Leadership in Times of Crisis: What are We Learning?

Garry R. Sanders, PCC
Executive Coach
gsanders@assistleadership.com
assistleadership.com
U.S. Businesses Take Steps to Reopen

“The New York Times”

“Context?”

“Leading Remotely: What Managers Need to Know”

“GALLUP”

“Social Distancing Requirements meet Challenges.”

“The Washington Post”

“All the comforts of the office, at home: Remote workers snapping up desks, webcams and lamps”

“LA Times”

“How Soon to Find a Vaccine?”

“Millions have sought U.S. jobless aid since coronavirus. Deaths accumulate worldwide.”
“According to Gallup, Americans are experiencing the sharpest drop in perceived well-being on record.”

NY Times 5/15/2020
Observations: March 2020-May 2020

Disorientation/Reorientation (new maps)

Uncertainty/Risk Management

Reaffirming and Anchoring to Values

New Possibilities and Innovations
And Still...Resilience.
Many Challenges Ahead

• Reopening colleges and universities
• Reopening research operations
• Rebuilding communities
• Determining acceptable risk
• Managing financial downfalls
How can we describe what we are living through?
It’s Always been a VUCA World

VUCA draws on the leadership theories of Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus (1987)
“For the moment he wished to behave like all those others around him who believed, or made believe, that plague can come and go without changing anything in men’s hearts.”

Albert Camus, “The Plague” 1947

What are you noticing about yourself as you live and work through this crisis? How are you doing?
Understanding How We Make Meaning at Work

Status
Certainty
Autonomy
Relatedness
Fairness
**Status** “Where do I stand?” “Do I matter?”

**Certainty** “What can I depend on? What is going to happen?”

**Autonomy** “What parts of this do I have some say/control?”

**Relatedness** “Do you care about me?”

**Fairness** “Will you treat me fairly?”
A Leader’s Job in Crisis: Put on your SCARF

- Self-Aware
- Hopeful
- Pragmatic
- Trustworthy and trusting
- Compassionate and vulnerable
- Dignity and Clarity
Bounded Optimism:

Confidence combined with realism.
What are you learning about leadership and teamwork through the pandemic?
Leadership Concepts To Steer By During Crisis

• Mindsets
• Mind-traps
Mindset and Resilience

• Related to beliefs about ability and effort.

• **Fixed** mindset – ability cannot or will not change. Born with what you have or don’t have. Easily disappointed. Closed to new. “This is me.”

• **Growth** mindset – ability can and will change (grow). Learn, try, fail, improve. Adapt. Learning is vital. “I create me.”
Sounds of a Growth Mind Set

Curiosity and Collaboration

- What if we...?
- What are we learning?
- What do you need?
- How can I help?
- What can we try?
- What might be possible?
- How could that work?

AND (not but)
Mindtraps

• **Simple Stories**
  I know the heroes and villains and what happens next.

• **Rightness**
  I’m safe if I’m right. I fear being wrong.

• **Agreement**
  I need to make everyone happy.

• **Control**
  I’m happiest when I’m doing things myself.

• **Ego**
  I am who I am. Has worked for me so far.

Jennifer Garvey-Berger ©
choose shift.com/mindtraps
Mindtraps-Pivots

• Simple Stories-What are other possible stories?
• Rightness-How could I be wrong?
• Agreement-How could conflict and debate serve to help us solve a problem?
• Control-What can I make possible by sharing information and the decision making load?
• Ego-How can I give myself permission to change and grow?

Jennifer Garvey-Berger ©
choose shift.com/mindtraps
“I refuse to believe that you cannot be both compassionate and strong.”

Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister, New Zealand
“(You) can’t connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backward. So, you have to trust that the dots

Steve Jobs (speech to Stanford graduates, 2005)
Questions?

Garry Sanders

gsanders@assistleadership.com
assistleadership.com
Wishing you Reflection and Resilience and Good Health!

Garry Sanders
gsanders@assistleadership.com
assistleadership.com