

President's Message

Warm greetings to readers and fellow members of the Asian Association of Management Organisations (AAMO).

Today, our world stands at a historical turning point. As we continue to navigate the ongoing repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are also in the grip of some powerful and major forces of change. In just over a decade, we have faced the largest financial crisis since the 1930s, the worst pandemic since 1919, and now the most serious geopolitical crisis in Europe since the end of the Cold War.

Over the past 15 years, successive economic and geopolitical crises have quickly sent shockwaves throughout the world, affecting every country, economy, trading relationship and business operation. Amid continuing uncertainty around how the war in Ukraine may end — or escalate — business leaders are faced with the challenges of navigating in the dark, accelerating already urgent transformation plans, and building resilience for impacts that may yet strike.

Resilience is now a critical survival skill, and timely transformation combined with agility will drive business success. To harness the forces of change that are reshaping our world, we will have to collaborate more closely, learn from each other, harness the knowledge and expertise of our partners and invest in the required skills, technologies and resources that will enable us to create new opportunities and accelerate growth.

Extraordinary circumstances demand extraordinary leadership; and it is up to organisations like AAMO, and the National Management Organisations to provide business leaders and management professionals access to the latest management trends as they attempt to navigate a constantly changing business environment.

This issue of 'Leading the Way' explores new and emerging trends in management and leadership from the Asia Pacific region. Contributions from India – 'Mix Business and Pleasure' highlights how the adoption of a 'Workcation' (working vacation) can motivate one to stay focussed and physically and mentally fit; while 'The Leadership Sweet Spot' explains why leadership achievements should matter more than personal milestones. 'Work-Life Balance: How Managers Can Help Their People' offers suggestions on how senior managers can help their team to maintain work-life balance; while 'How a Diverse Skill Set is the



Rajive Kaul
President, Asian Association
of Management Organisations

'Key to Your Success' sheds light on the ways leaders can develop and utilise diverse skill sets for their career – both contributions from Australia.

'Data Science is the Skill Required for Future Managers in Industry 5.0' comes to you from Nepal highlighting the importance of data science and how the future managers will need to have knowledge about data driven decisions. Contributions from the Philippines include two articles - 'What Kind of Leader are You?' – which focusses on understanding the kind of leader one is with some insightful tips on becoming a better leader; while 'Cultural Agility: The Future of Leadership' is an article explaining the concept, importance, and ways to build cultural agility.

I do hope you enjoy this issue of 'Leading the Way' and look forward to your feedback and suggestions.



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MIX BUSINESS AND PLEASURE

Can ‘workcation’ —being on vacation and working simultaneously —help escape monotony?

By Jaymol Mary Joseph, Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad; Anindya Ganguly; Dr Sumanta Dutta, St Xavier’s College (Autonomous), Kolkata



Visualise yourself waking up to a picturesque, calm, serene waterfall through your window or a panoramic view of snow-clad mountains or foaming waves draping the golden-yellow sands of a beach or melodious chirping of birds in a lush green forest every-morning. What if you get to savour all of these captivating experiences whilst you are at work? Just having a teleworking opportunity, steady wi-fi connectivity, and a portable workstation can make this possible.

‘Workcation’ or working vacation is gaining popularity amongst many who love to travel and can manage work and vacationing simultaneously. So, Jaziel who loves to travel chooses to work from Rishikesh, the ‘Yoga capital of the world’ and the ‘Gateway to Garhwal Himalayas’. On weekdays, during office hours, she works from the comfort of her room, and after work, she meets people from local community, tries local cuisines,

attends yoga camps, and visits nearby places. On the weekends, she plans adventure sports including river-rafting, bungee jumping, short trips, and hikes.

Wanderlust workaholics

For people who love to travel while working, the current times are an opportune moment, as most corporate entities are advancing teleworking opportunities owing to the current COVID-19 situation. This rejuvenating experience—exploring different places, cultures, and cuisine with family and friends—motivates one to stay focussed and physically and mentally fit, and thereby, be more productive at work.

In economics, opportunity cost is the cost of the next best alternative foregone. Opportunity costs of investing money in shares would be the amount that could have been invested in risk-free assets at a fixed interest rate. Similarly, opportunity

cost of stay during workcation is the amount of rent saved on residence. Thus, from an employer’s perspective, if you are sponsoring a part of the workcation expenses, the opportunity cost is the amount saved on house rent allowances of those employees.

Several teleworkers have experienced musculoskeletal issues such as back and neck pain; many have also reported mental health issues. All this is due to prolonged hours of sitting at the work desk, not getting the opportunity to go for walks, do stretching exercises, not socialising, and so on. Workcation can provide relief from such confinement and its repercussions.

Organisations can promote team spirit by sending members on a workcation together. This can help increase cohesivity amongst the team members and also can serve as a platform to foster trust. These retreats with co-workers can also facilitate knowledge exchange and discussions regarding innovative solutions to work related problems.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown that followed impacted

workers’ productivity, creativity, and innovative thinking as they were mostly confined to their homes, with the feeling of isolation, seclusion, and the fear of the unknown. A workcation can change this as it will help relax one’s mind through the change of ‘scenery’ it provides for. Meditating in a peaceful environment, taking a dip in a river or sea, mixing with locals, learning about their cultures, cuisines, and customs, and participating in their

festivals can provide a new perspective and further expand one’s thinking, thereby adding to creativity and productivity.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Anindya-Ganguly

Anindya Ganguly is pursuing a doctoral programme in management at Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta.



Jaymol-Mary-Joseph

Jaymol Mary Joseph is Research Associate, Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad.



Dr. Sumanta-Dutta

Dr Sumanta Dutta is Assistant Professor, Post Graduate and Research Department of Commerce, St Xavier’s College (Autonomous), Kolkata.

THE LEADERSHIP SWEET SPOT

Cyrus MR Gonda explains why, as a leader, your leadership achievements matter more than your personal milestones.

By Cyrus MR Gonda



Sustainability. Corporate responsibility. Business purpose. Social responsibility. Call it what you like; competent boards can no longer afford to put ESG—environment, social, and corporate governance—issues on the back burner. Not long ago, these subjects—ranging from freak weather events to demands for a higher minimum wage and the diversity of board members—were widely considered to have no place on a board agenda. Now, however, directors ignore them at their peril.

All great performers need not be leaders, and all great leaders need not be performers.

Of course, it is always good when a leader is also capable of performing well. It adds a lot of value to the team he is leading. But consider a large-sized organisation having around five-thousand employees, or even a thousand employees. How much of a difference can one

individual's (the leader's) contribution in terms of individual achievement or performance really make?

