



## HOW TO ENSURE THE RISE OF WOMEN IN COMPANIES?

Researches shows that there is lack of ambition among women, but they find more obstacles than male professionals do to hold leadership positions. In our exclusive news report, we point out ways to provide an egalitarian working environment.

**Pages 2 and 3.**

### OUTLOOK

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Research conducted by BCG points out that companies that value both business and the well being of all are rewarded by faster growth, committed staff and superior financial performance.  
**p. 5 to 8.**

### GET INSPIRED

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Albert Hiribarrondo, founder of Alerspective, is a reference for professionals around the world. But who inspire him, which leaders he admires? Learn more about this brilliant professional.  
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### POINT OF VIEW

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How can executives at the top of career can be better to handle fears and doubts? In a new article, Lee Ellis points out four brave ways to overcome these obstacles.  
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## REPORT

# FOR WOMEN TO REACH THE TOP, COMPANIES NEED TO CHANGE



Gender pay-gaps have been exposed. Women are assuming control of countries for the first time. People are taking to the streets to claim women's rights. Campaigns are echoing round the world in the form of hashtags, as with #inclusionrider, #timesup and #metoo. It is 2018 and, in spite of having seen many steps forward, women continue to earn less than men, even if they have a stronger educational background. Executive positions, in both public and private sectors, are overwhelmingly filled by men whilst the leadership capacity of women is still questioned by many organisations.

This data from various studies represents the reality of women around the world. It is also a reflection of a society that, throughout history, has constantly attributed different responsibilities to men and women. It begins in childhood (with unequal rules) and extends into adulthood (she takes care of the home and family; he studies and makes money). A survey carried out by Harvard Business School in 2015 even suggested that women are not promoted because they don't want to be. Could it be that they really don't want to, or are they committed to other social values that lead them to have other ambitions?

The absence of women in leadership positions has nothing to do with lack of ambition, according to the analysis of Boston Consulting Group (BCG), one of the most comprehensive surveys carried out to date. After listening to 200,000 employees from 189 countries, BCG concluded that women do indeed want to be part of top-level management, but the corporate environment puts them off pursuing their dream for the following reasons:

- \* Daily micro-aggression
- \* Lack of opportunity within companies
- \* No female leadership role-models
- \* Policies that are insufficiently inclusive

In the opinion of professor Flávia Ivar, president of Mulheres S.A, a Brazilian initiative that promotes gender equality in businesses, "women are now family providers and undertake more than men, even though they don't have social and political representation". According to her, professionals and executives did not consider this for a long time, but this is now changing. "Nowadays, society and entities like those I represent have been mobilising, the results of which have been taken up widely by the media. It is generating positive impacts. The new generation, for example, is growing up with a different view of this problem, and women who have been in the workplace for longer are taking a deeper and harder look at their role in society and corporate life. Nevertheless, many questions are still being raised and it is important for us to understand the real meaning of our struggle for total gender equality."

According to Dasein president, Adriana Prates, this cultural change that will see women assume positions of greater importance within companies is still in its infancy. Global campaigns such as Paradigm for Parity and the recent Time's Up are important for bringing the issue to the forefront. "Speaking more frankly and more systematically will promote the alignment between discourse and practice, which constitutes a pillar on which the agenda 'women in management' stands; it is an essential need for those companies that wish to grow intelligently."

Prates highlights the fact that women are highly dedicated and have specific skills and a mental model that can undoubtedly contribute to a more competitive and sustainable management structure. Many companies have already noticed this; principally those that want to create sustainable environments for their people. These companies have already priced-in the inclusion of women, created mechanisms to stimulate this growth, and

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Aline Ferreira and Pollyanna Alcântara

forbidden any type of discrimination, above all regarding salary, which is the most glaring inequality. They have also, albeit in an isolated manner, been using more intelligent and challenging business models, in which women feel increasingly motivated to participate.



For Flávia Ivar, many questions are emerging and are important for women to understand the real meaning of the fight for gender equality.

