



## THE INVISIBLE DIMENSION OF LEADERSHIP AND CULTURE

### *Part II*

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The following essay is the second in a two part series by Paul Nakai in collaboration with Dustin W. Seale. For the first part, please see *The Invisible Dimension of Leadership and Culture: Part I* in the 2018 *International Journal of Servant-Leadership*. Paul Nakai has been talking about foundational four awarenesses and the first two foundational principles in Part I.

Foundational Four Awarenesses:

- The attraction of success and the repulsion of failure
- The visible and the invisible
- Walking through life as a transmitter and as a receiver
- Living in abundance and scarcity

Foundational Four Principles:

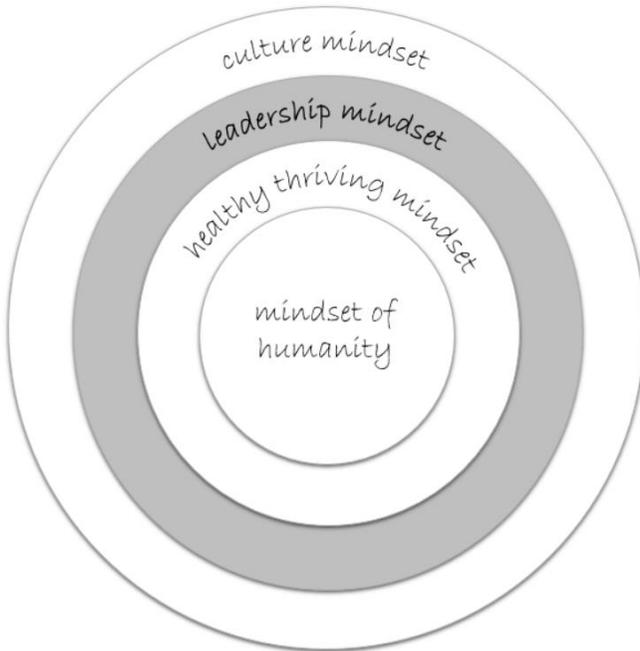
- The Mindset of Humanity
- The Healthy Thriving Mindset
- The Leadership Mindset



- The Culture Mindset

This essay starts with the third foundational principle.

## LEADERSHIP MINDSET



If you were to focus on how leadership is defined and accepted, can you see how the tenets of leadership thought has evolved over the past 100 years?

For the sake of brevity, let's join the journey at the start of the Industrial Age. It hasn't been that long ago where the business world and its leadership was predominantly male . . . and, a dictatorial, bullying, and intimidating one at that. Can you imagine yourself working under a "command and control"



dominating leader? Someone who controls the situation through tight adherence to top-down mandatory edicts, selectively communicating, being arbitrarily exclusive, and dominating or intolerant of others. Imagine having to surrender your human dignity and your voice in order to work in the company. This was the accepted and almost expected leadership consciousness.

As time went on, the limitations of the dictator-mindset became intolerable as well as illegal to a more savvy and powerful work force. This leadership mindset was moving to a more sensitive parent-mindset. It was less hurtful than the earlier mindset by being more nurturing, inviting and benevolent. But even this mindset could be judgmental, impatient and controlling. You were expected to be grateful and you had to follow orders . . . sometimes without question. Like the dictator, the parent knew what was best for the company. However, unlike the dictator who saw the people as an inter-changeable commodity, the “parent” also felt that they knew what was best for the people.

For the more secure and healthy leader, another level of leadership consciousness could be described as the accountable co-author. This individual invited more inclusion and dialogue from everyone in the company . . . not just from his/her senior team. It was not a democracy since decisions still needed to be made often time at the executive or Board level. There was still a sense of separation between the populations of the executive, management and laborers . . . although the distance was diminishing.



As we describe it, we see “leadership” as the manifestation of the mindset of humanity and interacting with life through the lens of the healthy thriving mindset. Taking it one step further, whereas leadership interfaces with other individuals, it also sets up the creation of the appropriate culture be it organizationally, in the home, in the community or in the world. Looking at culture transformation through this mindset, there is a realization on the part of crucial leadership that successful culture change is difficult at best. This is because successful culture transformation needs to occur at the mindset level of humanity and Healthy Thriving functioning. It occurs at the level of thought, contemplation and honest self-assessment.

The second realization is filled with respect, empathy and understanding for the people of the firm who are expected to understand that this transformation does not only occur at the level of behavior, attitude and belief. It needs to occur at the deeper level of consciousness and mindset.