Not too much, even if his or her workrelated output is phenomenal.

On the other hand, it is the leadership-related achievements—based on leadership qualities, rather than the individual achievements and the personal milestones, that can determine and decide the fortunes of an organisation.

Too many times, the leader of a department or a team or an organisation is incorrectly chosen, based on the individual-level skills and performance that he or she displays. But one needs to remember that selecting a leader to 'lead' others so that these others can offer their best to the team, requires a totally different set of skills as

compared to the skills required for individual success.

The reason such poor decisions are taken is that not much thought goes into the selection process as far as choosing an appropriate team-leader is concerned. In most cases, it is assumed that a good performer will, by default, make a good leader—which is an incorrect assumption.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni, former Indian cricketer and captain of the Indian national cricket team offers the best of both the worlds. In Dhoni's case, thankfully, we have a rather rare combination where leadership qualities, as well as the ability to perform well in an individual capacity, are found combined in the same individual.

Dhoni's record leading the team, not only in terms of the championship wins but in the other traits of

leadership as well, is phenomenal. In fact, it is purely because of his leadership traits—motivating, supporting, leading from the front, taking responsibility for—that Dhoni has been able to lead his team to victories, consistently.

Of course, the fact that he is also skilled with the bat and behind the wickets, makes him even more desirable in the captain’s position. But the thing to keep in mind is that if there is a choice to be made when selecting a leader between two people—one of whom is a great individual performer but not skilled at leadership—and another who is not

such a great individual performer but highly skilled at leadership—it is the one with better leadership skills who needs to be selected for the leadership spot.

As commentator Harsha Bhogle rightly points out: “If you’re not doing well yourself, you still have to get performance from others. These are two different things.”

Mike Brearley is considered to be the finest captain of the English cricket team of all time. He played 39 tests for England in the 1970s and the 1980s, and captained the English side in 31 of them. Out of these 31 tests he

captained the side in, he won 18 tests and lost only 4. Of the 19 tests in which he captained England at home, he never lost a single one.

Was he a great bowler?
No; Brearley did not bowl.
Was he the wicket-keeper then?
No; Brearley had the services of one of the greatest wicket-keepers of all time, Alan Knott, when he was captain. So Brearley did not keep (or needed to keep) wickets either.



Then he must have been a great batsman.

Wrong again. Brearley did bat, but he could hardly be called great, or even a good, batsman. In the 66 innings that Brearley batted for England in test-matches, his average was extremely modest: just 22.88. This is an average that even tail-enders have today. He never scored a single test century either.

So, if he was such an average performer, why was he occupying a slot in the team in the first place? Because, purely as a captain—a cricketing brain—he was a genius.

It seems amazing that in over 30 testmatches, across many years, he was in the side purely for his captaincy skills alone.

English superstar cricketer Ian Botham, who played many matches under Brearley’s brilliant captaincy, said about Brearley: “Without a doubt the best captain I ever played under, a man with a billion-dollar cricketing brain.”

Australian record-breaking pace-bowler Rodney Hogg, who played against Brearley’s English team, described Brearley as having

“A degree in people.” Brearley was truly a master motivator — a leader whom the most talented men would gladly follow.

And it showed in his captaincy record: 31 tests – 4 losses – 17 wins.

Brearley’s best-selling book, *The Art of Captaincy*—largely based on his own successful leadership experience—is considered as a classic work; it is a book that needs to be read by every aspiring leader, no matter what field they are in. An contrasting example to that of Brearley’s is Sachin Tendulkar, who, being maybe the best batsman the world has ever seen, himself declined the leadership role after a short stint, as he realised that it was impacting

his batting abilities. But Dhoni took a different approach, where his batting actually flowered and flourished in combination with his leadership role.

So, on one hand we have players like Sachin Tendulkar—excellent performers—but not suitable for the leadership position. On the other hand, we have cricketers like Brearley, who are by no means performers, but are excellent captains and leaders—role-models for the position.

And then, there are cricketers like Dhoni, who are phenomenal performers, as well as outstanding captains and leaders. This is the sweet spot to be at as far as leadership is concerned.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cyrus MR Gonda is a thought leader, best-selling author, and a leading trainer in the areas of customer experience, communication, leadership, and selling skills.

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WORK-LIFE BALANCE: HOW MANAGERS CAN HELP THEIR PEOPLE (AND THEMSELVES)

By Susan Rochester FIML, Balance at Work

As a busy manager, you've probably wondered how to strike the right balance between your work life and your home life. If so, you're not alone.

The work-life balancing act was already hard before the pandemic but, in the past two years, it's become even trickier. Amidst lockdowns, travel restrictions, and home-schooling, the lines between work and home have never been so blurred. And it's taken a big toll on managers and their people.

Harvard Business Review reports 85% of workers experienced a decline in wellbeing in the past two years, while a global study from Coursera cited worker burnout as the number one reason that people quit jobs.

It's no wonder that research by the National Bank of Australia found one in five Australians surveyed quit their job in 2021, and a PwC Australia

survey found 38% of Australian workers want to switch jobs in 2022.

In this time of The Great Resignation, the message for managers and leaders is clear: Prioritise your people's work-life balance, or they may walk out the door.

More pressure, fewer boundaries

Depending on where you live, the pandemic has probably changed how you socialise, how you holiday, how you exercise, how you see your family – and how you work.

As managers and their teams galloped into the unknown territory of working from home en masse, many slipped into the trap of letting work intrude on their private lives. The lack of physical boundaries between the spaces in which we work and live has made it almost impossible to separate the two. For many, that has led to longer working hours, higher stress levels, poorer

mental health and – in extreme cases – burnout.

However, the good news for managers is that you can be part of the solution. In this article, I'll offer some suggestions to help you help your people strike a better balance.

Prevention measures to find a healthier balance

As a manager, you have a wonderful opportunity to set the tone in your team. You can help demonstrate the behaviour you wish to see in others. If people see you setting boundaries that prioritise your health and wellbeing (as well as those you care about) while remaining open and accessible, then they'll find it easier to do likewise.

Being unambiguous about your expectations is also crucial. One of the most effective things you can do as a leader is to be crystal clear about what you expect from people and –

perhaps even more importantly – what you don’t. Give them clear responsibilities, be calm and measured and, above all, remember that everyone is only human. Right now, we’re all figuring out new ways of working. We’ve all got things going on outside our jobs too. And we’re all going to make mistakes. So it’s important to show your people that you understand this.

