emotional distance. With "empathy" you can imagine or understand to how someone might feel, without necessarily having those feelings yourself.
- Agreement or belief in the views of another

Four Skills of Empathy

1. Perspective-taking
2. *Staying out of judgement**
3. Recognize the emotion in another person
4. Communicate that recognition

* Your ability to suspend judgment is a key enabler for *empathy*, *perspective-taking*, and *vertical development.*

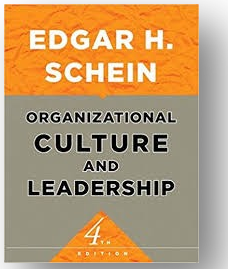


The Communication Process

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

- Why and What needs to change
- Structural
- Cultural (Climate)

Schein's Model

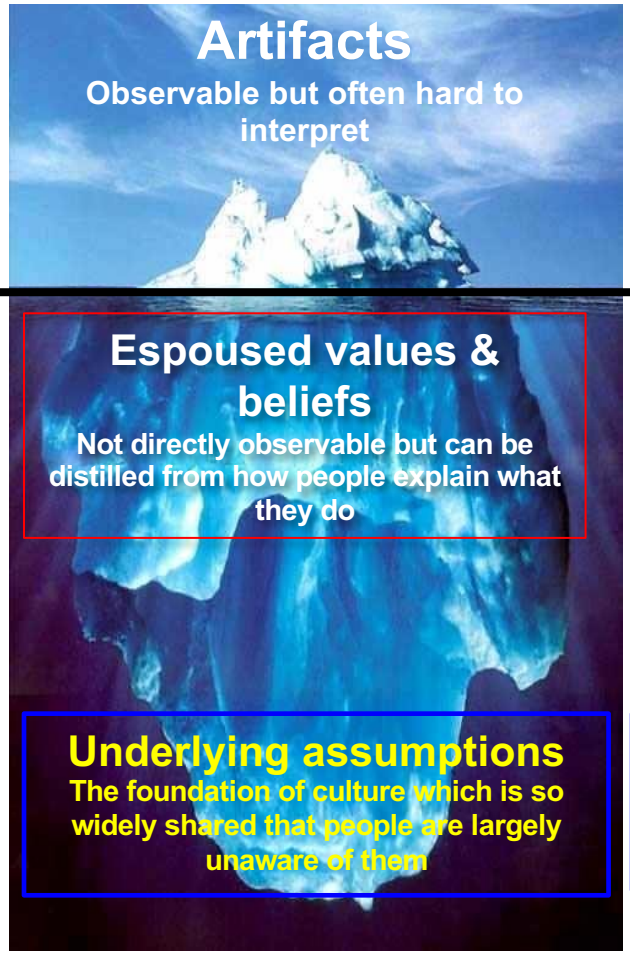


Explicit

Outward View

Inward View

Implicit



Artifacts
Observable but often hard to interpret

Espoused values & beliefs
Not directly observable but can be distilled from how people explain what they do

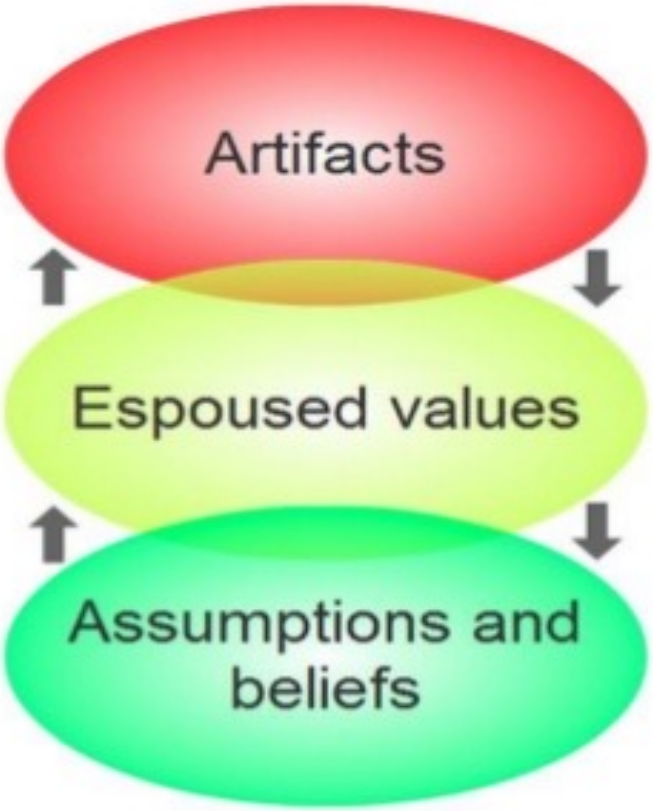
Underlying assumptions
The foundation of culture which is so widely shared that people are largely unaware of them

Visible organizational structures, policies, & behaviors.