In both situations, the prime role of leadership is to personally and individually model this very change to those in the company. Even when the process starts with an enthusiastic acceptance, the leader needs to continually display the many uncomfortable as well as the exciting phases of this type of change . . . self-honesty, discomfort, embarrassment, enthusiasm, hope, back-sliding and vulnerability. They need to show that they are on the same journey as they are asking of the people in the company. They need to be the mentor and coach of others vs. merely the judge and disciplinarian, regardless of how benevolent they appear to be.



In many cases, the leader makes the clear and emotional pronouncements of alignment about his/her support for the culture change efforts. Sometimes, these pronouncements are also echoed from other members of the senior team. In addition, there is usually a program that clarifies the intention and mechanism of the culture change.

Unfortunately, quite often the leaders who have just made presentations about their commitment to change and transformation, return to their offices and lead in the same manner that they led others before their presentation. The “changing” and “transforming” that these leaders spoke of seemed to only apply to the systems and policies of the company. The really difficult transformation needed to occur with how the people thought and how they saw their relationship with the company. What needed to happen now lay in the hands of the people in the company and to the people who have been delegated to run the culture change process.

The CEO and the Board need to have the conversation of how do they begin to change the culture? After all, it could be a 5-10 year proposition in changing the fundamentals of that organization.

It’s at this level that the discussion begins. Even before we begin a culture change process, we need to ask ourselves two questions.

- How will the culture change serve our business? Our people? The world?
- What certain problem (solution) is the culture change



linked to?

If your dialogue around these questions warrant pursuing a culture change, it is also the starting point for your leadership agenda. The next question has to be . . .

- Who carries the lion's share of the success and continuity of the culture change?

When we first started out, we felt confident in the culture shaping endeavor if we had the tacit approval of the CEO in what we were going to do. We walked him through each intervention and spelled out the role he was to play. Although we were careful not to over-burden him with yet another corporate responsibility, we expected him/her to attend a few complete meeting sessions, make the appropriate pronouncements and statements of approval and support. We would even compose memos for distribution under his name.

We felt that with this branded seal of importance, the program would achieve what it set out to do. We soon discovered that we were in the right church but in the wrong pew.

Yes, we needed to partner with the CEO but not singularly focused on his supporting a well choreographed and tightly composed message supporting the program. Instead of saying the "right" thing we needed to awaken and bring forth the CEO's openness for personal insight and discovery. He needed to model the mindset that we would like to see the people access for everyone in the organization . . . the agile world of epiphany, wisdom and contemplative thought.

In this way, the leader truly becomes the culture specialist



for his company. He should be the primary culture change model of inspiration since initially it is a reflection of his insights, what he values, and what he rewards.

It requires that the leader is OK with humble inquiry and a willingness to explore how his actions and behaviors support the change in the culture . . . or how they actually get in the way retarding growth and change. Within this context, his openness to candid feedback and personal admission is more of an act of strength and integrity than one of vulnerable ignorance.

Once he has a relatively clear idea of the journey that he and his team are on, he knows what he needs to do everyday with everyone he comes into contact with. If greater collaboration and interconnectedness is at the heart of the culture change initiative, he is asking how collaboration and interconnectedness is the enabling focus for performance with everyone he meets.

For the most part, he is not engaged in punitive questioning to see who he can “catch,” punish or judge. His conversations are for clarity, understanding and correction.

He is sincerely interested in his people’s feedback especially when he asks them how his actions and behaviors promote and are aligned with greater collaboration and interconnectedness . . . and when his behaviors get in the way of this cultural initiative as he resorts to the old way of doing things.

He may have to repeat his vision for the firm hundreds of times . . . why does he feel the need to change and the problems that it solves. He will have to examine his own



behaviors as well as attend outside trainings in the matter.

As these values and norms start to take hold, the implementation and planning portion of this initiative can be delegated to HR and T&D Specialists. But the main drum major will remain the CEO.

People tend to look up to the CEO in order to determine what's truly important to their leaders. They pay attention to what their leaders talk about, what they care about, what they consistently expose themselves to change and grow about. Within this relatively risky endeavor, there needs to be a level of perceived safety. Much of the endeavor will have reinforcing stories that accompany it. But inevitably, as people try new behaviors and thoughts, there will be failures. The culture and its leaders need to create a safe environment to fail in trying out "new" ways to get things done.