Try to remember (and remind your people) that most jobs are not a matter of life or death. Chances are, no one’s going to die if you miss a meeting, struggle to hand in a report or need a little bit longer to hit certain targets.

So, encourage your teams to work smarter, not harder. From a manager’s perspective, working smarter might include putting systems in place that force you not to micromanage. Trust your team. They’ll be happier, healthier, and more productive when they feel you have confidence in them, and that you’re not peering over their shoulder. That doesn’t mean letting

them run wild – it just means being constantly willing to adapt and change the way things work.

Look for the joy together

Instead of seeking work-life balance, I believe we will all be happier when we accept that work is a significant part of everyday life. Balance comes from finding joy in whatever work we do.

So, try to remember why it is that you do your job (including what you love about it and what its purpose is). And then, ask those questions of your team members, too. Give them the opportunity to stop and reflect, to assess and to adjust.

Create a safe and open space for them to discuss what’s not working and to suggest meaningful changes. Just because something has always been done a particular way at your organisation, doesn’t mean that it’s the right way. Give yourself and others space to be flexible, creative, and innovative. The more people enjoy work and feel their leaders are approachable, the easier they’ll find it

to strike a better balance at work.

Warning signs that work life balance is off kilter

Despite your best efforts, some of your colleagues may still struggle with balancing the competing demands in their lives. But as the pandemic continues, spotting the symptoms of this can seem difficult. With many teams now working remotely, it can be harder to get a sense of how people are feeling and coping.

However, there are still some simple ways to connect with your people, and warning signs to watch out for:

● **Do you keep in touch with them?**

It’s surprising how many managers do not meet with their direct reports on a weekly basis. Having that quick ‘check in’ every week provides a platform for your people to talk about how they are tracking, and what support they might require from you. It also reduces the chances of small problems festering out of sight where they can grow bigger and harder to solve.





● **Are they getting their work done?**

This sounds obvious but, if you have a team member who is habitually missing deadlines or falling behind, that could be a sign they're struggling with balance.

● **When are they working?**

The beauty of increased work flexibility is that people can mould their workday around their home life. They might, for example, pick up the kids from school at 3pm and then catch up on work at 7pm. But if you're seeing emails from colleagues sent at all hours of the night and day, this is often a sign that they are overdoing it.

● **Has their behaviour altered?**

Are they suddenly struggling to make decisions or remember important information? Have you noticed a drop in their confidence? These could be signs that someone is overwhelmed.

If you do have concerns about a team member, it's important to raise these in a manner where they feel safe and comfortable. Here, preparation can make all the difference. Consider how you, as their manager, might be able to support them – but also find out what resources your organisation might have to offer (e.g. an employee assistance program). Your aim should be for a constructive conversation, where you commit to listening to whatever your colleague has to say. Beyond Blue and NZ's Mental Health Foundation offer further advice on how to have such discussions. (And, if you run a small business, you may find this web page useful too.)

Start with the manager in the mirror

I've worked alongside managers and leaders for many years, and I'm constantly impressed with how many

of them put their people first. Such selflessness is to be admired, but it's also important to remember that you can't look after other people unless you also take care of yourself.

So ultimately, when it comes to balance, my advice is to start with yourself. What matters most to you? What do you love doing at work? Take the time to answer these questions, and you'll set yourself (and your people) on a path towards better balance.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Susan Rochester FIML is Managing Director of Balance at Work and co-host of the new Work Wonders Podcast. Both her website and podcast include a range of practical and useful resources to help managers achieve balance.

HOW A DIVERSE SKILL SET IS THE KEY TO YOUR SUCCESS

By Sara Keli and Nicolle Burt CMgr MIML



When Nicolle Burt CMgr MIML took her first steps into her career, she could hardly have imagined where she would end up almost four decades later. Originally trained as a graphic artist, she never intended to follow the path she did. But, as any experienced leader will tell you, that's the nature of the beast.

Nicolle knows that the diversity of her skill set has played an important role in her success. More than this, it is also the diverse experiences and thinking that she brings as a First Nations woman.

Now working as a consultant to the public service, Nicolle shares her insights on developing and utilising a broad range of skills across your career.

From failed artist to successful public service consultant

With her training as a graphic artist, Nicolle intended to work in the

advertising industry. It was the 1970s and she soon realised that finding work as a woman in this industry was almost impossible. Instead, she pursued a career in hospitality.

"I worked in hospitals, hotels, restaurants and resorts," she recalls. "I managed bars, I cleaned toilets and I ran food franchises. There is a huge amount of diversity in hospitality and it gave me a really strong customer service focus. Working in hospitality for so many years helped me to develop my interpersonal skills and my ability to communicate effectively. This has been the foundation for my success."

Eventually, Nicolle realised she had learnt all she could and that it was time for a change. She sat one of the last national public service exams and entered the public service before eventually taking a package. After this, she became a public service consultant.

"It took me a while to adjust to working in the public service," she says. "In hospitality, your service is quick. If you don't have a happy customer, that's the end of your business. Whereas in the public service, it's quite long and laborious as you navigate the bureaucracy."

"Having that understanding of how the public service works has been invaluable in my role as a successful consultant."

The ability to adapt

One constant throughout Nicolle's career has been flexibility. She has been able to adapt to the requirements of different roles because she is flexible. She puts this down to her customer service background.

"When you work in a customer centric environment, you learn to be flexible and adaptable," she explains. "Circumstances are constantly

changing and you have to satisfy the demands of many different customers, often at the same time.”

Nicolle has then been able to apply those skills in other roles, particularly as a consultant, to achieve the outcomes she needs.

“One of the challenges of working as a consultant is that the client doesn’t always know what they want,” she adds. “You need to guide them and ask questions to help define what output they need. Once again, that flexible and adaptive approach is key.

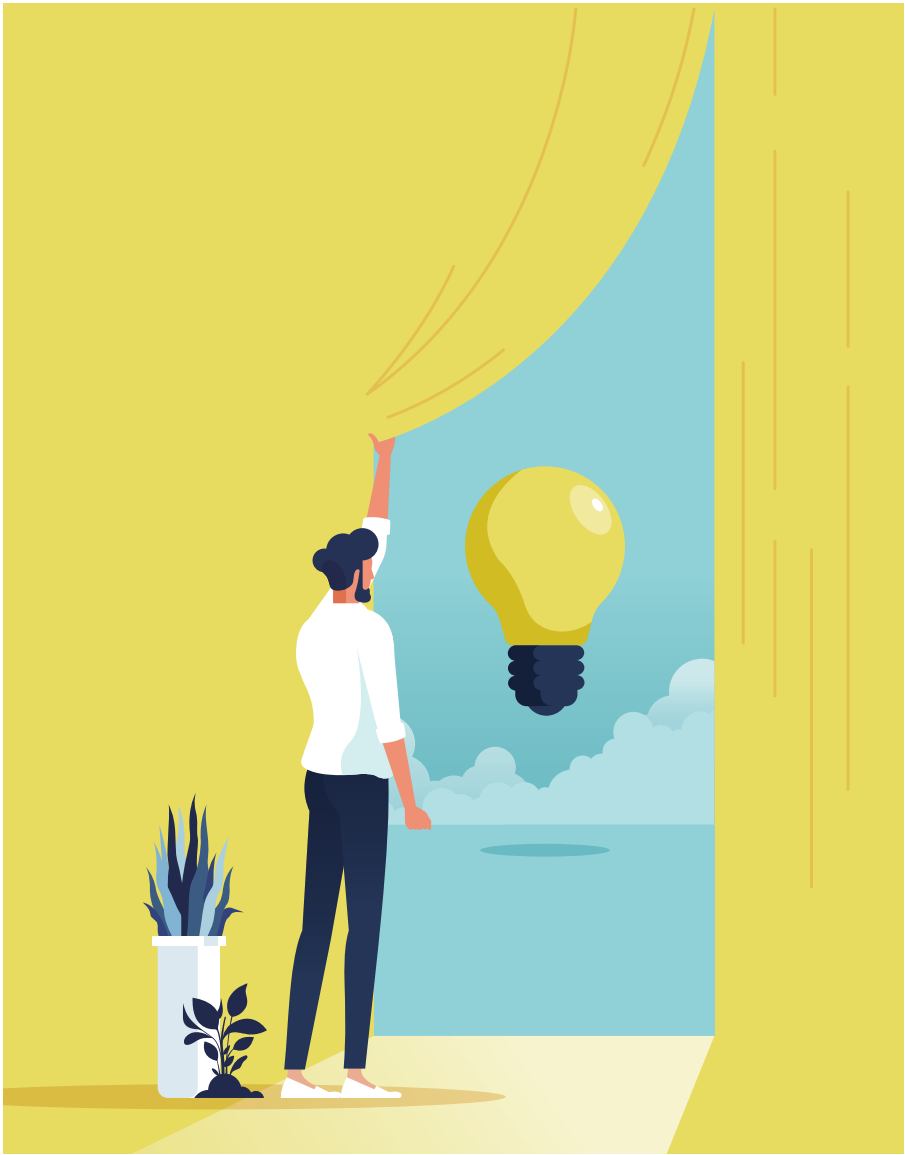
It’s not just the diversity of your skill set that matters, it’s also your ability to apply those skills in diverse ways. Using adaptability as the example, it’s not just about adapting to different environments or being flexible with customers. This is a skill that can help you work with many different types of people.

Nicolle has gathered her skills, abilities and learning and applied it to her role as a consultant.

“From a failed artist to working for myself as a consultant in Canberra, I’ve worked in so many different departments and areas,” she says. “I’ve worked in Australia and overseas and in departments as diverse as defence, health and infrastructure. Each of the departments I’ve worked in has had its own unique culture. And then working as a consultant, it’s a very different experience from being an employee.”

Diversity as an asset

The experience Nicolle had as a young woman entering the workforce is vastly different to the experience women have today. As a First Nations person, she has also experienced systemic racism.



“In my early days in the hospitality industry, it was extraordinarily sexist,” she recalls. “As a First Nations person, in my hometown, everyone knows who I am and my mob. But when I leave my hometown, I’m often challenged about my indigenous identity and background. That was really tough in the 70s and 80s, but there’s now more understanding of First Nations culture and recognition of what we bring to the country.”

From her own personal experiences, Nicolle knows that diversity is an asset in any business. She is not afraid to call out prejudice and to share her lived experiences with other young people who might find

themselves in a similar position.

“Everyone brings a lived experience to their job, even leaders,” she says. “That experience informs how we behave, interact and work. As a leader, you don’t know what someone has going on in their private life and you can’t judge their lived experience by looking at their resume. What is important is that you listen.

“When you listen to people, you can understand where they’re coming from. As a leader, it’s your job to cultivate other leaders. When you listen to them and invest in them, they ultimately make your job easier.”

Always add value

Over the last few decades, the nature of paid employment has changed. New jobs and industries have opened up more opportunities for people and the notion of the lifelong employee has faded.

For Nicolle, it's not so much about the jobs she goes into that matters. It's about how she can add value. This is her measure of success.

"I only go into roles where I can add value," she says. "It's not about how many jobs you've had. It's about how you add value to the tasks you're engaged to do."

"Often when people go into a job, there's a couple of months of learning and then they plateau. That's when they become bored and often end up leaving. In my view, once I've hit that plateau, if I'm not still adding value then I've completed my job. So my task then is to develop somebody else."

Nicolle encourages people to consider their value add when taking on a job. And for leaders to look at the value people can add to their team, not just the experience they bring.

Building a diverse skill set

The concept of adding value is an interesting one in that it goes both ways. In every role, it's not only about the value you can add but also about the value the role can add to your skill set.

"Whenever I'm mentoring younger people, I always encourage them to think about what they're going to get out of a role," explains Nicolle. "Of course you're going to get paid. But what are you going to learn from the job that you can add to your bag of skills?"

"I've been fortunate over my career to learn a lot across many specialist areas and also about the nature and function of bureaucracy."

For leaders who are considering how to build and then frame a diverse skill set, Nicolle suggests the following:

1. Continually polish your skills

Over your career, you build up a set of skills. That skill set grows and grows with each new role you go into. But it's not enough to just have the skills. Each time you use a particular skill, you need to give it a polish. This refresh helps you to add value to the client and further build on your bag of skills.

2. Keep learning

Whether it's formal learning or professional memberships where you can keep up to date with the latest thinking, you need to have an open mind.

You never know where your learnings might be useful for a role or situation so always be willing to learn. This also applies to learning on the job. You never stop learning, no matter how senior you are. At the same time, we need to also understand that failure is also a key learning process.

3. Look for new ways to apply your skills

Teams work in different ways and no two projects or teams are the same. But you will have transferable skills that you can apply across multiple situations.

The challenge is to be able to adapt or combine different skills to the situation.

Nicolle says that this is a critical piece of leading with emotional intelligence.

"In my view, if you're flexible and adaptive, that's a sign of your emotional intelligence," she explains. "That's fundamental to leadership. A lot of leaders aren't necessarily trained in these skills. But they come to the fore because of that diversity of lived experience they have."



