

EXCEPTIONAL LEADERSHIP BY DESIGN

How Design in Great Organizations
Produces Great Leadership

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How Design in Great Organizations
Produces Great Leadership

By

Rob Elkington, Madeleine van der Steege,
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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Rob Elkington

This book is dedicated to seven amazing people who took time to design contexts of laughter, happiness, and hope each day. To Rebecca, Sarah, Hannah, Dwayne and Amy, Aliyna, and Sienna, thank you for the rich privilege of traversing this journey of life with each of you, and for the wonderful ways you carefully design human-centric experiences to enrich so many!

Madeleine van der Steege

To Anton, Arianne, Zander, and Mariq, who embody the pure sweetness and truth of Ubuntu.

Judith L. Glick-Smith

To Kieki, Jordan, Hannah, and Irie (who will be arriving about the same time this book is published). In addition, to the men and women of the fire and EMS world who have taught me so much over the past 10 years about flow and making hard decisions.

Jennifer Moss Breen

To my children and grand daughter, Paige and Brinley, Jacob, Trevor, and Jacqueline. I pray for your life to be happy and balance between work and play, you thrive in difficult times, and know how much I love you. Also, thanks to Tedd. Our conversations shaped this book, and they endure in my mind.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Design: We see it everywhere, and yet we don't. That is because good design is subtle and enigmatic in that it does not announce its presence, but you and I both know when good design is missing. For instance, think back to the times you stood in long line-ups waiting to purchase something, or flew for 17 hours in Economy class on an aeroplane, or worked on a laptop that made your wrist or eyes hurt. These are examples of poor design, and we are reminded then of the power of design because it is missing! In our VUCA world, which is volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous, "design thinking" is one of the ways we might effectively cultivate VUCA prime, or vision, understanding, clarity, and agility. Ponder upon this for a moment and you will see that VUCA prime is a human-centric antidote to VUCA – and thus design thinking fits beautifully!

Design is, at its core, an anthropocentric undertaking. It seeks to place humanity at the center of any process and ask the simple question: "How can we make this product, process, or experience better for the people who will use it?" Once that question is in the air we move through the phases of design thinking from the initial stance of "empathy," in which we seek to understand the people who are impacted by our product through the next phases of "defining," "ideating," "prototyping," and "testing." In fact, that is how we designed this book that you now hold in your hands – we designed it with you in mind!

This design thinking approach is no less true of leadership, especially since at its core, leadership focuses on two key dimensions: task and relationship. All leaders, and by extension leadership, exist to accomplish a task. However, to accomplish that task, leadership needs to work with people, hence the need for relationship. Great leadership knows how to balance both task and relationship effectively and efficaciously so that there is a beautiful mutual synergy between both. Exemplars such as "Madiba" (Nelson Mandela), Ghandi, and Churchill come to mind.

We are excited about this book, which offers a fresh approach and a new way of thinking about how to bring human-centric intentionality to the leadership arena. We are excited about this book because by its development, design, and delivery, it is human-centric. This book exemplifies not a heroic leader but exceptional leadership by design.

The editors of this book were chosen by Design to ensure continuity with our previous book: *Visionary Leadership in a Turbulent World: Thriving in the New VUCA Context*. They were also chosen because each one of them focuses on human-centric processes in their leadership research and practice.

The authors of this book were chosen by Design because each one of them is a specialist in a specific area that relates to Leadership by Design, either task or relationship. We are also extremely privileged to have a design expert to author a chapter on the processes of design thinking.

It is our hope that by the end of this book, leaders will see the leadership function in a new light, as a function of design – of putting people first. To that end, we acknowledge the hard work of our editorial team, especially our managing editor, Madeleine van der Steege, who, by design, inspired and kept us on track. To our other editors, Judith and Jennifer, who provided continual support, encouragement, and direction; they kept us on task while always strengthening our relational ties. To the authors, thank you for embarking on this journey, a journey in which we truly did not have a planned destination. We started with an idea, with empathy, and then from there moved through the design process together.

Finally, to Pete Baker, and the team at Emerald, we express our gratitude for their willingness to take a chance on this, our second book. They are a great team to work with and we believe that together we have co-constructed a useful work that will empower Exceptional Leadership by Design!