Summarizing these culture change leadership points:

- At this stage, we are not looking for someone to punish or mandate. This dialogue is more along the lines of "why" aren't we leading the culture change in the way that we (the CEO, Board, and Senior Team) want it done? . . . (We create hierarchies but don't use them as channels of communication)
- As we mentioned, the CEO needs to have transformational "skin in the game." He needs to ask himself, how might I be contributing to this situation? More than merely issuing pronouncements and making presentations, he needs to talk about it in many ways all the time. These are learning AND coaching



opportunities. If he notices differences between what he wants to see and what is actually happening, he needs to talk about it. There need to be speak-up sessions that occur on a regular basis. Remember that what you get is what you pay attention to.

- There will be some parts of the company where the values and cultural intentions are not trickling down. Why is that? If it is true, there are units of the company that are not living the values of the corporate headquarters. Could it be because the CEO is not re-enforcing the values of the company and is allowing these units to develop their own values?
- If there is too much autonomous empowerment (I'll do it my way), the CEO needs to examine how he enables that . . . what is the CEO doing/not doing that allows individuals on the management team or in upper management to act in a resistant or contradictory way?
- If the CEO feels that early on he can delegate the culture change, he doesn't understand what's fully required. He's the one that punctuates its importance and sets the limits if there are limits to be set. Especially in the early stages of the culture change, the endeavor needs to be led more than it needs to be administered. By turning it over to HR or T&D too quickly, he takes a "living" and "evolving" organizational initiative and turns it into a program to be implemented.



- In addition, effective culture change that embraces ongoing adaptability is an “inside-to-outside” process. It goes beyond identifying the behavior you want to see and then mandating that behavior. That would be an “outside-focused” approach. An “inside-focused” approach addresses the mindset and consciousness you want to awaken and enable. That is to say that for the most part, the initial approach to change is more individual, personal, dialogic coaching. The focus is on personal awakening, enabling and clarification taking into account each person’s insight and mindset. By working with the CEO, Board and other thought leaders, they are at the management level in the organization where their insights are leveraged to a larger population. When this foundational understanding exists, I’ve found that they are more effective, consistently agile, and “bigger-picture” thinkers.

As an example, one of my manufacturing client CEOs appreciated this relationship between results, behaviors and mindset better than I. During the course of our engagement, his organization was presented with the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award. He understood and had faith in the critical nature of this link between the mindset of his people and the performance of the people.

After the Baldrige Award was presented, another organization in the community wanted to learn and duplicate the procedures and policies that the first organization designed



and implemented. This new company felt that in so doing they could duplicate the performance that the manufacturing company had achieved. With Board approval, he opened up his organization to all of the procedural designs that they had done for the last two years leading up to the award presentation. I asked him if he was worried about giving away his quality performance secrets.

He responded:

“I hope that they are successful in providing a higher quality service but I am dubious if they will understand the secret behind our success. I think initially there will be an enthusiastic reception by their company. But if they don’t recognize and internalize the attitude and mindset that made what we did work, their program will peter away simply because they don’t see what made the procedures and protocols come alive and actually work.

“We had and still have tremendous synergy between all our people regardless of position and title. I can’t think of any topic that we couldn’t discuss to a more positive conclusion. We’ve learned to candidly talk about the issues without making it personal.

“Unless the organization creates a more level playing field among its people, heirarchy keeps seeping into the dialogue. Their people are more concerned with how they look and who they agree with . . . rather than resolving the challenges facing the business.

“They are also very smart people who don’t listen to each



other. Everyone has the answer. This made it very difficult for us to share with them what we learned because we kept getting interrupted with ‘I know exactly what you are saying’ statements.”

The manufacturing CEO’s words were prophetic . . . A year later, that other company gave up their quest for quality.

But is it the leader who determines how the people should think or is it what the people value and believe that permits the leader’s actions and words to move them to act as desired?

The *leadership mindset* embraces both. The most effective leaders are fundamentally adept with two understandings that govern their capacity to positively influence the world around them, leadership competency and leadership consciousness.