CORPORATE CULTURE – THE “WHAT” AND “WHY”

Episode 1

By Brian Tang,
Corporate Training Consultant

This is a true story.



A 5-star international hotel in Macau has a practice of giving a card to its staffs who have family members passed away. The card contains condolence words handwritten and signed by department heads and the General Manager. It is a gesture to show empathy to the staffs who have just gone through difficult times in life. The design of this gesture was sound. However, its execution was poor. Staffs whose family members have passed away will be asked to approach the HR department. Then, a HR representative will hand the card to the staff, “It’s for you.” That’s it. No extra words or any sort of verbal condolences, as if the staff is picking up a letter from the post office. In one incidence, the card wrote “I am sorry for the loss of your grandfather.” In fact, the one who died was the grandmother – the grandfather was still alive! The staff who got the card was furious, “Are you cursing my grandfather?” Due diligence, obviously, was not done.

Disappointment was inevitable. As a matter of fact, the staff who received that card didn’t bother to tell her HR about the mistake – she couldn’t care any less.

It is not hard to suspect that this hotel was trying to create a culture of caring. They want to treat the staffs with kindness and care and hopefully it will translate into how customers are treated. The logic is fine, but companies that wish to create a culture by merely following policies and procedures will eventually fail. The card given to the staff was real in nature, but fake in spirit. Corporate culture is more than posters on the wall. Culture is not a set of rules to follow – it has to be lived.

What is and is not culture?

Culture, in the context of organizations, is a set of beliefs, values and experiences that guides the thoughts, feelings and behaviors of those in the organizations. It is

invisible – beliefs and thoughts cannot be seen. Although many people like to make it visible by putting attractive posters on the walls, whether the practice is effective is another story.

Culture is not a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). SOP can be written with corporate culture elements in it but we can’t write the culture per se on SOP, just as we won’t, and actually we can’t, write how we think on an SOP. Take the condolence card mentioned earlier as an example. Suppose the culture that the hotel wants to cultivate is caring. It takes genuine effort and a comprehensive delivery of the card to make the staff who receives the card to feel being cared. We can write a SOP about giving a condolence card whenever a staff’s family member passes away, but we can’t write on the SOP how the card can be presented with empathy and genuine condolence. Even the best idea in the world can

do more harm than good if it is delivered poorly. Therefore, culture can be described but cannot be defined by policies and procedures.

Culture is not what we post on the wall. For instance, a company wrote “Speak Up” on the wall in order to encourage its staffs to express their opinions instead of hiding their thoughts. But when a staff tried to raise a concern during a meeting, the manager quickly jumped to conclusion by dismissing the value of the concern. That action alone, in terms of shaping a team culture, is way more powerful than what we post on the wall. Regardless how many team building events we do or have a world class design of the “Culture poster” on the wall, a quick comment by the manager himself can easily wipe out all the effort. People won’t remember the poster, but we can recall the manager’s comment vividly.

We can imagine that staff’s behaviors are shaped by two forces: Visible and Invisible. Visible forces are Policies and Procedures, SOPs, compensation and benefits. Invisible forces include purpose, mission, vision, values, culture. Visible forces are comparatively more tangible. They can be measured and rigidly followed. Invisible forces are less tangible, more sophisticated, but more powerful than visible forces in terms of guiding staffs’ behaviors and decision making if cultivated and sustained appropriately.

Why is culture important to an organization?

The answer is simple – it makes business sense. In one study conducted by John Kotter¹, a Harvard Business Professor, found

that companies that strategically built a high performing culture turned out to be outperforming. Compared to competitors, their revenues increased four times faster, stock prices increased 12 times faster, new revenue grew 700%, customer satisfaction doubled, and many more.

It is not difficult to understand why companies with a healthy culture are outstanding. A common trait of a high performing culture is high trust among team members. As a result, toxic conflict and office politics are minimized. People are more cooperative and less silo thinking. A good culture can help company attract and retain talents, hence maintaining competitiveness in the long run. Lastly, it is simply more enjoyable to work in companies with a great culture. We spend more than 1/3 of our lives in career – who wants to waste our lives working in a toxic environment?

Can culture be trained?

If a healthy culture is so important, can we train people to adopt a certain kind of culture? The simple answer is no. Culture can’t be trained literally. It has to be modeled, molded, and sustained. Once the culture is formed,

it guides people’s thoughts and behaviors. In situations where there are no SOPs to follow, culture will dictate the decision making.

Zappos, the online retail giant, is a case in point. Zappos is known for its extraordinary customer service and the fun culture. Its motto is: Create fun and a little weirdness. Their customer service representatives are known to go the extra mile for their customers – they will even order pizza delivery for you if that is what you want. It’s not an urban legend. It’s real and in fact a little bit crazy. Ordering pizza has nothing to do with their product offering. But if that’s what you want, they will make it happen². No training in the world can create this “Wow” moments, and certainly no SOP will be written to tell you to order pizza for the customers.

While company culture can’t be literally trained, it can be created by applying many practices from the areas of leadership, corporate Learning & Development, and employee engagement. Before I explore how leaders and managers can help to form a healthy culture in the workplace in the next episode, I want to dig deeper on the characteristics of corporate culture.



¹<https://www.rhythmsystems.com/blog/the-roi-of-company-culture>

²<https://www.socialfresh.com/zappos-just-ordered-me-a-pizza/>



1. Culture is Inside out, not outside in

Culture should not be defined by the company’s strategy or external factors. It should be created inside out. Think of yourself as an individual. Your identity defines who you are, how you think, speak, and act. The very traits that define who you are do not, and should not, change as you, for example, interact with different groups of people or travel in other country. You are still who you are because the way you think, speak and act are the basic building blocks that make up who you are as a person. What defines you as an individual comes from inside, not outside. The same goes for companies. Its identity, defined by the company’s mission, vision, values, culture, don’t change as the company adjusts its strategy or introduces a new product line. If it does, every time we change our strategy we will need to update our culture, which is not effective.

The other way to look at the principle of inside out is that we don’t cultivate a culture because of recent hot topics of what resources the company needs at the moment. For example, we don’t want to build a culture of LEAN just because it has become a hot topic and every competitor is talking about it. By the same token, we don’t create a culture to specifically attract talents in

preparation of the new expansion plan. If we were, the culture would be dictated by external factors, which are uncertain and uncontrollable. Such outside in approach is like putting the cart before the horse.