Strategies, goals, philosophies, justifications, and aspirations. May or may not be congruent with behavior and other artifacts.

Unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs & values. They determine perceptions, thoughts, & feelings.

Why is changing Organizational Culture so difficult?



Visible organizational structures and business processes

Dress code
Work hours
Rites and rituals…

Strategies, goals, vision

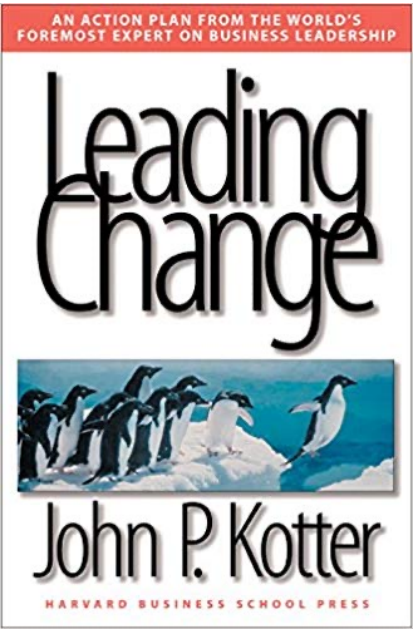
Are values communicated to employees, customers, suppliers… aligned?

Unconscious beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings – **the unwritten rules.**

How are decisions made, conflicts resolved…watch out for the signals

Edgar Schein

Kotter's- Methodology



Step 0 Is change needed? (most important decision!)

4 Levers to Organizational Change

- Articulate the aspiration
- Select & develop the right leaders
- Use org comms to underscore importance
- Reinforce organizational change through design
  - Structure, policy, technology, human capital

Tools for Organizational Change

1. What leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis.
2. How leaders react to critical incidents and org crises.
3. How leaders allocate resources.
4. Deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching.
5. How leaders allocate rewards and status.
6. How leaders recruit, select, promote, and excommunicate.

Common Errors & Biases for Org

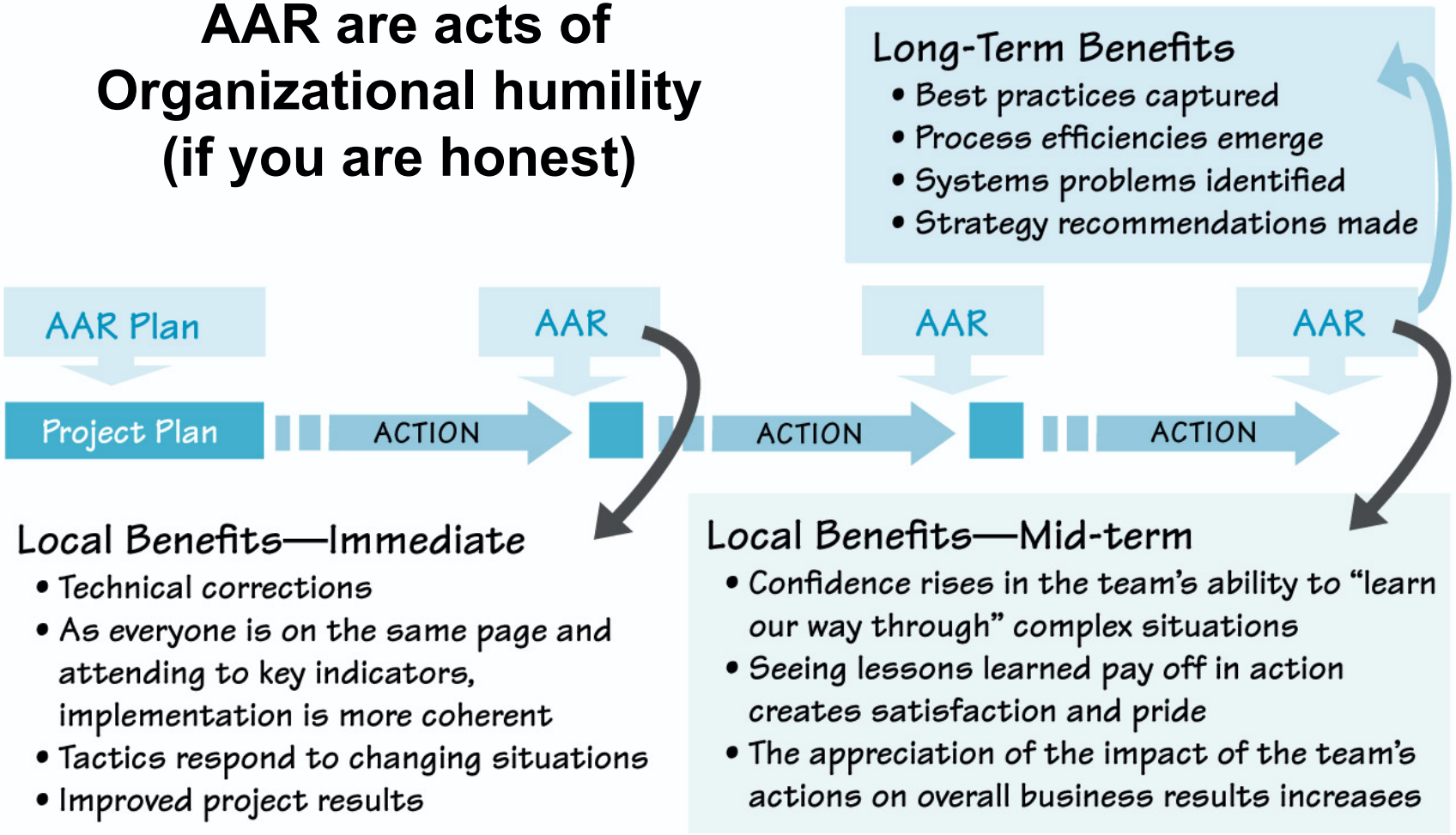
- Confirmation bias: failure to get complete data
- Anchor & adjust initial choices influence subsequent decisions
- Framing the problem influences the decision
- Overconfidence
- Sunk costs
- Risk taking or Risk Adverse culture
- Status and power differences
- Preoccupation with short range results