– Rob Elkington, 2018

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

1. INTRODUCTION

Judith L. Glick-Smith, PhD, has been a Communication, Knowledge Management, and Leadership Consultant since 1983. Her PhD is in Transformative Studies with a concentration in Integral Studies from the California Institute of Integral Studies. She has a Master of Science in Conflict Management from Kennesaw State University. She is the author of *Flow-Based Leadership: What the Best Firefighters*



Can Teach You about Leadership and Making Hard Decisions. Judith is the founder of MentorFactor Inc. (<http://www.mentorfactorinc.com>), the home of The Center for Flow-Based Leadership®, which focuses on helping organizations facilitate flow-based work environments and to prepare for the unexpected. She is also the architect of the *Strategic Planning for Your Life* life-planning model. Judith has been studying flow-based decision making and leadership in the fire service since 2007. She lives in the Atlanta metro area with her two English Springer Spaniels and near her daughter and two granddaughters. You can reach her at judy@mentorfactorinc.com.

2. GREAT LEADERSHIP INFORMED BY DESIGN

Atul Handa is a Seasoned Design Leader with 17 years of industry experience. His forte lies in experience design and content strategy. He is passionate about applying design best practices in an agile world. He helps his clients leverage Design Thinking to bridge business goals and user needs. He is an expert at translating complex business ideas into



actionable design blueprints. Atul has successfully led many large-scale design and development efforts for both web and mobile products in a variety of domains for clients ranging from start-ups to Fortune 500 companies. He is a Subject Matter Expert for the University of Toronto's School of Continuing Studies in Canada, and has a Master of Science in Technology from Arizona State University, USA, and is the Principal UX Designer at Informatica and Co-founder of Conceptell Inc.



Kanupriya Vashisht is a Senior Content Strategist, Editor, and Writer with more than 15 years of experience. She provides communications strategy leadership, which supports a user-centric approach, to a diverse array of Fortune 500, mid-sized and start-up clients. She oversees projects through entire lifecycles: from research, analysis, content strategy, and design to content creation and testing. She also regularly writes features and columns for leading magazines, newspapers, and websites. Kanupriya is a Subject Matter Expert for the University of Toronto's School of Continuing Studies, and has a Master's in Journalism and Mass Communications from Arizona State University, USA and is a Director at Conceptell Inc.

3. DESIGNING LEADERSHIP LIKE JAZZ



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4. STRENGTHENING OUR OWN LEADERSHIP BY DESIGN

Greg Morgan is an Australian Leadership Practitioner and Scholar who considers leadership as a type of practical wisdom for generating influence in relationships. He has worked with leaders in several sectors on cultivating understandings, structures, and practices, which bring out the best in people pursuing shared goals. His current focus is on “narrative intelligence”: insight in the ever-unfolding present about the stories we shape, inhabit, and believe to be true; and capacity to modify them to better support our goals and well-being.



Greg is an executive partner in the Australian consulting firm Allora Leadership and Coaching (<https://www.allora.org.au/>). He believes leadership is more about disposition than position, and that it is never too early – or too late – to learn and develop leadership. “Leadership” is a slippery concept, and the only “training” most leaders experience is what they encounter on the job. Greg supports leaders to visualize who they seek to be and to reach for what is highest in them.

Seeking to learn how to be effective as a school principal, Greg completed a PhD in Leadership before honing his skills further as head of school at the National Excellence in School Leadership Initiative. Greg then co-launched Allora with a focus on offering personalized leadership development to leaders at all stages of career progression. Greg has shaped a very accessible approach to leadership development from his professional experience and research, with clients valuing its authenticity and immediate application to their practice and continuing growth as leaders. Greg may be contacted at greg@allora.org.au

5. REDESIGNING THE HERO LEADER: LEVERAGING EMERGENT LEADERSHIP

Dr Rob Elkington is the CEO and President of Global Leadership Initiatives (www.globalleader.ca). Rob holds a PhD from North West University, and an Advanced Certificate in Intercultural Management from Notre Dame University. Rob is also Adjunct



Professor at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (<https://www.uoit.ca>) serving in both the Business and IT faculty and the Education faculty, and is a Senior Lecturer with the Stellenbosch University School of Public Leadership and Good Governance (<http://www.sun.ac.za/english/faculty/economy/spl/centres-institutes/sggf>).

6. ACTIVATING FE+MALE LEADERSHIP SYNERGY IN YOUR ORGANIZATION



Madeleine van der Steege, MA (Soc. Sc.), is an Award-Winning Female Entrepreneur and the Managing Editor of two Global Leadership Initiatives (GLI) publications. Her key interests are entrepreneurship, leadership, and diversity eloquence. In practice, she acts as a Business Catalyst for international companies setting up in the Netherlands, and is a Master Coach, Researcher, and Writer. Madeleine is an Adjunct Professor in Leadership and Business Studies and the Psychology Department at Webster University, Leiden, a management board member of TheBridge2Hope project for survivors of human trafficking (for sexual exploitation) in the Netherlands, and a core member of Global Leadership Initiatives (GLI).