2. Culture is unique to the company

Simply put, culture is unique and cannot be copied. Strategy can be copied, talents can be poached, but successful culture cannot be copied. Take Walmart as an example. Their senior executives used to fly in economy class. The company ended up buying private jets for the executives not because of status or luxurious purpose, but because the cost is cheaper in the long run. When their executives go for business trips, they share a motel room. It’s almost impossible to imagine but that’s their culture – frugal. You can copy Walmart’s strategy and poach their staffs, but you probably won’t let your executives share a motel room. The frugal culture is in their blood – it cannot be copied.

3. Culture has been and always will be in the organization

Imagine a baby was born in a family. Her parents were too busy at work hence didn’t spend any effort to raise the kid. The child grows up without much conscious effort of cultivation from the parents. Do you think the child will still be able to develop her

own personality? Certainly. Even without the conscious intervention from the parents, the child would still have a personality coming from her innate traits plus the interaction with the outside world, including school, caretakers, friends, and the environment. Some children’s personality might be stronger than others, but every child will have a personality developed. It’s just a matter of strong or weak, desired or not.

Same goes for company culture. Leaders and managers are like the parents in the analogy. Whether you intervene or not, a team or organization culture has been formed. It could be a strong or not-so-strong culture. The culture could be desired or undesired. Whether you like it or not, it is there and it will always be there. The question is whether you, the parent of the child or the leader of the organization, want to consciously mold it or let it develop organically. The choice is yours.

In this episode we have talked about the “What” and “Why” of corporate culture. In the next article we will explore the “How” – how can business leaders consciously cultivate a culture that fits the needs of the organization.

DATA SCIENCE IS THE SKILLS REQUIRED FOR THE FUTURE MANAGERS IN INDUSTRY 5.0

By Ajay Yadav



We are progressively moving towards Industry 5.0 age where there will be bigger role of machine collaboratively working with man. Most of the task will be automated and machine will have capacity for the decisive role due to optimized algorithm. Due to the big data generation from automated technology and several Internet of things (IOT) device, human will be involved in making algorithms smarter and finally algorithms will be doing all the task in automated way with their own decision. There will be less of human interventions on any predefined task. As most of the systematic defined quantitative problems has already been programmed (like accounting, physics, mathematical calculations), computer scientist need to develop algorithms for more of qualitative nature only. Human brain is good in approximate calculation whereas Computer is best in exact calculations. This is where the future

of computer scientist will be pondering to solve and behave computer alike human beings with more sort of approximate calculations.

Data science is the process of extracting insight knowledge and information from the structured and unstructured data. As the organization becomes bigger and have several stakeholders, the value of data becomes more valuable and data helps to take business decision in data driven approach. Business analytics helps to take the organization business decision based on the past data performance and would suggest probability of new decision with several predictive algorithm approach (Linear / Logistic Regression, K- means Clustering).

As Humby coined the phrase “Data is the new Oil” in the Digital economy. At current digital age, the value of data is too much rewarding to extract

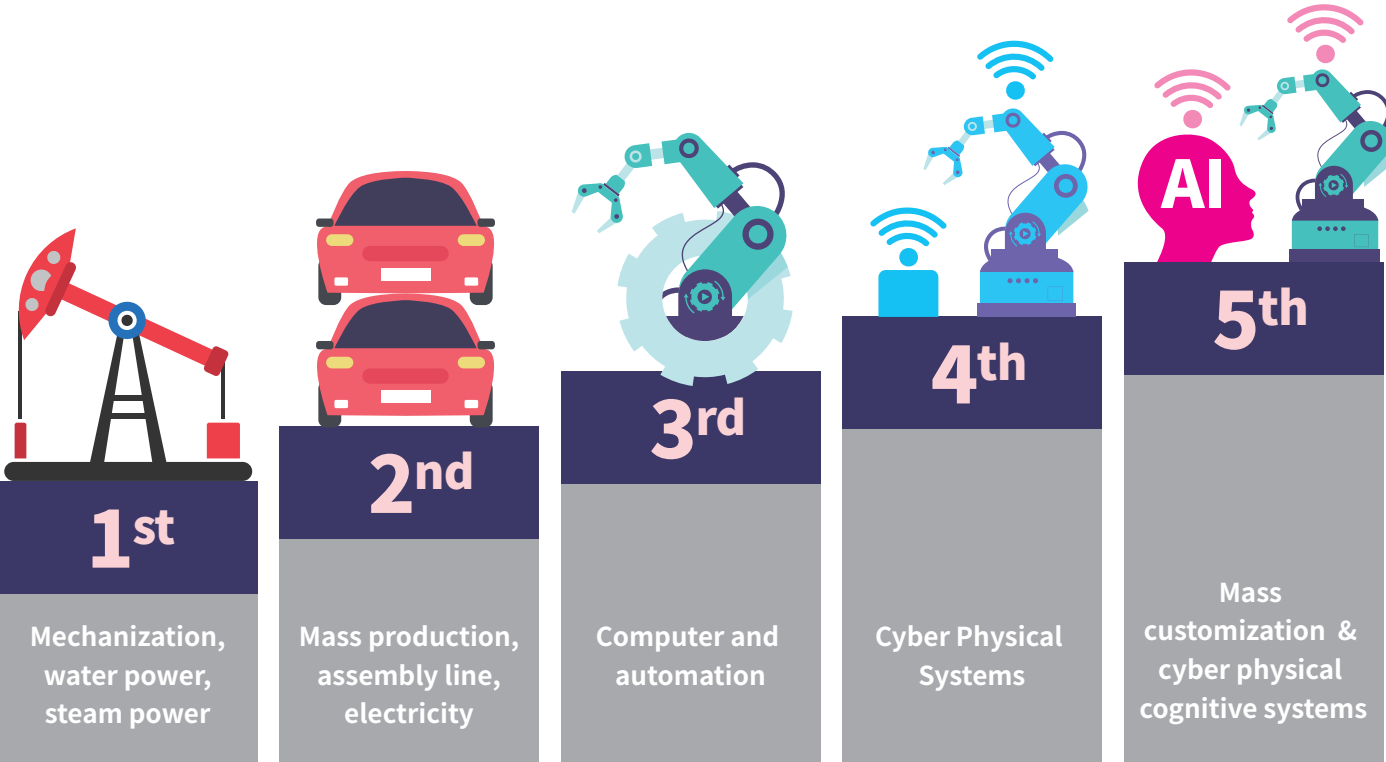
different types of information from data. For example - in retail application, we can predict the customer shopping patterns as per season and have sufficient stocks of items in store. We can predict the consumer psychology in shopping and have come out with several business offers as per customer category. For the medical, the health care data can predict the patient health and recommend the diet and medicines based on symptoms. For the tourism sector, we can have different plans for vacations with the tourist home country location and their preferred ethnic habits. In education domain, the value of student record data provides very valuable information to college like students technical command on subject and give suggestion on several perspective courses to pursue career with customized elective subjects. Thus the role of data science is ubiquitous irrespective of domains. As the managerial role

requires to manage several resources (human or Machine), thus in any bigger organization the data science knowledge is very critical to take data driven scientific decision.