Articulation & Reinforcement

1. Org design & structure.
2. Org systems & procedures.
3. Org rites & rituals.
4. Design of physical space, facades/quarterdecks, & buildings.
5. Stories about important events & people.
6. Org philosophies, creeds, & charters.

The After-Action Review and Organizational Development

AAR are acts of Organizational humility (if you are honest)



Take-aways from today's conversation?

Which Leadership Style Is Best for Your Team?

- **Find the Most Effective Leadership Style for You**
- If you recognize that there is one type of leadership style that dominates your work style, look for opportunities to put other leadership styles into practice when they're appropriate.
- If you haven't connected with your team members on a personal level, put on your empathetic leader hat and have some one-on-ones where you get to know each team member's perceived strengths and career goals. If you've taken a more hands-off approach to leadership, think about future projects where being more vocal can enhance the results.
- Shifting your leadership style based on the situation or team member you're dealing with doesn't make you inconsistent. It can make you more successful, because you can connect more effectively and guide your team toward better results.

https://online.wharton.upenn.edu/blog/which-leadership-style-is-best-for-your-team/

3X5 Card

- When is the last time you allowed a subordinate to change your mind about something?
- Am I asking questions other than ones I might normally ask?
- Am I looking at things from different viewpoints?
- Am I attempting to put things in context by seeing this in the larger system?

Authoritative Leadership

- The authoritative leader knows the mission, is confident in working toward it, and empowers team members to take charge just as she is. The authoritative leader uses vision to drive strategy and encourages team members to use their strengths and emerge as leaders themselves.
- The authoritative leader provides high-level direction, but she lets those she leads figure out the best way to get there. Authoritative leaders are always striving for progress. They inspire others to adopt a similar attitude.
- **WHEN THIS TYPE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE WORKS BEST**
- Authoritative leadership is not restrictive. It propels advancements when:
- A leader is truly competent to take charge.
- Detailed instructions are not required.
- Employees already have the tools they need to do their most effective work.
- Those who adopt an authoritative leadership style when they don't have the appropriate experience, or when they try to wield authority over others in an aggressive way, will fail. An authoritative leader must be confident and have the experience to back it up in order to be successful.

