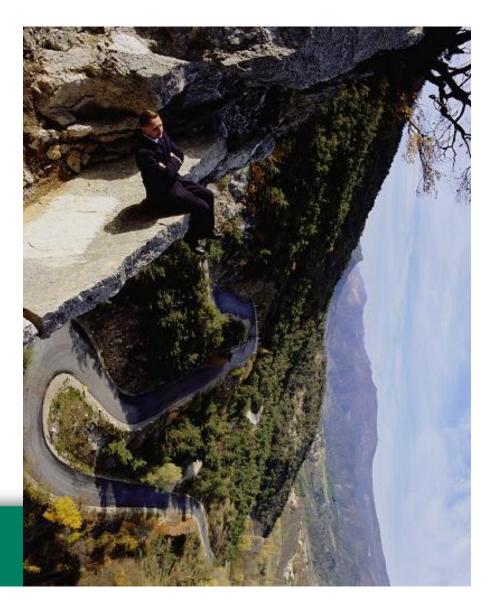


Herminia Ibarra The CORA Chaired Professor of Leadership & Learning, INSEAD Professor of Organisational Behaviour

**CRF** Master Class 23 November, 2011

# Transition to Leadership

Understand the world. Expand your world.



#### A Brief History of Leadership



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"Who leaders are "What leaders do "How leaders develop

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# A Behavioral Definition of Leadership



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Leaders are people who:

- " Establish an ambitious goal or direction for a group
- "Gain the cooperation & commitment of those they need to move in that direction
- Motivate and inspire people to overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of achieving their goals

# Managerial & Leadership Roles are Different



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"Ensure efficiency vs. create change

- "Work within vs. outside and across the boxes
- "Rely on positional vs. personal power

## The Developmental Challenge



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"Leadership roles require:

- " More time devoted to strategic thinking & agenda setting
- "Greater clarity of purpose: %why?+
- " More motional intelligence+
- "But, most of us are rewarded for:
  - " Operational and technical skills
  - " Execution
  - " Reople sins+forgiven as long as we perform





- "How has the kind of leadership you (and your high potentials) are asked to provide changed over the past two years or so?
- "What do you (and your high potentials) struggle most with as you shift into bigger leadership roles?





- <sup>"</sup> X has a deep and wide operational background and a demonstrated ability to work through problems in a systematic way. At the next level, the complexity of problems he will encounter are going to demand an approach to problem solving that takes into account a number of different stakeholder and that will be long term in nature.
- C needs to improve her people management. She is able to drive delivery of results and execution flawlessly but still needs to develop her people touch. She could also benefit from better time management to allow her to spend more time on strategic topics

# Key Shifts in the Transition to Bigger Leadership Roles



- 1. Shifting from an operational/functional role & mindset to a more **strategic role & mindset**
- 2. Shifting from working through existing internal networks to creating & bridging across internal & external **networks**
- Shifting from a dominant (usually hands-on and directive) leadership style to a broader stylistic repertory and more collaborative forms of leadership

## What Got You Here Wond Even Keep You Here



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"Environments change & expectations change

- "Yet, we fail to **see the shift** & continue to rely on what has made us successful in the past
- "Barriers to change are less a matter of "skill" but work values & time allocations that correspond to former roles and deeply internalized identities
- "Transitions provoke deep self-questioning: who am I? who do I want to become? Can I do it? is it worth the effort?

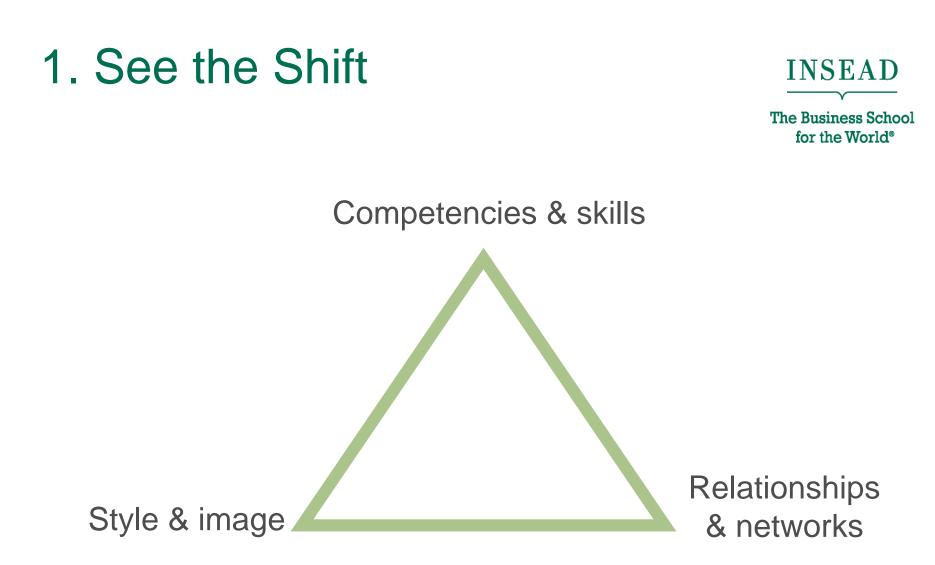
#### Example: Are Leaders Portable?



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Harvard study of 20 GE alumni with experience in "growth & expansion" versus "cost-cutting" roles (Groysberg, 2006)

- " Like to like transitions: + 14.1% returns
- " Like to unlike transitions: -39.8%



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## 2. Escape Identity Traps

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- "Competency traps
- "Authenticity traps
- "Performance Traps
- "Positive illusion traps

#### **Competency Traps**



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A successful behavior pattern that precludes search for more adaptive possibilities.

 Experience/competence/preference cycles. We become better at what we already do well, breeding both success and the satisfaction of a task well-done. The more expert we become, the greater the enjoyment and, therefore, the motivation to get more experience that deepens our knowledge even more.

# Competency Traps (continued)



- 2. Opportunity costs and loss aversion. The better we are at something, the higher the opportunity cost of doing something else. Returns to exploitation are more certain, closer in time and closer in space than are the returns to exploration.
- **3. Buffering.** The more expert we become, the more we surround ourselves with people who can appreciate our expertise, buffering ourselves from people and situations in which our competencies don't have currency.





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Staying inside one's comfort zone in order to avoid feeling inauthentic, i.e., untrue to oneself.

*"What I am supposed to do, send an email saying "how's it going?" That seems fake to me. I feel more comfortable saying "let's talk about the business." I know there are people I need to keep contact with, strategically, but I struggle for how to keep the contact."* 

"We are in danger today of being mesmerized by people who play with our reptilian brain. For me, it is manipulation. I can do the storytelling, but I refuse to play on people's emotions. If the string is too obvious, I can't make myself do it."

#### **Performance Traps**



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#### A behavior pattern aimed at validating a self-image.

- "Performance goals: **show** others & validate for ourselves that we have a valued attribute (e.g., intelligence)
- " Learning goals: **develop** a valued attribute.
- "People seeking to validate a self-image prefer tasks that will help them look good over tasks that will help them learn.

"You are not supposed to be an expert in everything but people fall in this pitfall where you want to express an opinion in every goddam thing even if you don't know. That's a trap people fall into."

#### **Positive Illusion Traps**



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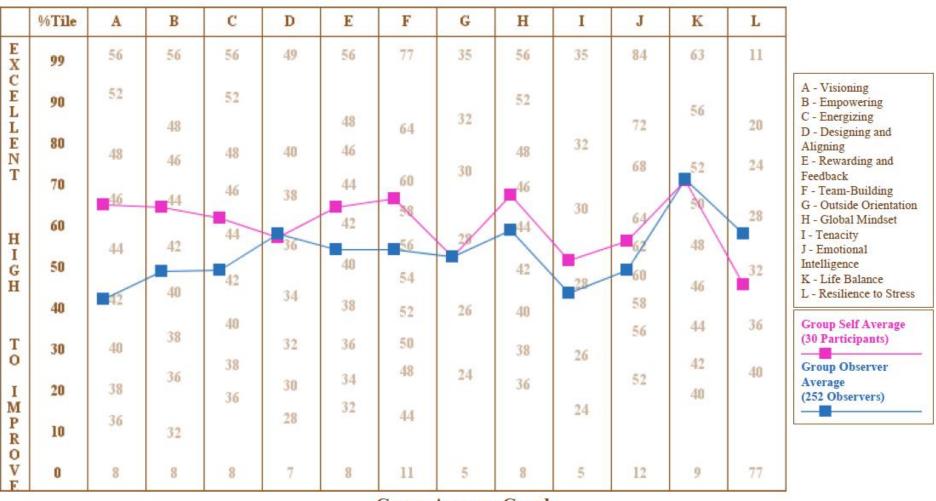
Our tendency to see ourselves in the best light possible and to reinforce that tendency by surrounding ourselves with people who confirm our self-views.

"Lake Wobegone" effect360-feedback person-observer gaps

#### **Global Executive Leadership Inventory**

Leadership Transition -

#### **Group Average Graph**



**Group Average Graph** 

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10 to 14 October 2011

#### **Buzz Groups**

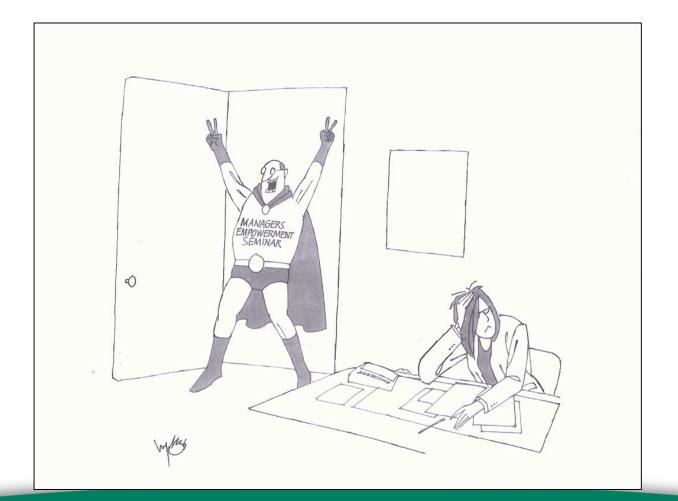


- What do you do (and dond do) to help people avoid the traps?
- "What might you do?