The future of manager will be more interacting with machine rather than man. There will be more of machine driven projects. As the manager, s/he should be checking the machine optimal performance and effectiveness of machine. To equip with those analytic skill, we should be

competence enough to analyze the structure and unstructured data. Structured data is more of the standardized format (in table form) in which report is predefined and information can be extracted easily. Unstructured data does not have any pre-defined data model from where information can be extracted. Also the unstructured data have several data types combined like image, video, text from different source formats. The role of data scientist would be there to have insight from

unstructured data but the role of manager is critical to direct the data scientist about what type of knowledge s/he need to extract from data and take decision on business. The future of industry need manager who are not only SMART but do have knowledge about data driven decision and have capability to interact and direct several resources (man / machine) from the touch command through software apps from any location.



Glossary Terms

Algorithm – Algorithm is the finite steps of solving problem with the computer instructions. Algorithm are converted to program with help of any programming language.

Internet of Things– IOT refers to the small physical devices that are connected to the internet with data collecting and sharing capability.

Industry 5.0 – The fifth industry revolution will be focused more on the cooperation between man, machine and Robots. The industry will focus more on the customization and personalization for customer. Human intelligence will be working in harmony with cognitive computing.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ajay Yadav
MBA (VIT), Computer Engineer (MIT)
Visiting Faculty for Management, Data Science, AI subject

WHAT KIND OF LEADER ARE YOU?

“MAP Insights” Column in INQUIRER - February 1, 2022

By Chit U. Juan



IF YOU HAVE WATCHED *Designated Survivor* on Netflix you may understand what governance means. And it simply means transparency and accountability expressed in leadership and in decision-making.

Tom Kirkman is what every leader should be in the free world: honest, sincere and accountable. But that is what movies are made of. Fantasy, unreal and seemingly impossible to do or happen in the real world.

This is a lesson in good governance. Or the lack of it. What do we do when the leader of a company, organization or entity is not forthright or honest? Do we simply quit and choose not to have anything to do with the company or try to make things right?

This also involves choosing a leader for a country, a league, even a non-profit. And what options are when it is an elective position. Do we know who is honest and trustworthy?

Or is it a case of “better luck next time” if we make a wrong or bad choice?

These are questions to reflect on as we all try to be productive while in isolation. Due to the recent surges in Covid cases we are left with a lot of time to reflect on where we are and where we want to be. How do we deal with leadership we cannot accept? Do we compromise our principles for the sake of peace and unity? Or do we stress ourselves sick thinking of ways to go around the situation?

Every employee, member, citizen has a responsibility to check on the leadership of whatever group they belong to. It is our right to question and do a “check and balance” whenever we find a need to do so. The last thing we must do is turn away and keep quiet.

On the other side, leaders must check their constituencies periodically.

They must get an honest assessment of how they are governing their group or company. Something like a temperature check every so often even if members or employees seem to be happy. It may just seem that way when it is not. Instead of sweeping complaints or questions under the rug, a responsible leader must ask for feedback from everyone. Majority may carry a vote, but one must listen to the small voice, too.

How do you know you are a good leader?

1. Tom Kirkman wanted a Chief of Staff who questioned him. Not a yes man or a yes woman. Someone who even takes the other side even for exercise and testing the idea.
2. Listen to the feedback and questions. Sometimes we lead with a blind spot and it is helpful to find a critic every so often.
3. Loyal team members are loyal with a reason. It is because they believe in

your leadership. The more loyal team members there are, the better you are as a leader.

4. You must be open to change. People change, styles change and the times are always a-changing.

So give yourself the Tom Kirkman test. Can you stay as an independent, not blind to partisan decisions or your own selfish choices?

Every leader must think that there is always another way of doing things. It is not always our way or the highway. Sometimes good ideas come from the unlikely suggestions. And if you are a mature leader, you do not need the credit. Give credit to your team.

And finally, do not promote yourself. Your good deeds will be talked about and you may even be an urban legend without self-promotion.

That's what Tom Kirkman realized. Some staffers stayed because they got to know how honest he was. How sincere he was. Not because he made them stay.

Talk to your opposition or opposing forces. They may have an idea you both can actually agree on. Pull the rug from under by acknowledging their suggestions and improving on them. Soon, they cannot oppose you anymore.

Think of the greater good. Collaborate with like-minded individuals as well as other groups who seem to have a different tone or tune. They may give you good ideas to build on.

And finally, make sure you are in the right, legally and politically. A good leader works smart and is rewarded

by a growing mandate. Listen to what people say about your leadership.

On the last two episodes though, there is a plot twist which I had to watch before finishing this article. So, after over 40 episodes at 40+ minutes each, you then face reality that Tom is after all, just human.

BUT if you want an entertaining lesson in leadership, watch the film. It's on Netflix and is a good respite from just reading books or social media. Or admiring popular and successful leaders. And this may be good thinking for the coming elections, too. I will not pre-empt your viewing pleasure. But believe me, I rarely watch sequels, but I got glued to this one. It may be worth some time to get entertained while helping you reflect on your leadership style.



And ask yourself, what kind of leader am I? Every MAP member is a leader in his or her own right. So this film is relevant for everyone. And a good film to watch while we are in isolation either because we are already infected or avoiding being a statistic. Isolation is good for everyone, once in a very long while.

Disclaimer

This article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines or MAP.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author is Member of the MAP Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Chair of the Philippine Coffee Board, Councilor of Slow Food (www.slowfood.com) for Southeast Asia and is an advocate for organic agriculture. Feedback at <map@map.org.ph> and <pujuan29@gmail.com>.

CULTURAL AGILITY: THE FUTURE OF LEADERSHIP

"MAPping the Future" Column in the
INQUIRER - February 28, 2022

By Ramon B. Segismundo

One of the key thrusts of the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) for 2022 is Human Development and Well Being. The levers of Human Development and Well Being broadly encompass an ecosystem consisting of the workforce, the citizenry, the education sector and tri-sectoral leadership that includes private, public and civil society. Tri-sectoral leadership is a key enabler of the rest of the players in the ecosystem and MAP wants to play a key role in expanding the discourse on the leadership of the future: what is required of leaders to maximize their effectiveness and development.