Transactional Leadership

- A transactional leader may be in a position of leadership, such as in a managing role, but this leader is not necessarily one to embrace going above and beyond what is expected. The transactional leader dangles a carrot in front of each workhorse. If the employee does something positive, they are rewarded. If they don't meet the exact expectation, they may be punished.
- This type of task-oriented leadership focuses on meeting basic expectations. The transactional leader may decide roles and ways to monitor performance so that results are delivered. But encouraging innovation isn't as prevalent with this type of leadership style.
- **WHEN THIS TYPE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE WORKS BEST**
- Transactional leadership may be appropriate when:
- You are working with team members who are new to a certain type of project or need detailed guidance.
- Clear goals and a plan to get there will increase productivity.
- The team will benefit from celebrating victories together or holding each other accountable when someone doesn't do the work they're supposed to.
- The downside to transactional leadership is that this type of style focuses on the work, not the people. Employees want to feel like their work has a broader purpose and want to meaningfully connect with work. Transactional leadership doesn't foster the human-work connection.

Servant Leadership

- Servant leaders get in the trenches with their team. Their goal is to achieve the best outcome. To do that, these types of leaders make themselves available to help with issues, work alongside those they manage, and develop those they manage into better employees.
- Servant leaders coach. They're willing to stay late and get in early when it's called for, just like everyone else. Servant leaders are focused on constantly transforming their teams into stronger, more efficient, more productive and happier entities. Servant leaders are empathetic and use emotional intelligence to guide their leadership decisions.
- **WHEN THIS TYPE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE WORKS BEST**
- You might want to employ a servant leader mindset when:
- A team is in desperate need of a great example to look up to and learn from.
- A team has conflict and needs mending.
- Big projects require all hands on deck.
- Servant leadership can have many positive outcomes, but it's also time-consuming. Servant leaders must also be aware that they need to avoid doing all the work. When they give *too* much of themselves, they don't give team members as much of a chance to learn. That can create inefficiencies and missed opportunities to lead in other areas.

Democratic Leadership

- Just like a political democracy, where people with diverse opinions work together to come up with a consensus for decisions, a democratic leader gets everyone involved. The whole team is a part of creating a vision and the ideal way to get there. Democratic leaders embrace group meetings and surveys. They value transparency in decision-making. They want their team to feel as involved in work processes as they are.
- Employees who work for a democratic leader are aware that they're part of a larger team. They learn the value of collaboration and know they play a role in the evolution of their work environment. Democratic leaders foster discussion, but they also are able to step in when needed and make a decision that's guided by overall input.
- **WHEN THIS TYPE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE WORKS BEST**
- A democratic leadership style could help teams when:
- A new project that will benefit from brainstorming is introduced.
- There is a problem to tackle and fresh ideas are needed.
- Tight-knit, highly collaborative teams are in the formation stage, like those at startups or new small businesses.
- Using a democratic style on a constant basis can have drawbacks, though. A leader who never really takes charge and instead lets everyone else debate every decision can lose respect as an authority. Team members may not understand why they're even reporting to someone who only leads in a democratic style in the workplace.

Empathetic Leadership

- The empathetic leader recognizes that great work starts with engaged workers. This type of leader strives to create strong emotional bonds on a team so that those working on it feel a sense of belonging. The empathetic leader makes it a priority to make teammates satisfied with them as a manager and with their team. The empathetic leader focuses on people first, then work.
- Empathetic leaders aren't micromanagers. They empower team members to do their work, and offer themselves up as a resource whenever their team members need them. They're quick to dole out praise and offer support when needed.
- **WHEN THIS TYPE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE WORKS BEST**
- Empathetic leadership can be effective when:
- A competent team knows the job they need to do and how to effectively execute that.
- Little direction is needed from the leader.
- The team will benefit more from space and independence to complete tasks than micromanaging.
- An empathetic leader who only focuses on the people and not the work, though, can leave employees confused and unmotivated. With no clear direction, a hands-off approach to work-related leadership can lead to mistakes, inefficiencies and poor results.

Narcissistic Leadership: The Style to Avoid?

- One type of leadership that is best avoided in most work situations is the narcissistic leader, also known as a coercive leader. Instead of empowering team members to work toward the best possible outcome, the narcissistic leader has an agenda and aims to coerce those they're leading to carry it out.
- **NARCISSISTIC TRAITS**
- Narcissistic leadership is self-centered. It's not often results-focused, and it is disrespectful to the team. This type of leader doesn't lead – but dictates.
- Leadership should foster collaboration and intrinsic motivation. A narcissistic leader who lacks empathy will instead breed disinterest or resentment.
- There is one exception to when a narcissistic leadership style may be appropriate – when quick action is needed to avert a crisis, like a battlefield situation. But in the workplace, be aware when narcissistic leadership traits are emerging. Try to avoid those actions.

THANK YOU!