#### 3. Increase Self-Outsight

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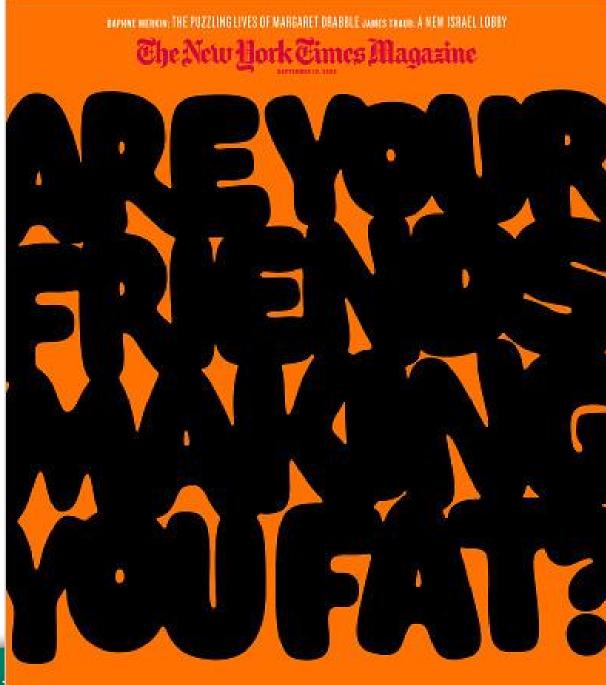
#### Attraction



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What is the top determinant of chemistry in a professional relationship?

- " Intelligence
- " Attractiveness
- " Similarity
- " Frequent contact (proximity)
- " Power/status

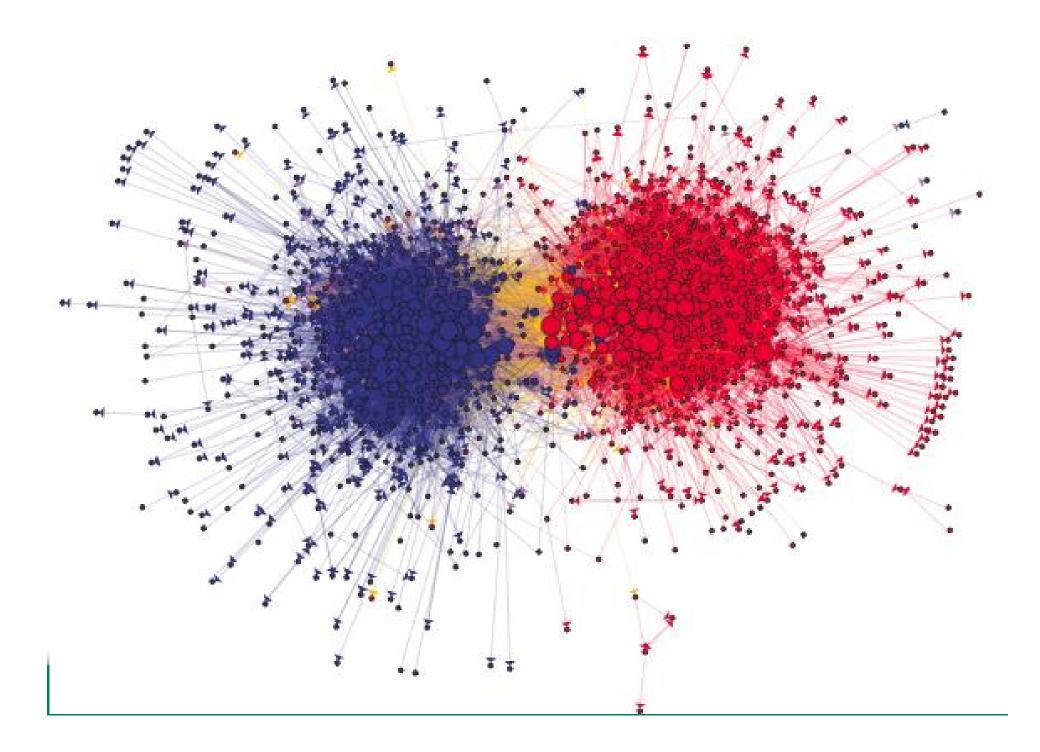


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Understand

THE EMERGING SCIENCE OF 'SOCIAL CONTAGION' HOLDS THAT WE ARE WHOM WE SURROUND OURSELVES WITH. BY CLIVE THOMPSON



# Trapped in Your Own Net



- "Birds of a feather effect: "homosocial" reproduction
- "Internally focused; inbred
- "Slow to adapt: Network lag

#### Increase Self-outsight



- "Look outward for a fresh perspective
- "Add to your toolkit before you subtract
- "Change your reference group to create new benchmarks
  - "Build new peer groups to provide support
  - "Seek role models that show the way
- "Create slack in your schedule

## Summary



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"Recognize the shift

"Avoid the traps

"Increase self--outsight+