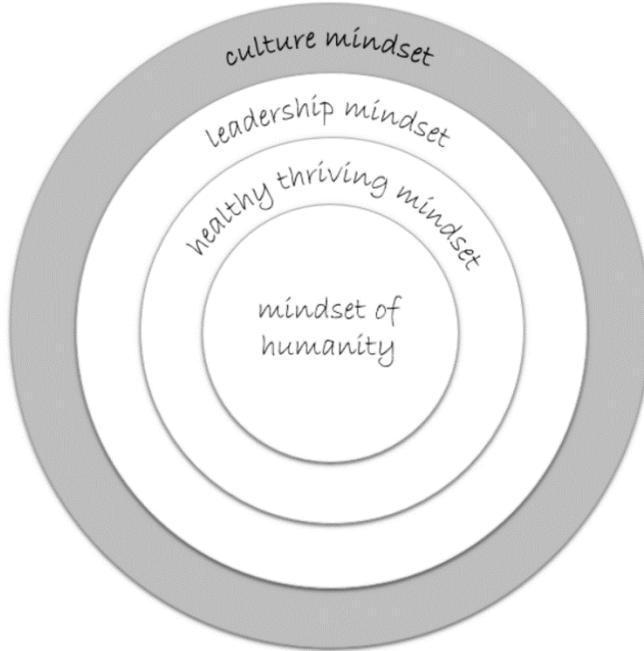
You can identify the influential mindset of the effective leader by the contemporary acceptance of those led . . . and you can also identify the less than impactful mindset of the leader by the contemporary rejection or resistance by the people they lead.

Ask yourself in honest contemplation:

- How do you “walk the talk?”
- How do you get in the way of the success of the initiative?
- What is your level of rapport with each other and with the people?
- How much permission do you have from the people to expect change from them?



## CULTURE



Although more times than not, there are numerous examples of failed culture change efforts. However, we also don't have to look very far for examples of successful organizational culture changes. For me, a wonderful example of a relatively radical organizational culture change has been occurring for the last two and a half millennia. The changes are not always for the better for mankind and at times, the velocity of organizational culture change has occurred at a glacial pace. However, this evolutionary journey has brought forth leadership heroes such as St. Francis of Assisi, Mother Theresa, and Pope Francis . . . and leadership villains such as



Pope Pius XII, the de Medicis, and Borgia's. It's contributed to the welfare of the world through various charities, refugee services and the like . . . and deminished the world through war, subterfuge, sexual aberrations, and illegal financial crimes.

I hasten to add that I use this organizational example solely to make the point of culture change and its influence on both those in the organization as well as on those impacted by this organization. I do NOT mean to pass judgment on the content of that focus or the mechanisms of that change.

In the beginning, imagine an organization, loosely tied together by strong belief, admirable core values and inspired purpose. For various reasons and motives, this organization was persecuted by the powers at the time. After all, in many quarters, it was not a politically safe nor a popular declaration to make that you were a Christian. Christianity lacked the protection from those in power. It was a "poor people's campaign" motivated by spirit, love and a brighter future. This liberation theology focused on freeing people from religious, political, social and economic oppression. What would you imagine this organization's culture to feel and look like? How much of the culture is in response to the situation at that time as well as to the then current challenges facing the organization? How would this culture enable this organization to thrive much less survive? Was leadership concentrated at the top or was it dispersed to where leadership was exercised by all? What would you imagine the core motivating principles to be . . . forgiveness, restoration, one-ness and compassionate



love. Would there be any limits to what could be thought or discussed?

However, in A.D. 313, much of that changed when the Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity to initially be one of many religions of the realm.

Because of that formal recognition Christians were better off in that persecution ceased. From a growth perspective, it became safer to expand and bring more people to the religion. They had state help in setting up places of worship and an almost unlimited source of funds and authority to create and build an ever-present infrastructure.

However, Christians were in many ways worse off in that many now flocked into the Christian church who were such in name only, simply to receive the money, power and authority offered by Constantine. They could grow exponentially . . . but to what message? Christianity thus lost to a degree its ‘pilgrim’ status and became to a degree worldly. The true nature of Christianity began to be obscured at this point, especially as it was mingled with state power by a ruler who continued to act wickedly and to hold the highest title of paganism (pontifex maximus). This mixture of paganism and the Christian faith made it undoubtedly difficult for those who were originally true Christians and who had endured great suffering previously to promulgate the true faith as it had now become ‘one among many,’ even though a favored one. ‘Nominal’ Christians, especially the Catholic Church were better off because they became the State religion. The rich became richer and the poor were kept poor. True Christians were much worse off, because



church leaders had deviated from seeking God's Kingdom that Jesus taught his followers to pray for. Christendom's clergy, out of fear of Constantine and the Empire was now the kingdom that the Counsel of Trent and the Catholic Church worked for. Ironically, they then became the "persecutors" of the remaining true Christians.

By doing such, it put the Church on a similar pathway as the rest of the world. In so doing, how we now measure success and contribution is not so much by the standards of humanity but by money, power, consumption and production. Status, popularity and the opportunity for uncontrollable greed mark this institutional pathway.

Prior to A.D. 313, Christianity had grown rapidly in the first three centuries, but after the conversion of Constantine the church mushroomed. At the time of the Edict of Milan (A.D. 313), probably about a tenth of the Roman Empire had converted to Christianity. But that had taken nearly three hundred years. In less than a hundred years after the Edict of Milan, nearly all of the other 90 percent of the population had been "converted." The church believed that this rapid growth was a sure sign of God's approval. Having accepted this premise, the church quickly adopted virtually any practice that resulted in growth, including the use of images in worship—a practice utterly loathsome to the early Christians

Constantine spread Christianity mostly with bloodshed. Constantine co-signed an edict that provided freedom of religion for mainstream Christians. In spite of Constantine's efforts to bring unity to a divisive and splintered religion,



Christians took up the sword and began viciously slaughtering one another over doctrinal differences. As the fabric of Christianity began to fade and tear, the emphasis continued to shift from the Christian life to Christian doctrine.

However, Constantine continued to give Christianity state patronage, provided generous state stipends for the Christian clergy, expended considerable state funds on the construction of magnificent churches. He encouraged those with ambition to see that conversion to Christianity would best serve their interests. He persecuted the pagan religions and he allowed the Church to distribute state food aid to the poor, enabling the Christians to proselytise to their captive audiences, who also saw that many of the elite were adopting Christianity out of ambition.

How might this sudden transformation of consciousness appear? On one level, would it be a transformation of consciousness of those people who were already there before A.D. 313 . . . or could it be an attraction for those individuals who were not inspired by Christianity up to that point in time but were now attracted by the promise of ambition and a consciousness of consumption, popularity, power and wealth? Along change in people's thinking, there was (and is) a change in consciousness.

How might this new culture enable this new organization to thrive and adapt? Would this new culture be different than the culture before 313 AD? How has that culture evolved over the past 2,000 years since then?

“You only begin to understand your culture when you try to change it” (Schein, 2018).



How do we begin to change the culture?

We noticed that being able to consistently perform regardless of change or challenge is highly dependent on one's mental health. As we posited earlier in this paper, is the idea of a good culture or a bad culture universally true? Is there a universally good culture to achieve and/or is there a bad culture to avoid? If we accept that premise, it explains why there are "cookie-cutter" programs in the industry. After all, "one size" would fit all needs.

However, could there be an optimal culture given the demands and variables of the situation? Is the best measurement of a culture's appropriateness its ability to consistently achieve its mission and perform admirably over the years of constant change and challenge?

There are so many different cultures in the world that need to be able to work with and maximize their efforts with one another. We not only refer to business organization cultures, but we also refer to societal cultures. There is a U.S. culture, a U.K. culture, a Japanese culture, etc. Each culture seems to work in their own right . . . some better than others.

Why do you feel that you need to change the culture?

As I mentioned, the quest is not one of identifying a universally good or bad culture. There are only good or bad organizational intentions. The question is how well are you doing in your organization, in your community and in your environment? If you are doing well, you have an effective culture . . . for the time being. Judge your culture on the basis of its performance and contribution, on the health and



resilience of your people, and on the fulfillment of your people. Not on their alignment to some arbitrary external criteria like stated morals or attitudes. Values, patterns and norms and the way that people think varies from organization to organization . . . from country to country. Culture exists in many forms and in many situations.

For example, one criteria for culture assessment that has been used to justify a culture process has been based on the level of maturity of the organization.

Consider the *start-up / small business / entrepreneurial organization*. Usually the founder/entrepreneur tends to hire people who they feel fit their values and have broad and flexible competencies. These are the early stages of culture building. The successful entrepreneur realizes that “walking the talk” and creating inclusive, respectful, honest and open relationships are more important than issuing pronouncements.

If the organization succeeds and grows, they start to see that their culture is their identity.

In *mid-life*, as they’ve grown and expanded, culture becomes relevant when held up to problems they are trying to solve, i.e., losing people, too much autonomy, not innovative or agile, poor market share. Instead of merely analyzing the problem, which usually yields a dualistic two-dimensional choice . . . good-bad, good-better, either-or . . . they need to engage in problem solving in a non-dual sort of way.

