

October 11, 2017 In The Know Summary

Mastering Leadership: An Integrated Framework for Breakthrough Performance and Extraordinary Business Results By Robert J. Anderson and William A. Adams

What is the book about?

In our October 2017 session, Clarence Norment took us through an animated discussion of Anderson and Adams' *Mastering Leadership: An Integrated Framework for Breakthrough Performance and Extraordinary Business Results*. The book argues that the path to effective leadership development requires a strategic, long-term, and integrated approach, which in turn enhances business performance.

The authors offer a developmental pathway – not cookie cutter quick fixes – to recognize, encourage, and maintain individual and collective leadership. The book also addresses a challenge many of today's leaders share – a feeling of being overwhelmed. In the book summary, the authors note:

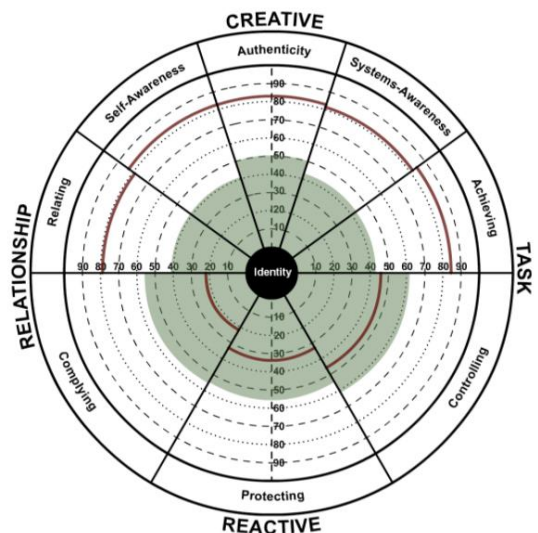
"...For most leaders today, complexity is outpacing their personal and collective development. Most leaders are in over their heads, whether they know it or not."

What did we discuss?

Clarence began the session with two probing questions: the first was about passion and purpose. He asked us to think about an outcome in our work that really matters. *What have we been doing to achieve this outcome, what would it mean if we were to achieve it?* The second question was about fear. *What fears arise in pursuing this outcome, what would be at risk – what's the worst that could happen?*

This launched us into a deeper discussion of what defines leaders, how those traits are developed, and how they relate to performance.

Referencing his kickoff questions, Clarence noted that "structure determines performance and consciousness is a structure." That being said, he explained that there are two different modes of consciousness. The first one being the



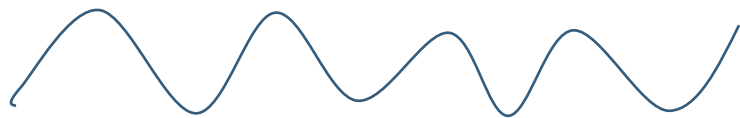
“Creative” mode where you’re driven towards passion and purpose and the second one being the “Reactive” mode, where you’re running away from fear.

These two modes – and the leadership model Clarence presented – stem from a larger view of the five stages of adult development: Unitive, Integral, Creative, Reactive, and Egocentric.



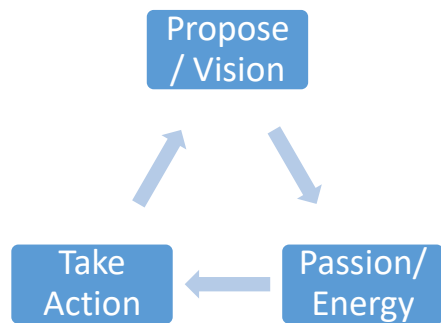
In “Reactive” mode, you respond to threats or problems with increased fear, which in turn drives your reaction. However if that problem disappears, your anxiety lessens and then you don’t react.

Later on, that problem surfaces back up again and then your anxiety increases and you react. Over time, the pattern looks like a sine wave, with multiple but consistent peaks and valleys.

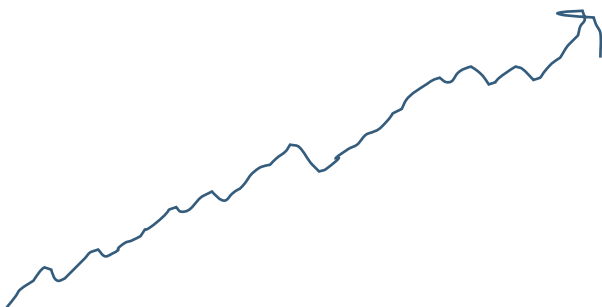


This cyclical pattern gets in the way of productivity and development because we’re merely reacting to the things we want to avoid, like a micromanaging boss or a challenging project. And while a team may see short term productivity gains – Clarence used the example of a manager standing over an anxious employee – over time (or when that manager is no longer standing there) that productivity is unsustainable. But when productivity falls, the manager reacts by micromanaging, and the cycle begins again.

Alternatively, in “Creative” mode, you respond to the same stimuli with energy and purpose – you shift into “problem-solving mode” – so, you take more action, you then are more motivated towards your vision. When you succeed, you gain more confidence in your ability to successfully tack the NEXT challenge.



Over time, this can be represented visually as a more positive trajectory:



Clarence then took us through a handout exercise, focused on claiming our “true gifts” and “harvesting the shadow.” In it, we dissected some typical leadership behaviors and explored how to use them to consistently reach more positive outcomes, both for ourselves and our organizations. These “typical behaviors” included “complying,” “protecting,” and “controlling.”

So, what did we learn?

From both the text and the moderator, we learned that a change in leadership style, (or developing new leaders), isn't an overnight process. It requires an examination of both the leader and the organization, then a strategic plan based on those specific, unique traits, to turn perceived weaknesses into strengths.

On a personal level, we learned what our own modes are, and how to begin to use that knowledge to better inform our reactions. For example, we're extremely limited in developing or being productive when we're spending our time running away from things we want to avoid.

How can I learn more?

- [Laura Mendelow's Blog related to Belonging](#)
- [Mastering Leadership: An Integrated Framework for Breakthrough Performance and Extraordinary Business Results](#) by Robert J. Anderson and William A. Adams.
- [Smarter Faster Better: The Transformative Power of Real Productivity](#) by Charles Duhigg.
- [Self-Analysis](#) by Karen Horney.
- [Immunity to Change: How to Overcome It and Unlock the Potential in Yourself and Your Organization \(Leadership for the Common Good\)](#) by Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey.