

LEADerShip at a Glance

CHLNet's "Top Three" Suggested LEADS Readings for COVID-19¹

Allen, J. (2020). [*The Power-Up Sequence: Addressing the Organizational Costs of Covid-19 Lockdown.*](#) Bain & Company.

Summary:

James Allen, a partner in Bains & Co., a global consultancy dedicated to helping companies create breakthrough change, argues that the COVID 19 crisis is, for many organizations, a "dress rehearsal for a more turbulent world ahead", in which companies—and health care organizations—will reinvent themselves to remain relevant, or fade away. In this context, many CEOs want to avoid a snapback to old ways of working, instead favoring the new and improved routines and behaviors learned during the lockdown. Because everything communicates, employees will view each step in the sequence as either an endorsement of the new or a return to the old.

How CEOs reopen their organizations—for example, in health care, to deal with the backlog of elected surgeries; to maintain a focus on health and wellness of employees and clinicians; and to adapt to the newly understood virtues of technology—will send a signal as to whether the intent is to return to old practice or embrace valued changes as part of the operating future.

This article summarizes a number of factors learned during this pandemic that CEOs should consider moving their organization into the future. These are:

- Maintain bottom up experimentation—trust local teams.
- Utilize smaller teams—keep at four to six.
- Create fewer 'rules, tools and fools' -- use your power to eliminate needless friction and complexity.
- Move to coordination, reallocating resources among experiments, ending some, and changing key parameters of others.
- Find the right balance between the loneliness-solitude paradox in a technologically enabled world.
- Develop a new social contract, that redefines the relationship between the individual, the team, and the organization—i.e., to embrace many of the 'lessons learned' about how to assist employees and clinicians to remain physically and psychologically healthy.

LEADS Link: LEADS is a leadership framework, and leadership is about creating improvement and change. How a CEO conducts him/herself to generate their organization of the future—building in some of these suggestions—is a significant change that demands of those leaders almost all the capabilities of LEADS. This article signals a strong move towards caring, distributed and co-creative leadership, consistent with the philosophy of LEADS.

¹ As recommended by Dr. Graham Dickson (CHLNet Senior Research Advisor)

Champoux-Paille, L.; & Croteau, A-M. (2020). [Why women leaders are excelling during the coronavirus pandemic.](#)

Summary:

The two authors, Louise Champoux-Paille and Anne-Marie Croteau, from Concordia University in Montreal, make a compelling case that the actions of female political leaders in many countries across the globe are providing leadership to the crisis better than their male counterparts. Resilience, pragmatism, benevolence, trust in collective common sense, empathy, listening, collaboration, mutual aid, recognition of collective contribution and humility are mentioned as common features of the success of these women leaders.

They then go on to ask the question, “What if countries led by women are managing the pandemic more effectively not because they are women, but because the election of women is a reflection of societies where there is a greater presence of women in many positions of power, in all sectors?”. They answer this question by stating that gender-balanced environments produce more robust decisions. These environments also represent leadership where female-like values dominate; and that those values are inherent a new type of leadership—different to command and control.

They then argue that societies dedicated to solving the problems of the 21st century, such as climate change, health care, social disparity—which demands this form of leadership—must diversify their talent; including giving priority to diversity and gender.

Link to LEADS: We can also see in Canada that women leaders in Canada’s public health system emulate many of the positive leadership characteristics demonstrated by the female political leaders profiled in this article. Some of these qualities—i.e., trust in collective common sense, mutual aid and humility—are also consistent with the *Caring* ethos of the LEADS framework; and trust, empathy, humility, and resilience are demonstrable of the *Lead Self* capability of Demonstrates character; while listening and mutual aid are consistent with the capabilities of *Engage Others*; and collective contribution and collaboration of the champion and orchestrate change capability of *Systems Transformation*.

A fundamental theme in the new LEADS book—Putting LEADS to Work—is the power of gender and inclusion in leadership; and how LEADS invites women into leadership roles. This article reinforces that theme.

Duarte, N. (2020). [Good leadership is about communicating “Why”](#). Harvard Business Review.

Summary:

As healthcare contemplates its future—the new normal after the pandemic—one thing is inevitable: significant change. Indeed, the term ‘new normal’ signals that there is no going back to the way health care used to do business before the pandemic.

This is important context for Nancy Duarte’s article on good leadership is about communicating why. Partly because we are going to be asking employees, clinicians, staff, partners, etc. to do things differently. Ms. Duarte makes the case that most leaders are hampered during their requests for change by focusing on the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of their desired change, rather than the ‘why’ of it. They often think that the why is so self-evident it doesn’t need unpacking; but this is primarily because they have come to that conclusion after hours of reflection, investigation, and exploring different alternatives: a luxury the people who have to implement the change have not had.

She then outlines and describes three strategies to help a CEO to get to the heart of the why in a desired change process:

- Ask good what questions
- Follow up with because
- State alternate perspectives

Link to LEADS: This article provides guidance into multiple capabilities of LEADS. The first is the Set direction capability of *Achieve Results*. The ‘why’ message in communications is directly related to the desired results of a change. If this cannot be stated clearly, in the sense of the desired impact of a change on patients, families or citizens, then the direction itself is not clear.

The second capability is Effective communications from the *Engage Others* domain of LEADS. The first message—focus on the why in communications—obviously directly relates to that capability; how to phrase a communication for maximum influence.

The three strategies to help the CEO get to the heart of the why in a desired change process are directly drawn from the *Lead Self* domain of LEADS. The three strategies demand all four of the capabilities: self awareness (introspection); self-management (preparing for the dialogue); character (i.e., asking why is an act of empathy); and self-development—in that the process helps you learn why you yourself are committed to a course of action, and prepared to engage in the difficult discussions that may be required.

Kaczorowski, R. (2020, April). [The Light at the End of the COVID-19 Tunnel](#). Insights: Longwoods.

Summary:

As we prepare for the future after the COVID-19 pandemic, it is helpful to be reminded of the Stockdale paradox: and approach outlined by Jim Collins in his book *Good to Great* and created by the US Vice-Admiral James Stockdale. The Stockdale paradox is based on the premise that optimism, operationalized effectively, is the key to resilience through times a major stress and crisis.

A Stockdale optimist embraces four main mindsets in dealing with these difficult situations. They possess 1) a realistic and pragmatic view of a situation, 2) a strong belief and faith in people, 3) the ability to understand and appreciate what one can control and, just as importantly, what is out of one's control, and finally, 4) the optimism that the first three areas will eventually provide a passage out of today's dark tunnel.

Kaczorowski then outlines how these four mindsets can be employed during the health care pandemic to enable us to find our way to a future at the end of the tunnel. He also emphasizes how important it is to take the time to fully understand what has happened and why (editorial note: a shout-out to the CHLNet Action Research Project on Leading Thru COVID-19).

Link to LEADS: The four mindsets of the Stockdale paradox relate directly to the emotional intelligence aspect of the are self-aware and manages self capability of *Lead Self* in the LEADS framework. Operationalized, they also express the Demonstrates character (resilience) and Develops self capabilities of *Lead Self*.