

Chapter 13

Team Consciousness

Leading others¹⁰⁴ or any group of people with a common goal or purpose is obviously not the same as leading yourself. It requires significantly more skills and capabilities. Just as you learned to create the conditions for your own fulfilment in the Leading Self module, you are now going to have to learn how to create the conditions for a group of people to find their individual and collective fulfilment.

Do You Want To Lead Others?

This may sound like a dumb question, but it is extremely important for you to know if leading others is, in fact, your pathway to fulfilment. It may be that your skills and talents lie elsewhere. So many people find themselves thrust into management positions, not because it is what they want to do, but it is because what they feel obliged to do in order to progress in their chosen career. Being honest with yourself on this matter is vital if you are going to find fulfilment in your life.

If you are someone whose passion involves doing your work rather than supporting or guiding others in doing their work, then setting your sights on becoming a leader may not be the pathway for you. Ultimately, it all comes down to understanding where your passion and creativity lies; knowing which of your unique abilities gets your juices flowing.

This may not be a question that you can answer right now. Some people know what they are meant to do with their lives while they are still young. Other people think they know, but then have to make a midcourse correction. That was my case. Some people never get really clear, either because the gifts they have and their passions are generic

¹⁰⁴ I am using the term “Leading Others” in the context of someone who is responsible for a group of individuals: a work team, a project team, a division or a business unit, or any group of people who has a common purpose or goal that is subsidiary to a larger organisation. I am using “team” as a generic term embracing all sizes of group.

and diverse or because they prefer to lead a life of adventure. Put more simply, adventure is their passion.

For myself, I know my passion is to understand the evolution of human consciousness and create models and tools to support personal and cultural transformation. My gifts include writing and speaking. This is who I am. Whenever I am doing this work, I feel vital and alive. Three times in my life, I started and built up small organisations, only to realise that my passion was in doing the work rather than managing others who were doing the work.

That was one of the most pleasing aspects of my many years at the World Bank. I got to pursue my purpose without having to be responsible for others. This is also what is pleasing about my current life. Having spent the past twelve years building a successful organisation, I have now handed off the day-to-day operations to my colleagues so I could devote my time to pursuing my passion. I am still strategically connected to the business, but I am no longer involved in day-to-day operations. What I do each day, my passion, contributes directly to the thought leadership of my organisation.

So, if supporting and managing others in doing their work is your passion or your default position because you are not sure what else you are supposed to be doing, learning to lead others is most likely what is best for you. In any case, the skills you will learn will always be helpful in some part of your life.

What you learned in the Leading Self module will be of significant importance in helping you to lead others. The work you have done on personal mastery will enable you to create a working environment with a low level of entropy. Personal entropy has negative repercussions that are the major source of cultural entropy. Being able to manage, master, or overcome your subconscious fear-based beliefs and learning to identify your needs and make requests will significantly improve the quality of your interactions with your team members. Everything you learn about leading yourself will enable you to do a better job at coaching others.

Finally, in order to effectively lead others, you will need to be operating with a self-transforming mind. Learning how to becoming your own self-witness is a key skill that supports you in this regard. Let me explain.

Are You Able to Lead Others?

Most people are promoted to supervisory or managerial responsibilities because of their ability and experience in doing their work. It isn't because of their ability to manage and develop people. Your ability to build a high-performing team will depend on two factors: the type of mind you are operating from (your ability to handle complexity) and the degree to which you have learned how to lead yourself.

Three Types of Mind

In chapter 5, we linked the evolution of personal consciousness and the ability to handle complexity to three types of mind: the socialised mind, the self-authoring mind, and the self-transforming mind.

The way a socialized mind responds to a situation or request is strongly influenced by what it believes others are expecting and how it can meet its survival, relationship, and self-esteem needs. The socialized mind prefers to be given instructions and told what to do. If you are operating with a socialized mind, you are unlikely to want to take on a significant leadership position. The level of responsibility and accountability will be too stressful.

The way a self-authoring mind responds to a situation or request is by feeding back to others what it needs to further its agenda. The self-authoring mind wants to be accountable and take initiatives. It will readily accept challenges. If you are operating with a self-authoring mind, you will be keen to take on a leadership role. You will see this as a possibility to further your ambitions and goals. You will be best suited to managing people with socialized minds who are working on relatively routine tasks. You may find yourself clashing with people in your team who are also operating with self-authoring minds that hold a different view of how the work should be done.

The way a self-transforming mind responds to a situation or request is by seeking out more information to find the best way forward. The self-transforming mind is not a prisoner to its beliefs, agenda, or position. It is open to thoughts and ideas of others and can integrate them into a more inclusive worldview. If you are operating with a self-transforming mind, you will be well suited to managing people with self-authoring minds who are working on tasks that demand personal creativity and initiative, people whose daily routine involves significant levels of responsibility.

We evolve from a socialized mind to a self-authoring mind to the degree we are able to overcome our anxieties and fears, individuate, and feel confident about our own capabilities to survive and thrive, our ability to adapt and master life's challenges and build a strong level of self-esteem. We evolve from a self-authoring mind to a self-transforming mind to the degree that we can detach from the outcomes we think we need, trust the process, and live in the expectation that we will get exactly what we need to get to the best outcome.

In the industrial age, organisations mainly wanted employees with socialized minds. They wanted people who were good team players, pulled their weight, were loyal to the company, and could be counted on to carry out the directions or instructions given to them by their bosses.

In the information age, organisations mainly wanted flexible and knowledgeable employees, people who were able to act responsibly, take initiatives, and work independently. They were looking for people with self-authoring minds. Now in the consciousness age, organisations want people, particularly leaders, who are not only able to get results, but, at the same time, engender trust, display high levels of empathy and compassion, and have a strong social conscience. These are people with self-transforming minds.

Whatever type of team you are managing, you will need to give all team members the opportunity to express their ideas and opinions about their work. This means you will need to get past the idea that you have all the right answers and your job as a leader is just to tell people what to do. You will need to be skilled in personal mastery and display strong emotional intelligence skills if you are going to manage a team.

Finally, you will only be successful as a leader of a team if you are able to support your team members in finding fulfilment. You will only be able to do this if you know and understand what type of minds your team members are operating from and what fulfilment looks like for them. You will also need to be aware of their talents and give them tasks that align with what they do best.

Internal Stability

A team experiences internal stability when the needs of the team members are being met either by the team members themselves or by you as their leader. This means you, as the leader of the team, need to

be able to support team members in taking responsibility for and managing their own internal stability and at the same time, manage the internal stability of the team. Maintaining the internal stability of a team involves:

- Managing individual upsets in your team: coaching team members in developing their personal mastery skills
- Managing conflicts in your team: using your communication skills and capabilities to de-energize and resolve contrary fixed positions

External Equilibrium

A team experiences external equilibrium when the team is able to carry out the specific tasks that the organisation has asked the team to provide and the organisation itself takes care of the team's basic needs. The relationship with the organisation and other teams or, in the case of a project team, with the client organisation is primarily the responsibility of the team leader. Maintaining the external equilibrium of the team involves:

- Providing the financial and physical resources that enable the team to fulfil its goals
- Managing the relationships the team has with other parts of the organisation and/or its external stakeholders

The Journey of Team Evolution

Learning to lead a team will present you with more experiences for learning to lead yourself. If you have not thoroughly inculcated the Leading Self module of the evolutionary leadership programme, you will probably find yourself struggling to lead others. You will be struggling because you will not have mastered your subconscious fears. You will not have uncovered your authentic self, or you will not have found your empathetic core.

Even if you have achieved a significant level of mastery in all these areas, you will still come across situations that will challenge you. This fact is absolutely guaranteed. That is what life does when you are open to it. It keeps on presenting you with opportunities to take yourself to the next level of your growth. That is why it is important to learn the self-coaching skills I outlined in the previous chapters. Once you have

mastered these skills, they will help you move forward on your evolutionary journey with minimal internal upset. They will help you adapt to the vicissitudes of life so you can be happy and enjoy yourself.

As you begin the journey of learning to lead others, you will find yourself referring back to what you learned in the Leading Self module and what you wrote in your leadership journal. This is why I have included such a journal in the New Leadership Paradigm learning system, because it will be an invaluable resource and support for monitoring your progress.

As a team leader, your job is to manage the internal stability and external equilibrium of your team by making decisions and choices that not only support the team in meeting its needs, but also support each team member in meeting their individual needs. When the needs of the team members align with the needs of the team, the team will have internal stability. When the physical needs¹⁰⁵ of the team are also in equilibrium with the team's physical environment, you will have a high-performing team.