Madeleine (“Mads”) comes from a family of entrepreneurs in South Africa, where she was a Pioneer in the field of Mediation. She lives with her husband and three children in a picturesque village in the beautiful flower bulb region of the Netherlands. You can reach her at mads@synquity.com and www.synquity.com.

7. DESIGN THINKING – HOW TO THRIVE IN A VUCA WORLD



Fred Krawchuk is a former US Army Special Forces Colonel, Olmsted Scholar, and George Marshall Fellow at the US Department of State. A graduate of West Point, Harvard, and IESE Business School, he has 30 years of experience in over 30 countries

launching innovative enterprises and building collaborative networks that generate alternatives to violence. A long-time mindfulness Practitioner, Fred serves as an Advisor to the Coming Home Project, and on the Board of Directors of Peace through Commerce.

Fred Krawchuk is the Founder and CEO of the Pathfinder Consulting Group, Senior Lecturer at IESE Business School, Executive Coach, and Writer. He empowers leaders and organizations to successfully manage change and transitions, and innovate in dynamic environments. He is an accomplished leader known for strategic planning and leading high-risk operations around the globe, including peacekeeping in the Balkans, jungle operations in Latin America and Southeast Asia, and counterinsurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan. Blending his peak performance, negotiations, and design thinking expertise, he writes about and guides senior executives on how to build consensus among stakeholders from all walks of life, align action, and generate pragmatic solutions to complex challenges. Fred works with a variety of public sector and corporate clients around the world, enabling them to become more agile and adaptive in volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous situations, whether in business, government, or conflict zones.

8. DESIGNING AN ORGANIZATION THAT BUILDS RESILIENT LEADERS

Jennifer Moss Breen's passion is working with emerging leaders and helping them to thrive in complexity. Topics that Jennifer feels are most essential for today's leaders include the power of followership, healthy teams, strength through humility, building resilience through adversity, and reflection as a tool for leadership growth. Jennifer earned her PhD from the University of Nebraska and currently serves as an Associate Professor and Program Director for Creighton University's Interdisciplinary Leadership EdD. Prior to joining Creighton University, Jennifer developed and directed Bellevue University's PhD in Human Capital Program.



Jennifer has been studying, teaching, consulting, and writing about leadership for nearly 20 years.

9. FLOW-BASED LEADERSHIP THROUGH EMERGENT DESIGN



Judith L. Glick-Smith, PhD, has been a knowledge management and leadership consultant since 1983. She is the author of *Flow-based Leadership: What the Best Firefighters Can Teach You about Leadership and Making Hard Decisions*. Judith is the founder of MentorFactor, Inc., the home of The Center for Flow-Based Leadership®, which focuses on helping organizations facilitate flow-based work environments and to prepare for the unexpected. Judith has been studying flow-based leadership in the fire service since 2007. You can reach her at judy@mentorfactorinc.com.

10. DESIGNING LEADERSHIP FOR INNOVATION



Bettina von Stamm is an Original and Visionary Thinker as well as a Prolific Writer in the fields of Sustainability and Innovation. Building on her MBA and PhD from London Business School, she supports senior managers and innovation leaders in creating sustainably innovative organizations. She volunteers as Director of Awards Program for Katerva, a non-profit whose mission is to identify, evaluate, accelerate sustainable disruptive innovation, and contributes to executive programs at prestigious universities and corporates around the world.

Visionary at the boundary of academia and industry, Dr Bettina von Stamm has been evolving the field of innovation since 1992, from 2004 onwards through her own organization, the Innovation Leadership Forum. Her constant desire to understand is coupled with a passion to enable others to use innovation for creating a purposeful and sustainable future. The three cornerstones of her thinking are: (1) a focus on people, (2) deep understanding of specific context, and (3) a system-based approach. Tools that she has developed include a framework that helps understand where innovative organizations differ from their less innovative counterparts, the Innovation

Wave®, a facilitated tool for the assessment of innovation capability which builds on that framework, and a methodology to support collaboration across diverse mindsets.

She loves spreading her thoughts through presentations and interviews, blogs and articles, book chapters and reports as well as her own monographs: *The Innovation Wave* (Wiley, 2002), *Managing Innovation Design & Creativity* (Wiley, 2008), and *The Future of Innovation* (with Anna Triflova; Gower, 2009). She operates globally, in both the academic world (Cambridge University, UK; CEDIM, Mexico; Copenhagen Business School, Denmark; DEUSTO Business School, Spain; Kedge Business School, France; London Business School, UK; and Technische Universität München, Germany) and the corporate world (AMP, Banco Santander, DSM, Imerys, Katerva, Lloyds Register, Mars Mattel, SAP).

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Elizabeth (Liddy) A. Tuleja, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the Mendoza College of Business, University of Notre Dame, where she teaches intercultural communication and global leadership, and a Fulbright Scholar in China (2017–2018). She holds a Master's degree in Intercultural Communication and a Doctorate in Education from the University of Pennsylvania, graduating with distinction. Prior to Notre Dame, she taught at the Wharton School and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Her area of expertise is in cross-cultural management and global leadership with a focus on China. In addition to teaching, she consults with clients such as Boeing, US Marines, US Army, Merrill Lynch, Morgan Stanley, Bank of America, AXA, Marriott, Verizon, China Development Bank, and HSBC. She is the author of *Intercultural Communication for Global Leadership: How Leaders Communicate for Success* (Routledge, 2017) and *Intercultural Communication for Business* (GlobeComm Publishers, 2015).



She is also an Associate Partner with the Hofstede Insights group, which is an international organization dedicated to enabling global effectiveness. For over a decade, Dr. Tuleja has spent her summers teaching in

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She has also developed a popular online executive certificate course in Advanced Intercultural Management through the University of Notre Dame/University Alliance as well as another leadership course in collaboration with Notre Dame/Paragon Education. You can follow her blog at <http://globalbizleader.com>, on LinkedIn, and also:

Link to book: goo.gl/9GjKpD

Link to course: goo.gl/fM0XoN

Link to article: goo.gl/b9QF3X

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12. LEADERSHIP, BUILT-IN



Perttu Salovaara works as a Researcher and Organization Consultant in Finland, specializing in leadership, change management, and organizational and workspace design. He has also produced three academic documentary films. Currently he runs a research program on the impact of craft breweries on community building, is writing a book on plural forms of leadership, and studies how a space renovation project evolves as a co-creational process.



Bettina von Stamm is an Original and Visionary Thinker as well as a Prolific Writer in the fields of Sustainability and Innovation. Building on her MBA and PhD from London Business School, she supports senior managers and innovation leaders in creating sustainably innovative organizations. She volunteers as Director of Awards Program for Katerva, a non-profit whose mission is to identify, evaluate, and accelerate sustainable disruptive innovation, and contributes to executive programs at prestigious universities and corporates around the world.

13. Bringing it all Together

Jennifer Moss Breen's passion is working with emerging leaders and helping to thrive in complexity. Topics that Jennifer feels are most essential for today's leaders include the power of followership, healthy teams, strength through humility, building resilience through adversity, and reflection as a tool for leadership growth. Jennifer earned her PhD from the University of Nebraska, and currently serves as an Associate Professor and Program Director for Creighton University's Interdisciplinary Leadership EdD.



Madeleine van der Steege is an Award-Winning Female Entrepreneur and the Managing Editor of two GLI publications. Her key interests are entrepreneurship, leadership, and diversity eloquence. In practice, she acts as a Business Catalyst for international companies setting up in the Netherlands, and is a Master Coach, Researcher, and Writer. Madeleine is an Adjunct Professor at Webster University, Leiden, a Management Board Member of TheBridge2Hope project for survivors of human trafficking (for sexual exploitation) in the Netherlands, and a core member of Global Leadership Initiatives (GLI).



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CONCEPT OF DESIGN

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INTRODUCTION

JUDITH L. GLICK-SMITH

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.
 – African Proverb

Imagine a world with great leadership! What would that world be like? Would it be a better world or a worse one because of great leadership? Now ratchet great leadership up to exceptional leadership and suddenly we have cause for optimism. It seems that in many contexts and for various reasons we have grown used to mediocre leadership that produces substandard outcomes. Every now and again we witness the emergence of exceptional leadership and are immediately drawn to that leadership. We want more of it – now! If we assert that leaders are made, not born, and if leadership is a process and not an event, then how do we design processes to make leaders? This is the question we wrestle with throughout this book. How do we design contexts for leadership to emerge, to thrive, and to flourish? Can we design contexts, situations, and opportunities for leadership to emerge and grow and thrive and flourish – to become exceptional?