Flávia Ivar points out that, despite the changes occurring very gradually within organisations, it is important to celebrate the good examples, such as WEP's Brazil Award, which promotes gender equality in businesses. Organised by Itaipu Binacional, the project has the support of the organisation UN Women. "The award further highlights the fact that some companies not only practice gender equality, but also stimulate its stakeholders to adopt the same attitude". Itaipu itself is a good example, given that its boards are composed of 50% men and 50% women. According to the professor, another good business model is that of Itaú Unibanco, which, for the second consecutive year, features on Bloomberg's Gender Equality Index.

Although we are witnessing a transformation in corporate policies in favour of women, Ivar insists that companies must introduce certain measures such as the rejection of inappropriate behaviour, training focused on diversity, and the implementation of different job formats, like flexible hours. On the other hand, working from home, a practice defended by some women, she does not recommend. "I believe that a home office represents an evolution in the way of working, but it's not a solution for gender equality as it further excludes women from interacting with their work colleagues." She reinforces the idea that many professionals say they feel uncomfortable when the majority of participants in business meetings or events are men, and this needs to change.

Adriana Prates stresses that equal opportunities must begin in the definition laid down in the strategic guidelines of an organisation and validated by its executive board. "This is the legitimate way in which to discuss how to attract women to positions of importance, to enable the exponential growth of their careers with no limits on how high they can fly, surprising shareholders and

contractors. Policies that enable the use of their versatility and sensitivity to handle projects with a systemic view, bringing key elements to organisations that will enrich the organisation, social and competitive role of companies."

The president of Dasein believes that the speed of change will be even greater moving forward. "The younger generations, like the millennials, that are coming to power are more balanced and see the ascension of women to the highest positions within companies as natural. Gender equality is more natural for them, as it should be. Older generations, with their old practices and theories, are slowly retiring, together with this insecure and prejudiced habit of ignoring a woman's potential."



According to Adriana Prates, speaking frankly and systematically favors the construction of a pillar in which the "women in management" agenda is essential for companies that want to grow smart.

### **RETHINK ATTITUDES AND LOGIC.**

### **CHILDREN DO NOT DIMINISH AMBITION FOR HIGH-LEVEL POSITIONS.**

Children do not interfere in a woman's level of ambition. With or without children, they want to seize leadership opportunities, states the BCG study.

### **THE EXAMPLE MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE.**

Women who work in organisations with female leaders feel more motivated and reach higher positions.

### **BEING AMBITIOUS AND DETERMINED IS NOT ENOUGH.**

In the book "Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead", the author Sheryl Sandberg, chief operating officer of Facebook, encourages women to toughen up and adopt a more forceful attitude for their career to take off. However, the BCG survey and American specialists have criticised the author for this. According to them, it would generate isolated cases of success for a very restricted group. The ideal way forward is to demand change not only of female attitudes, but also that of corporations, demanding more equal structures, policies and opportunities.

## SPOTLIGHT



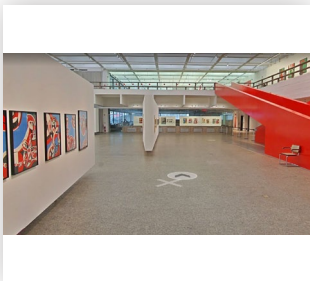
### LITERARY HUB

In homage to the Colombian writer Gabriel García Márquez, who would be 91 years old today, the website Literary Hub has brought together a selection of 100 covers used for his classic work, 'One Hundred Years of Solitude'. The editions were published between 1967, the year the book was launched, and 2018. The selection presents the first Colombian and American editions, as well as old editions from the United Kingdom, Brazil and the Soviet Union, among many others. There is also a curious Dutch edition whose cover uses the painting 'Abaporu' by Tarsila do Amaral.