Many effective leaders realize this intuitively. Instead of feeling the pressure to choose between two choices, they have the ability to stay engaged and, as necessary, wait for an insight



that embraces the grains of truth that lie in both choices. In this way they realize that instead of being limited between two choices, there is a third option.

Finally, in the *mature organization*, for some managers, the organization has gotten so big and complex that they realize that it cannot be led in a linear fashion. There are parts of the company that may not be visible or accessible because of that size. The company becomes a contradiction of priorities. There is a feeling that culture turns into a double-edged sword in that, on one level, people feel that the organization has succeeded because of its culture. On another level, some in the organization also notice that its culture is the very thing that is holding it back from accelerated change and adaptability.

But the problem for the company is does the company have the kind of culture that is adaptive enough to meet and resolve upcoming changes in circumstances? In order to see that answer, one must consider all of the many elements of the culture—its crucible strengths and its crucible issues and limitations. Consider the multiple elements of the culture that help or hinder performance. The culture did not miraculously arrive overnight neatly packaged in a linear box. As such, each cultural element is intertwined with the other cultural elements. This is especially true in the mature organization.

As we've mentioned earlier, two questions that will provide the context for culture change are:

- What compelling reason will the culture change best serve our business? Our people? The world?



- What certain problem (solution) is the culture change linked to?

As you identify the Blue Chip reasons for the culture change, not only keep the forward-focused imperatives in mind but also be sensitive to potential and very real cultural and leadership conflicts. For instance:

- Take a look at all of the objectives that middle managers must fulfill and where the conflicts and compromises exist. These conflicts start to show up most clearly for those who have to implement the edicts from the executive and managerial level of the company.

An example of this dual-thinking would be what happened at Wells Fargo. Middle management was charged to keep the stock prices high by focusing on productivity (vs. insuring the high quality of the transaction). At Volkswagen, they needed to keep development and production cost low by meeting the product requirements with the present faulty diesel engine. There are numerous other examples that have yielded tragic results over the years such as PG & E, Ford, Firestone, etc. They are all examples of what comes from these conflicting and unresolved double edicts that are left in the hands of middle management to resolve, compromise or balance.

- Equally important, one must look for the values, patterns and norms that are in conflict with each other. This must usually be done by department or unit.



Understand that it is rare that a company does everything right. It's not about taking your foot off of the gas pedal . . . it's about how you drive the car. If you are successful in consistently shifting the culture, conflicts will arise that were not present in the old culture. These conflicts are a natural byproduct of change until they are surfaced and resolved.

- In addition, by relying solely on middle management to implement a culture change program, you are delegating a transformational program to a level in the company who has learned to compromise these conflicting standards in order to achieve productivity and results standards unless the CEO is involved. At this level, although valuable, the culture change program is vulnerable to possible changes above their position in the company. We've seen this in the Healthcare industry . . . especially with ACA. If you do work up the corporate chain, the question becomes one of how stable and consistent will the support be and can we continue to upwardly influence the system to stabilize, internalize and integrate the improvements?

To reiterate, the final and possibly most important factor for success is the role that the CEO, Board Chair and select thought leaders need to play in this endeavor. They need to bring substance to the effort of “know thyself” and to keep that journey alive day by day. For some executive leaders, the most difficult thing that they need to do is to be a leadership role model of the cultural change they expect of their people. In



addition, they need to publicly be a role model of what they are asking of their people. By doing this, they send the message to the organization that they will be going through the same process that they ask of their people. It becomes an inclusive act of respect, rapport and trust.

## CONCLUSION

The ultimate success of any venture and organization is dramatically impacted by the quality of the relationships that are created with both employees and with clients. This interface is punctuated by the feelings that are manifested each time you get together. At times, there is a direct visible correlation to these results. However, at times there cannot be seen any visible interface at all. It does not deny that this interface exists.

The key is to start with your personal experience of the four interface principles.

- **The Humanity Mindset**: What is the nature of the interface that you have with consciousness of the world around you. At times, can you truly see that there is very little difference or separation between all of us? The truthful state of consciousness is our ability to operate as one entity with each other, with our organization, with our community and the world. We avail ourselves to this universal reality. It is walking through life treating everything in it as a “thou” and resisting the temptation to treat everything as an “it.”