Depending on the type of business you are in and the role of your team, you will want to carefully evaluate the mix you want of people with socialised minds, self-authoring minds, and self-transforming minds. If the work of your unit is repetitive and can be codified into simple steps or rules, then you may find your needs being best served by hiring people with socialised minds. In general, such people are motivated by the satisfaction of their basic needs. They will not be looking to take significant initiatives or deal with complex situations. You will need people with self-authoring minds to manage the people with socialised minds. To the extent possible, these people should also have mastered their self-leadership skills.

If, on the other hand, you are responsible for a unit that is constantly being faced by new challenges where people need to be agile and take initiatives, you will be best served by hiring people with self-authoring minds. Continuous learning, and having a voice in decision-making, especially in areas that affect their particular work, will motivate these people.

Ideally, you will need people with self-transforming minds to manage the people with self-authoring minds. It will be important to put these people in positions of authority that align with the work that

¹⁰⁵ The physical needs of a team include satisfactory working conditions, availability of appropriate technology, and an appropriate level of funding.

unleashes their passion and creativity. It will also be important that they have mastered their self-leadership skills.

Before we explore the three stages of learning how to lead others (team mastery, team internal cohesion, and team external cohesion), let us explore the territory you will be travelling through on your leadership journey by gaining a deeper understanding of the seven levels of team consciousness.

Seven Levels of Team Consciousness

Teams grow and develop by mastering the seven levels of team consciousness. The seven groups of needs/motivations that are associated with the seven levels of team consciousness are shown in Table 13.1 and described in the following paragraphs. This table should be read from the bottom up.

The lower needs (levels 1 to 3) reflect the basic (deficiency) needs of the team: the physical need for survival and the emotional needs of team members for belonging and self-esteem. The focus of the fourth level is on adaptability, continuous learning, and giving team members a voice.

The higher needs (levels 5 to 7) reflect the growth needs of the group: the need for individual team members to find meaning through their work, the need to make a difference through the work the team does, and the need to be of service to their internal or external clients and the organisation as a whole.

Stages of Evolution	Levels of Consciousness	Motivation/Needs
Stage 3: External Cohesion	7 Service	<p>Ethical conduct, social responsibility, and long-term perspective</p> <p>Ensures the work of the team meets appropriate ethical standards, supports the long-term vision of the organisation, and meets the organisation’s social responsibility objectives</p>

	6	Making a difference	<p>Strategic alliances and partnerships</p> <p>Cooperates with other teams in mutually beneficial alliances while deepening the level of internal connectivity of the team by fostering coaching and mentoring and focusing on employee fulfilment</p>
Stage 2: Internal Cohesion	5	Internal cohesion	<p>Strong cohesive culture</p> <p>Enhances the team's capacity for collective action by aligning team member motivations around a singular mission and a shared set of values that build commitment and unleash the enthusiasm, creativity, and passion of team members</p>
	4	Transformation	<p>Adaptability and continuous learning</p> <p>Gives team members a voice in decision-making, and makes them accountable and responsible for their own futures in an environment that supports personal growth</p>
Stage 1: Team Mastery	3	Self-esteem	<p>Team pride in performance</p> <p>Enhances the abilities of the team by building systems, processes, and structures that create order, encourage excellence and quality, and support professional growth</p>
	2	Relationships	<p>Friendly team relationships</p> <p>Builds harmonious relationships that create a sense of belonging and</p>

loyalty among team members
 Cares for the needs of internal and external customers

1 Survival

Creating an appropriate physical environment

Establishes satisfactory working conditions, availability of technology, and appropriate levels of funding
 Cares for the health, safety, and well-being of employees

Table 13.1. The evolution of team consciousness.

Teams that focus exclusively on the satisfaction of their deficiency needs find it difficult to achieve and sustain high levels of performance. In general, they are too internally focused and self-absorbed or too rigid and bureaucratic to be at the top of their game. They are not adaptable and do not empower employees. Consequently, there is little enthusiasm and commitment among team members. Working in such a team can be highly stressful because the main focus of the team is on performance and results.

Teams that focus exclusively on the satisfaction of their growth needs lack the basic skills and capabilities necessary to operate effectively. They are ineffectual and impractical. They lack the systems and processes necessary for high performance. They are not grounded in the day-to-day practicalities of team management and are often ineffectual in matters of emotional and social intelligence.

The most successful teams are those that have mastered both their deficiency needs and their growth needs. They operate from full spectrum consciousness. They create a climate of trust and a focus on excellence, and can rapidly adapt and respond to changing situations. The seven levels of team consciousness are described in more detail below.