### GASTRONOMIC COMPOSITION

Cooking is much more about the time you dedicate to preparation, about how much you are willing to dare, and how much you are able to surprise yourself with new experiences. But some people are going even further and transforming apparently simple recipes into true works of arts. This is the case with the American Heidi Larsen of FoodieCrush. If you don't know her, it is worth visiting her Instagram profile. In addition to the marvellous dishes on show, Heidi's recipes are easy to reproduce at home.



### A MUSEUM IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND

Google has put together a contemporary art collection that has been totally digitised and comprises works from 51 museums in 25 countries. The collection can be accessed for free by internet users around the world at Google Arts and Culture, which was created in 2011. The project presents around 6 million photos and videos of paintings, articles and sculptures, which users can enjoy with 360º video, virtual reality experiences and tours in Street View, allowing you to visit the museum without leaving home.



### HYPERREALISM

The major works of hyperrealism have one characteristic in common: it is very difficult to believe that one is looking at something drawn or painted, and not a beautiful photograph. This is the sensation one has when observing the works of the Nigerian artist Chiamonwu Joy. Believe it or not, these are not black and white photographs, but original charcoal drawings. Interest in the artist has recently surged after she started sharing her creations on Twitter and Instagram.

Did you like our selection? To learn more about each tip, follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter. All you need to do is search for Dasein Executive.



## OUTLOOK



# THE HUMANIZATION OF THE CORPORATION

No company is an island. This has never been more apparent than it is today. Business is more vulnerable than ever to political forces, economic upheaval, and social change. Consequently, the view of public companies as standalone machines to be optimized to deliver the highest possible short-term returns to shareholders is increasingly untenable. Rather, as participants in complex adaptive systems—in which outcomes are shaped by interactions among members—companies need to fulfill a purpose that is beneficial to those systems.

This requires a departure from the insular models that underpin traditional management thinking, epitomized by the narrow goal of maximizing total shareholder returns in the short term, toward a mindset that considers the impact of strategies and actions on broader systems. Think of it as a shift from a mechanistic to a more humanistic view of the corporation.

Interestingly, Aristotle advocated this perspective more than 2,000 years ago. He argued that wealth maximization as an end in itself is likely to undermine society and must instead be directed toward a higher purpose—a purpose that is in line with larger goals related to the welfare of all. In fact, our research leveraging natural language processing (NLP) shows that firms pursuing such a purpose have been rewarded by faster growth, higher employee engagement, and, paradoxically, superior financial performance. We suggest some principles of a strategic agenda that leaders can follow to humanize their companies in ways that generate benefits for both the business and the broader system.

### THE LIMITS OF THE TSR-MAXIMIZING MACHINE

In complex adaptive systems, local interactions can give rise to unpredictable global effects, which in turn shape local interactions. Companies are themselves complex adaptive systems. They are also nested within larger systems: companies are part of business ecosystems that are embedded in local and national economies, which in turn are interwoven with societies. The recent political tide against global economic integration is an example of an intersystem feedback effect. It could soon be compounded by another: the emerging backlash against technology, motivated by fear of its impact on employment and equality.

A root cause of the negative feedback to two major drivers of economic growth—globalization and technology—can be traced to the mechanistic mindset that prevails in many corporations. The goal of maximizing short-run TSR can easily lead to the dehumanization of business: companies can be stripped of human qualities and run as short-term extractive machines to maximize their own financial benefit, without giving adequate consideration to spillover effects on broader systems. This risks alienating internal and external human stakeholders, whose actions are influenced by values, not purely by financial self-interest. A study by ManpowerGroup showed that the top career priority for more than 40% of millennials is not to maximize earnings but to make a positive contribution to society or to work with great people.

The pursuit of narrow goals has contributed to several negative feedback effects:

- Disengagement in the workplace, with only 33% of US employees feeling engaged
- A mistrust of business, reported by 42% of Americans
- Inequality between winners and losers, and the political and economic repercussions of that, as the top 1% of the population in the US takes home more than 20% of the income

These trends could be reinforced as companies look to deploy technology primarily to cut labor costs. Fear of unemployment could increase the popular mobilization against technology, impairing companies' ability to innovate and grow.

To survive and thrive under such circumstances, corporate executives should expand their focus beyond their companies' immediate profits and consider the impact of their strategies and actions on broader systems.

## RETHINKING PURPOSE

Businesses enjoy a social license that is based on the assumption that they respect the rights of those affected by their activities. This license gives management virtually unrestricted freedom to set whatever goals it deems appropriate. Some CEOs have used this freedom to pursue initiatives that can have a positive impact in the world, but others have focused on the goal of short-run TSR maximization, leading to frictions with society. As Tom Wilson, the CEO of Allstate, explained, "There's no reason corporations have to exist in history. To the extent we don't live up to their expectations, people can revoke those rights, levy harsher taxes, summon more regulations, or, in a bleaker scenario, change the corporate framework entirely."

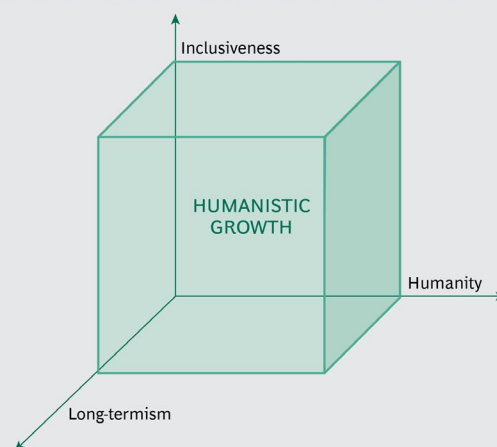
The challenges that arise from a sole focus on short-run TSR maximization were anticipated by Aristotle, who distinguished between two kinds of economics. The first is *chrematistike* (from *chrema*, money), or wealth maximization as an end in itself. *Chrematistike* (in our context, short-term TSR maximization) is arguably appropriate under two conditions: first, that there are minimal negative externalities affecting systems beyond the company; and second, that the game is established enough that the emphasis on exploiting it makes sense, but not so mature that the exploration of new possibilities has become an urgent necessity. Clearly, these conditions do not hold today—consider the conspicuous externalities of climate change and inequality, to mention but two, and the urgent need for companies to reinvent themselves in response to rapidly evolving technological and social conditions.

According to Aristotle, a second, and superior, kind of economics is *oikonomia* (the art of managing the household, from *oikos*, house, and *nomos*, rule), which subordinates financial considerations to the higher purpose of family welfare. As he described it, "The art of household management must either find ready to hand, or itself provide, such things necessary to life, and useful for the community of the family or state." To ensure survival in the long term, companies must fulfill a goal that serves the larger system. Failure to do so puts them at risk of being gradually starved of the support they need from other system participants.

Focusing on ESG (environmental, social, and governance) issues and CSR (corporate social responsibility) may not fully address the problem if such efforts are intended primarily to limit negative spillover effects. While some companies have embraced ESG and CSR as a fundamental shift, for others these approaches are merely additional factors to be considered when trying to maximize TSR. In particular, an ESG or CSR agenda doesn't necessarily plant the seeds of broad-based prosperity gains because it doesn't necessarily push companies beyond their own narrow interests.

To renew the social license companies currently enjoy, the focus on maximizing short-term results should be balanced by factoring in the long-term implications of current decisions, defining a purpose aligned with human ends, and setting objectives that are inclusive.

EXHIBIT 1 | Humanistic Growth Is the Result of Three Factors



Source: BCG analysis.

Recent political events around the world have been shaped in large part by frustration with economic stagnation and inequality: 70% of the US workforce has experienced no real wage increase in the past four decades, and the English West Midlands, the region with the highest

number of “leave” votes, has experienced stagnating median household incomes for nearly two decades. Similar patterns can be observed in Canada, Germany, and other European countries. Companies’ strategies and actions can magnify these inequalities or shrink them by ensuring that the gains of economic activity are distributed equitably.

The change in mindset requires companies to move from the quantitative maximization of one goal (chrematistike) to the qualitative optimization of multiple goals (oikonomia). Companies that make this shift place themselves at the intersection of a need in the world and a distinctive aspiration and ability to address it. We call them human companies.

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### MEASURING THE CHARACTER OF CORPORATIONS

Language is a defining human feature, enabling us to express our values, intentions, and character. Companies use language, too, and we can assess their character by leveraging natural language processing (NLP) technology. Using nearly 100,000 company filings from 2005 to 2016, we developed an algorithm to detect semantic fields around keywords reflecting companies’ orientation toward TSR maximization (chrematistike) or higher purpose (oikonomia).

Unsurprisingly, results show that more than half of the companies we analyzed seldom use the language of oikonomia—words such as “integrity,” “culture,” “mutualism,” and “contribution.” Overall, corporate language remains dominated by words aligned with chrematistike, such as “competitive,” “earnings,” and “stockholders.” But we discovered that some companies repeatedly and consistently put more emphasis on words associated with oikonomia.

Our research found that some of the differences in the language companies use can be explained by their industry. Unsurprisingly, businesses that do not serve individuals have less orientation towards oikonomia. We also observe that younger companies tend to use more human language. But even adjusting for age and industry, companies differ markedly in their humanity. Pursuing oikonomia is a choice each company can make, and those doing it are consistently rewarded. Because human companies focus on a broader set of objectives, they tend to score better on nonfinancial metrics: they record higher engagement, better ESG scores, and more diversity among top management. Paradoxically, they also have better financial performance: 0.7% higher growth per year and 0.6% higher annual TSR (both over a three-year period), and 2.5% higher PVGO (present value of growth options).

### REWRITING THE STRATEGIC AGENDA

How should companies change their mindset and rewrite their strategy agenda to focus on a broader purpose? We suggest eight steps:

**Define your purpose, the higher social goal of your company.** Crucially, companies then need to take actions consistent with their stated purpose, even when they might appear to impair short-term results. Consider CVS Health, the first US retail pharmacy chain to stop selling tobacco products. The company made this move in keeping with its purpose of “helping people on their path to better health.” This led to a nationwide decline in cigarettes sales.

**Adopt metrics that assess the well-being of the broader system.** Such metrics can include, for example, a focus on inclusiveness and equality. The pharmaceutical company Merck launched a program in 2010 with the goal to make its drugs available to 80% of the world’s population. The company employed a number of levers to achieve this, some with direct application to the business and others that could be targeted at specific markets and products.

**Put more emphasis on the future.** As our research has shown, in order to keep growing companies need vitality—the capacity to explore new options, renew strategy, and grow sustainably. Today, large, established companies are

EXHIBIT 2 | Companies That Focus on a Broader Purpose Perform Better







increasingly vulnerable because of their inability to create a sufficient portfolio of growth opportunities. Unilever CEO Paul Polman strongly believes in the need to balance the short and the long term when defining corporate strategy, and to adequately invest in the future of the company.

**Invest in technology “front to back.”** That is, stress growth and the fulfillment of unmet human needs, rather than the easier prize of cutting costs (and often jobs) in the back office. Some basic needs, such as education, health care, and housing, have become more expensive, and the cost burden has often fallen disproportionately on the less fortunate. Nvidia CEO Jen-Hsun Huang believes that “there has to be a connection between the work you do and benefits to society” for companies to be successful.

**“The change in mindset requires companies to move from the quantitative maximization of one goal to the qualitative maximization of multiple goals”.**

**Reeducate employees and citizens to make them better equipped to deal with changes wrought by technology.** This would both reduce unemployment and alleviate talent shortages in emerging areas such as data engineering and artificial intelligence. For example, Google aims to improve the lives of as many people as it can by leveraging its unique digital skills.

**Rethink and reshape the future of work.** In particular, understand and redefine the role of employees in organizations powered by AI so that the technology can take over mundane tasks and free up time for more rewarding activities. One of the key changes millennials

are introducing to the workplace is their preference for flexible work schedules to improve their work-life balance. Technology can play a key role in this regard.

**Support entrepreneurial business ecosystems.** Corporations should rethink their global supply chains and business models in ways that create demand for the services of new and small companies.

**Communicate a compelling new narrative for globalization, technology, and business overall that will inspire confidence in a shared future.** Narratives can shape perceptions and political reality, which in turn can shape economic reality. Business leaders have the opportunity to take an active stance and shape collective understanding. In the face of popular backlash, companies should communicate a narrative demonstrating that business and technology are contributors rather than obstacles to human ends.

Becoming a human company is a long journey. Once companies articulate their purpose, they need to understand their starting point and ensure they are well equipped for the change. Business leaders willing to change their company’s character and guide the transformation could help usher in a new era, in which the widespread emergence of human companies, able to plant the seeds of inclusive growth and remain vital by constantly innovating, could lead to broad-based prosperity gains for society and a long-lasting future for those companies.

**Source:** This research was originally published by The Boston Consulting Group (BCG). The full version is available at: [www.bcg.com](http://www.bcg.com)

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## GET INSPIRED WITH ALBERT HIRIBARRONDO

# “THE KEYS FOR SUCCESS REMAIN THE SAME, BUT THE ROLE OF LEADERS IS CHANGING FAST”



“Try not to be a man of success, but a man of value”. These words of Albert Einstein, chosen by the Albert Hiribarrondo as a teaching for life, tell a lot about his point of view, how he sees the world and about his professional career. French national, born in Africa, engineer, founder of ALSpective and vice-chairman of TGCL (The Global Community for Leaders), he argues that skills and attitudes are the continuity of his beliefs in leadership values: caring, listening, analysing what is happening. Learn more about this brilliant professional and get inspired.

**Disruptive technologies are driving new social habits, shared services and a new mentality amongst those generations entering the jobs market. We are in the middle of a transition that is having a huge impact on the global economy and entire industries. Are executives and businesses ready for such changes? Why?**

Change has ever been part of all executives and companies challenges. At all Times. What is new, is the rhythm of the present changes, due to technologies, globalisation, production and exploitation of datas, social habits of new generations. So many challenges all together.

There is an acceleration of technology changes, and

possible market segmentation of those who master them (like exploiting datas) and those who don't; on social issues, the gaps between generations are huge.

The keys for success remain the same, but the role of leaders is changing fast. They have to consider the entire world where competition is today, globalisation, innovation, diversity assets, gender gaps, etc.

Even if present leaders are “aware” of many challenges, the speed of their own changes is slow... too slow. In this way, we are not enough ready for our future. We follow the trends instead of anticipating them. Lack of vision.

Too much short term views, not enough long term vision.

**Specialists suggest that an era marked by disruption and transient work and personal relationships requires a new leader. How would you define this new leader?**

The new leader has values. As seen by ALSpective, he focuses on meaning, impact and team. He has to be strong in 3 dimensions:

To care  
To dare  
To share

**“We are not enough ready for our future. We follow the trends instead of anticipating them. Lack of vision”.**

**How have you dealt with these disruptive innovations and worked on this issue with your team and clients?**

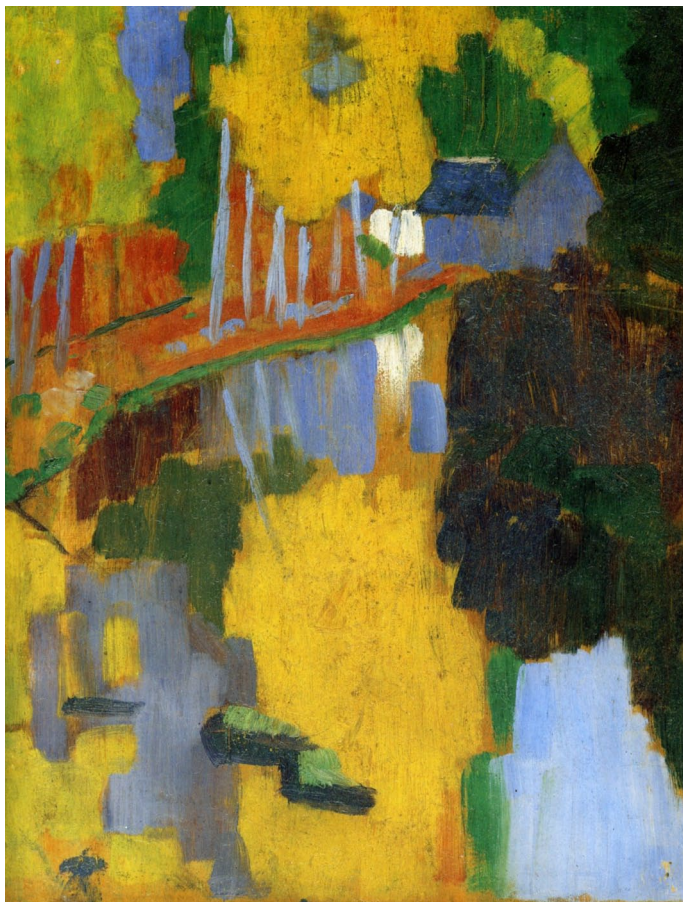
We are sharing these values with all met clients and leaders, offering their exposure to the ALSpective Leadership Index. We have created 3 clear lines of services

Strategy (to care), for a clearer vision from the governance

Executive search (to dare), for the composition of the executive committee

Leadership consulting (to share), for individual and team development

Here are some examples of our achievements: designing the 2030 strategy for a French engineering school; executive search for the future CEO of a construction firm Switzerland, advising a CEO in the choice of his successor.



The Talisman by Paul Sérusier (oil on wood, 106-1/4 x 84-5/8 inches) appears in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.

**Tell us about your professional career. What skills and attitudes led you to found the respected ALSpective and, more recently, TGCL?**

French national, born in Africa, engineer, former GM of a business school and world president of an NGO, I had spent 15 years in the management of business units; then 15 years in executive search. Today, I am on my ultimate goal of 15 years in ALSpective - TGCL, aligning leadership and strategy, for new perspectives, and a better world. Skills and attitudes are the continuity of my beliefs in leadership values:

Caring, listening, analysing what is happening, the facts.

Daring with trust: "We all think it is impossible, until it is done" (Nelson Mandela). We are born to have an impact; to make a difference.

Sharing: "Service to Humanity is the best work of life" (JCI creed). We can only act for/with our stakeholders.

**You are a reference for professionals around the world. We would like to know who inspired you, which leaders do you admire today?**

Thanks for your kind words. The persons I admire the most, in the day to day life, are leaders in my teams. They are just exceptional, together with my TGCL partners. I feel fortunate to have them with me, sharing values and missions for our clients.

In the past, my parents, Marcus Aurelius, Albert Einstein, Albert Schweitzer, Nelson Mandela, Marie Curie, Mother Theresa, the JCI creed, and Dale Carnegie have had impact on my beliefs.

**At Dasein, we believe that art has a great ability to inspire creativity in life and at work, above all in times that require a high level of dynamism and a vision of the future. Do you have any cultural reference you would like to share? A book, a film or the work of an artist?**

I share Dasein views. "Tout est là : l'amour de l'Art.". "Everything is there: the love of art", Gustave Flaubert.

Art elevates our thoughts and develop our emotions: "The purpose of art is washing the dust of daily life off our souls", Pablo Picasso.

When possible, I love to stop by a museum of modern and contemporary art in visited cities. I am impressed by painters like Pablo Picasso, Vincent Van Gogh, Maurice Estève and Fauvism painter Henri Matisse, and the writer Stefan Zweig for his description of human life, characters and passion.

I love a small painting: the talisman which is seen as the start of Nabis paintings, from Paul Sérusier (see picture on the side).

**Please share a phrase or teaching that you constantly recall.**

"Try not to be a man of success, but a man of value", Albert Einstein.