For the most part, this sense of awe can be seen in



the eyes of infants. Without words, they have the capacity to bring joy to the moment. They can build bridges between egos of adults. They bring an excitement to every learning opportunity. Their natural influence on those around them comes from their innate sense of humanity. However, there is a vulnerability to their state of humanity. They do not understand how the outside world is impacting their mindset of humanity as they move from this “natural” state to the “normal” state where many of us now occupy. (This is our experience of our living through our beingness of humanity.)

- **Healthy, Thriving Mindset**: This is the interface you have with your principles of healthy and thriving functioning. It captures your relationship with your thoughts, your consciousness and universal energy. It is your understanding of how your thinking impacts your experience of life, and, as such, how your reactions are governed by your interpretations. These principles help us stabilize these notions without deifying them or turning them into something rigid and unchangeable. When we allow it to, this understanding can serve us well as we journey through life.

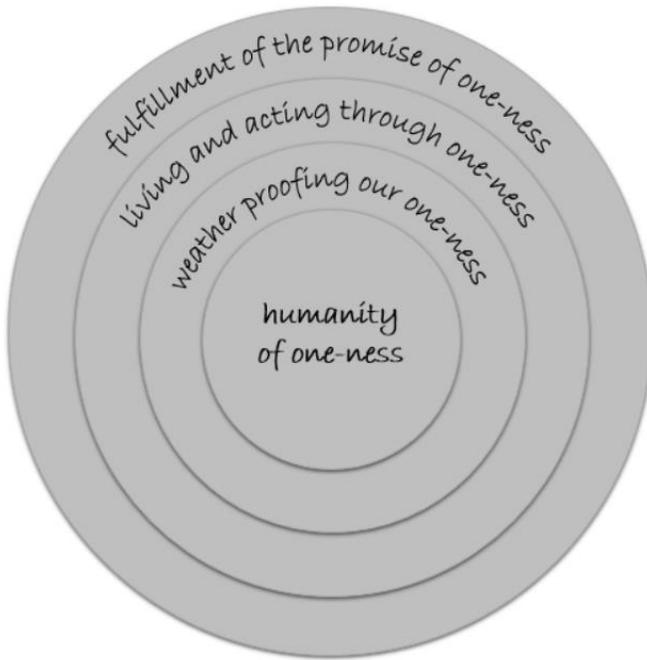
These principles enable us to rescue and bring forth some of the many wonderful traits of humanity. Through greater understanding, we can experientialize the weatherproofing of our innate capacities of humanity. (This is our experience of weatherproofing



our beingness of humanity.)

- **Leadership Mindset**: This deals with the interface that you have with the people you come into direct contact with. “Leadership” and “execution” go hand in hand. Through your evolving consciousness, you take action or are the catalyst to create a more unified, loving and peace-making collection of people. Your leadership is identified by others awakening to themselves more than them trying to implement your awakening. On this part of the journey, you both hear and feel their voice. (The experience of the application of our beingness of humanity.)
- **Culture Mindset**: This deals itself with the interface that you have with the collective consciousness and cumulative energy that is created by a group of people. On one level, this experience is even more subtle than the three that went before it. On another hand, it is more compelling, inspiring and insightful. Because it has to do with the collective consciousness of which you are a part of, your interface will have an impact on people you may never physically come face to face with. However, it holds the promise of influencing entire worlds, countries and industries both now and in the future. (The experience of the fulfillment of our beingness of humanity.)

In closing, if you choose to explore this path of invisibility, I wish you wonder, grace and continual knowing.



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the thriving leadership culture to sustainably be more agile in achieving organizational objectives.

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Through Leadership Spirit International, Paul is dedicated to healthy, thriving servant-leadership in order to assist executives in unleashing the spirit behind their personal leadership as well as unleashing the collective spirit of their organizations. Paul currently lives in Marin County, California, with his wife Nancy and his immediate family.

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Prior to joining Spencer Stuart, Dustin was a managing partner at another international executive search firm. In this role, he ran the entire organizational culture business outside of the U.S. for the firm. His culture work spans a variety of industries and includes implementing organizational change, supporting new leaders and advising on mergers & acquisitions (M&A). Dustin began his career and spent nearly 20 years at a smaller international culture-shaping organization. He was the managing partner for Europe, the Middle East and Africa and worked in several global markets. He has also had several public speaking engagements throughout his career on the topic of strategy, talent and culture alignment. Dustin has a Bachelor of Arts degree in pre-law and economics from the University of California, Santa Barbara.