Level 1: Survival Consciousness

The first need for a team is a secure and appropriate level of funding. Without funding, the team will not have the equipment or financial and human resources to fulfil its tasks. The team leader’s job is to make

sure the team has everything it needs to fulfil its mission, steward the team's resources, and manage the budget. When teams are not adequately resourced, they quickly become ineffective. Efficiency and productivity fall, and team members become discouraged about how the team is being treated. Entropy rises, and people in the team begin to complain.

Level 2: Relationship Consciousness

The second need for a team is harmonious interpersonal relationships and good internal communications. Without good relationships among team members and between team members and internal or external customers, the team will be ineffective. The critical issue at this level of consciousness is creating a sense of belonging and camaraderie in the team. Preconditions for belonging are open communication and mutual respect. Preconditions for camaraderie are friendliness and comradeship. When these are in place, loyalty and satisfaction among team members and the team's customers or clients will be high. The team should take time out for celebrations and rituals that support team togetherness.

Level 3: Self-esteem Consciousness

The third need for a team is to achieve high levels of performance and results that create a sense of team pride. Every team member needs to focus on quality, excellence, and continuous improvement with just enough systems and processes in place to support high performance and avoid time-consuming bureaucracy. The team should be continually researching and adopting best practices to enhance its productivity and professional approach. Each member of the team will need to have clear objectives, and the team as a whole should have a well-understood strategy for achieving its specified targets. Frequent monitoring of strategy, goals, and targets will be essential to achieve team success.

Level 4: Transformation Consciousness

The focus of the fourth level of team consciousness is on empowering team members to contribute their ideas to improve team performance to innovate for continuous improvement. Each team member needs to be accountable for their own performance and the performance of the group. They need to take responsibility for their own personal growth

and development and support each other in the growth and development of the team as a whole. For the team to grow and develop, it needs to focus on continuous learning and stay lean and agile so it can easily adapt to new situations and exploit new opportunities.

Level 5: Internal Cohesion Consciousness

At the fifth level of consciousness, the focus is on developing a shared sense of team mission and a shared set of team values that align with overall vision and values of the organisation and unleash the commitment and enthusiasm of team members. The shared mission clarifies the focus of the team's actions, and the shared values provide guidance on team decision-making. The behaviours associated with the team's values should relate directly to the work of the team. Every team member should have a clear line of sight between the work they do each day and the mission of the team. Everyone needs to know how they contribute through their work to the success of the team.

Level 6: Making a Difference Consciousness

Internally, the focus at the sixth level of team consciousness is on helping team members to find a sense of personal fulfilment from their work and providing coaching and mentoring to support them in becoming all they can become. Externally, the focus should be on building strong collaborative partnerships with other teams in the organisation for mutual support. The team should also seek to build collaborative relationships with customers and, if appropriate, the local community. The critical issue at this level of team consciousness is to assure the full and complete integration of the team into the organisation as a whole and the integration of the team with all relevant stakeholders.

Level 7: Service Consciousness

At the seventh level of team consciousness, the focus of the team is on serving the needs of the organisation by adopting and integrating appropriate ethical standards, helping the organisation meet its social responsibilities, and supporting the long-term vision of the organisation. Internally, the focus of the team will be on living up to its highest ideals through the exercise of compassion and humility.

Externally, the focus will be on supporting the organisation in building a sustainable future for the society in which the organisation operates.

Full Spectrum Consciousness

Full spectrum teams display all the positive attributes of the seven levels of team consciousness.

- They master survival consciousness by focusing on the financial stability and funding of the team, as well as the health and safety of employees.
- They master relationship consciousness by focusing on harmonious interpersonal relationships and good internal communications that engender team and customer loyalty.
- They master self-esteem consciousness by focusing on systems that enhance performance, results, quality, excellence, and best practices that engender team pride.
- They master transformation consciousness by empowering team members to contribute their ideas and giving them responsible freedom to innovate new ways of organising and learning.
- They master internal cohesion consciousness by developing a team mission and culture based on shared values that engenders a climate of trust.
- They master making a difference consciousness by coaching and mentoring team members so they can find fulfilment and creating strong alliances and partnerships with customers and other parts of the organisation.
- They master service consciousness by upholding the organisation's ethical standards, supporting the organisation in pursuing its vision, and focusing on the long-term sustainability of the organisation.