## POINT OF VIEW

# FOUR COURAGEOUS WAYS TO MANAGE LEADERSHIP FEARS AND DOUBTS



\*Lee Ellis

You're in the midst of a situation or challenge that instills fear. What do you do? In the animal kingdom, fear produces a "fight or flight" response, and it's true with people, too. But honorable leaders see fear coming and know how to handle it, right? Let's explore this idea.

### FEAR ROOTS AND CAUSES

Beyond the obvious, fear is often at the root of emotions like anger, shame, guilt, and pride (false pride or hubris). It termite our self-confidence and torpedoes our personal and professional relationships, further undermining our success and goals.

Doubts and fears can also cause procrastination and resistance to reasonable and needed risk-taking, and stymie initiative to overcome obstacles and achieve success.

### FEAR IN THE POW CAMPS

As you might expect, fear in the POW camps of Vietnam was never more than one thought away. During my first three years when torture was an ongoing tactic, all it took were the sounds of rattling jailer keys at odd hours to create an avalanche of fear.

Even in the best times, isolation, loneliness, and poor health without medical care could raise doubts that could blossom into full-blown fear. In time, together we learned some tactics to combat doubts and fear that have universal application.

### 4 TACTICS TO CONQUER FEARS AND DOUBTS

These tactics might be just what is needed to help take your fearful thoughts and actions captive and reach new milestones –

#### 1. Fear is Normal—Learn to Proactively Manage It

Fear can help us deal with legitimate external threats as well as trigger adrenalin and other chemicals that help us. By preparing in advance, we can train and equip ourselves to make logical choices that manage our fears (instead of our fears managing us).

#### 2. When Fear Hits, Stick With Your Values and Principles

Even when we're overwhelmed, we still have choices about how we'll respond. Once a leader clarifies what is really important, he or she can make courageous choices to achieve goals even when faced with doubts and fears. The lesson I learned (and can see it operating in all successful people) is that we must be willing to suffer to be who we are called to be and to achieve our most important goals.

#### 3. Be Willing to Suffer for the Right Causes

Great achievements are generally the culmination of a lot of delayed gratification, making hard choices and doing hard things—and yes, suffering. So when you look ahead at your goals, consider your passion for them. Is your passion and commitment strong enough that you're willing to suffer to achieve them? If so, then you'll be able to lean into your doubts and fears to do what is needed. But to ultimately get results and achieve our goals, we must also balance and value the importance of strong relationships. This point leads to the last tactic.

#### 4. Don't Fight Fear Alone

We need connection to others who can support us with wisdom and encouragement. Mutual support is the critical need of every warrior and every person who is fighting the battles of life. Engage with your key support team to help you courageously lean into the pain of your doubts and fears. As a leader, you also have the power to create this culture of support.

**Fears and doubts are part of life and especially a big part of leadership. Thankfully, we have ways to manage them. Lean into the pain of your fear and do the right thing—believe in yourself—I believe in you.**

\*As president of Leadership Freedom® LLC, a leadership and team development consulting and coaching company, Lee Ellis consults with Fortune 500 senior executives in the areas of hiring, teambuilding, human performance, and succession planning. His media appearances include interviews on CNN, CBS This Morning, C-SPAN, ABC World News, and Fox News Channel. A retired Air Force Colonel and former Vietnam POW, his latest book is entitled *Engage with Honor: Building a Culture of Courageous Accountability*. Learn more at [www.engagewithhonor.com](http://www.engagewithhonor.com).



**THE REVERSE VERSE**

Rise  
Said the moon  
And the new day came  
The show must go on said the sun  
Life does not stop for anybody  
It drags you by the legs  
Whether you want to move forward or not  
That is the gift  
Life will force you to forget how you long for them  
your skin will shed till there is not  
a single part of you left they've touched  
your eyes finally just your eyes  
not the eyes which held them  
you will make it to the end  
of what is only the beginning  
go on  
open the door to the rest of it

Rupi Kaur



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