Let me posit then that the successful leaders are not insular nor parochial; they are global and cross cultural. They have the openness, risk taking and experimentation mindset and an ability to identify, distill, source and apply possible solutions from wherever and whoever they are in the

world. The foundation of this global and cross-cultural management is a somewhat esoteric term called Cultural Agility.

WHY CULTURAL AGILITY?

No doubt COVID-19 has become a wake-up call for societies, organizations and individuals around the world. Consider the other equally serious global challenges we face, such as climate change mitigation, social inequality, the digital divide, mobility and migration and further virus mutations and other pandemics. Leaders would now have to contend with higher levels of expectations as they seek to hurdle these multi-dimensional challenges. Even before the onset of the pandemic in the Philippines, we were struggling with the challenges of eroding national competitiveness, poor governance, endemic corruption and debilitating poverty.

That is why the theme of "Push for

Change: Towards a Better Future for All" adopted by the MAP is fitting for this historic moment. We have to raise the goalposts for leadership in the next Philippines. An important component of this New Leadership is a global and cross-cultural mindset that drives a higher level of performance and enhanced competitiveness. This is built upon a foundation of a sense of nationalism and love of country.

As MAP President Alfredo Pascual points out: "As the Philippines opens up its economy and as we exert efforts to attract more foreign direct investment (FDI), Filipino leaders need to build a strong sense of cultural awareness, develop cultural competencies and acquire cross cultural experiences." An understanding and appreciation of the cultures in which we operate; the differences between national cultures versus corporate cultures; and the key success factors for thriving in the

global environment is a critical “must do” in this brave new world.

It used to be that you have to live and work abroad to acquire global and cross-cultural experiences. Nowadays, the reality is that you could stay in the Philippines and develop the same competencies. The chances of Filipino executives and leaders acquiring the global and cross-cultural skills without being expatriated abroad have increased with the recent developments that are described below.

First, the continued rapid growth of the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry has made the Philippines a top-tier destination for IT-Business Process Management (BPM) services and a leader in the global IT BPM industry, ranking first in voice-related services and accounting for 13 percent of global market share (Outsourcing Journal’s online edition, October 2021).

Second, the passage of the reconciled bill amending the Public Service Act (PSA) is expected to drive an FDI surge as full foreign ownership is allowed in more sectors.

Third, the Philippines enjoys natural advantages such, as its strategic location and relative proximity to Silicon Valley (compared to other IT hubs, such as Singapore or Bangalore), as well as abundant land and service-oriented human resources.

Fourth, the pandemic has opened up opportunities to work across regions and national boundaries from the comfort of office hubs or homes through the use of technology. Everything can be done from the Philippines, without the need to travel abroad to acquire global or cross-country experiences. Resource persons from other countries may

also be tapped to convey, and share their knowledge and expertise virtually.

HOW TO BUILD CULTURAL AGILITY

In a MAP webinar last January 28 on “The Future of Leadership is Cultural Agility”, two resource speakers --- Dr. Paula Caligiuri, a global expert on cross cultural management, and Mr. Stephen Krempf, a noted corporate communications coach, shared their insights on building cultural agility as part of the executive leadership toolkit.

Dr. Paula highlighted that cultural agility involves effectively and comfortably working in and with people of different cultures. She cites three components that are critical to build cultural agility: cross-cultural awareness, cultural agility competencies, and cross-cultural experiences.

Cross-cultural awareness could be acquired and sharpened through

training and coaching. Cultural agility competencies could be developed through assessment, identification of gaps, and establishing plans. In Paula’s work, the nine specific cultural agility competencies are: self-management, including tolerance of ambiguity, curiosity and resilience; relationship management, including humility, relationship building and perspective taking; and task management, consisting of cultural minimization, cultural adaptation and cultural integration. Cross-cultural experiences involve opportunities to build and develop competencies by implementing the plans from the assessment in the previous step.

To further deep-dive into the research and science of cultural agility, her book *Build Your Cultural Agility* could be sourced through *Amazon.com*.

On the other hand, Krempf focused on the global executive mindset that





senior management requires and recognizes. This is building on the experiences of his international career in large global organizations. He advised the audience to: first, be deliberate in which arena you would like to play, whether local, global, or both ('glocal'); second, be yourself while at the same time be at the top of your game in the critical few situations that require your expertise to be demonstrated. Examples of these situations include interactions with your direct boss, top management meetings, or presentations to the board.

He further asserts that when the pressure is on, you have to increase your visibility, raise your energy, differentiate yourself, add significant value and be proactive. This has to be built, of course, on a foundation of attitude, knowledge and competence.

In the course of my own CEO/leadership coaching, I have advised senior Filipino leaders on how to be effective and comfortable dealing with their non-Filipino bosses and colleagues. I have found Hofstede's work on the cultural

dimensions and the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) study as good starting points for the coaching conversations.

PLATINUM RULE AND SENSE OF NATION

Having defined cultural agility and being offered avenues on how to build it, I would like to recommend to Filipino leaders and executives two imperatives that will set them on a path to enhanced cultural agility: first, the platinum rule; and second, pride in being Filipino.

More than just observing the golden rule, let us treat others the way they want to be treated --- that's the platinum rule. This involves fully understanding and appreciating the cultures of the organizations or individuals that you want to engage with to secure the business outcomes you want to achieve. We have to move away from an inward mindset to one that embraces a world of multi-faceted opportunities.

Most importantly, we need to develop a sense of nationalism. Be proud of being Filipino. Yes, the Filipino can be

competitive in even unfamiliar environments by dint of sheer hard work and determination, resilience and faith in God. Voting in the right kind of leaders in the coming elections could be an important first step in bringing about a new Leadership towards a new Philippines.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The Author is Co-Chair for Strategic HR Management of the MAP Human and Management Development Committee. He is a Strategic HR Advisor, CEO Coach, and a member of the Strategic Management/Global Management Faculty of De La Salle University. Feedback at <map@map.org.ph> and <rbsegismundo@onehrx.com>.



Asian Association of Management Organisations

About AAMO:

AAMO is a partnership of National Management Organizations(NMO) whose purpose is to share and actively leverage resources to enhance the achievement of their respective missions. AAMO is an independent, nonpolitical and not-for-profit Association of NMOs, which promotes, facilitates and supports the development of professional management in the Asia Pacific Region.

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AAMO Secretariat: All India Management Association

Management House, 14 Institutional Area,
Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110 003, India

Tel : +91 11 2464 5100

Email: aamo.secretariat@aima.in

Website: www.aamo.net

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