What defines “exceptional leadership?” How do we measure it? Will we know it when we see it or experience it? Could it be that we will not recognize it until those around us bear witness to it and change their behavior because of it?

The literature on leadership is vast. Leadership styles are as varied as leaders themselves. Leadership styles evolve from experiences and training. What makes any leadership style exceptional? What may feel like “exceptional leadership” to one person may not be “exceptional” to another. What are the

contexts that optimize the ability for leaders to be exceptional? Understanding what makes leadership exceptional in each situation or organization is fundamental to designing environments, programs, and training in a way that helps it flourish over time.

The purpose of this book is to explore these questions. This book is a collection of stories and ideas written by individuals who are passionate about leadership within their own sphere of influence and study. Because each of us approaches the topic of leadership from different, often disparate, points of view, we decided to use the same iterative design process we are promoting herein, following design principles of empathy (for you, the reader), definition, ideation, prototyping, and testing.

In the “empathy” phase, we collectively struggled with the identification of a single persona, or archetype, that represents our target audience. This became problematic for a variety of reasons, including discussions about gender, position in organizations, assumptions about intentions of leaders, among others. The struggle to come together was difficult, but has resulted in a richness and depth in the realization that leaders and the leadership styles they use vary widely.

The “definition” phase was much the same in that we all approach our areas of inquiry around the topic of leadership from our own world views. Some felt that the problem to be solved lies in the physical spaces and in the supporting infrastructure that give people the opportunity to do their best work. Others felt that the focus should be more on the interactions between people. Still others felt that exceptional leadership begins within the psyche of the leader him- or herself. Ultimately, our discussions led us to the idea that all of this is valid. There needs to be a holistic approach to designing exceptional leadership.

We have divided the book into the following parts:

PART 1: CONCEPT OF DESIGN

This part focuses on the connection between design – as a conscious intention – and leadership.

Chapter 2, *Great Leadership Informed by Design*, written by Atul Handa and Kanupriya Vashisht, focuses on how infusing design into organizational leadership makes it more people-focused and fosters a culture of empathy, which is imperative for solving complex human problems.

Chapter 3, *Designing Leadership Like Jazz*, by Gloria J. Burgess, offers the metaphor of jazz to encourage an emergent design process when it comes to leadership.

Chapter 4, *Strengthening Our Own Leadership by Design*, by Greg Morgan, offers an approach that uses design principles for anyone seeking to strengthen his or her own leadership expertise at any level, whether novice or master.

PART 2: PROCESS OF DESIGN

This part focuses on how using various interventions within the design process can result in exceptional leadership.

Chapter 5, *Redesigning the Hero Leader: Leveraging Emergent Leadership*, by Rob Elkington, addresses the power of using a coach to help get you jump started in the journey to become an exceptional leader.

Chapter 6, *A Design to Activate Fe+male Leadership Synergy in Your Organization*, by Madeleine van der Steege, focuses on how using a human-centered design framework accelerates empathy and inclusivity of female leaders.

Chapter 7, *Design Thinking: How to Thrive in a VUCA World*, by Fred Krawchuk, highlights the importance of understanding the context in which you are leading. You accomplish this by attending to diverse stakeholder perspectives and all aspects of the environment. The knowledge derived from this framework ultimately informs your prototype and provides rapid feedback, enabling you to implement solutions quickly.

Chapter 8, *Designing an Organization that Builds Resilient Leaders*, by Jennifer Moss Breen, encourages you to build resilience strategies into your organizational model. The elasticity that resilience provides an organization is what perpetuates it over the long term. These strategies can work at the organizational and team levels as well as the individual level. For example, giving team members the opportunity to “steal time,” to meditate, to walk, to work out, etc., can result in increases in productivity and well-being.

Chapter 9, *Flow-Based Leadership through Emergent Design*, by Judith L. Glick-Smith, discusses how working in flow creates an outward, empathetic approach to decision-making and leadership. Using a continuous, emergent process, creates the conditions for organizations to grow and thrive over the long term. Having a framework in place enables the organization to prepare

for the unexpected. This chapter offers a framework called flow-based leadership, which is derived from the Georgia Smoke Diver program, an extreme, experiential training program in the US fire service.

PART 3: CONTEXT FOR DESIGN

In this part, Chapter 10, *Designing Leadership for Innovation*, by Bettina von Stamm, focuses on the importance of a wholistic, enabling, and facilitative approach to leadership design. When leading for innovation it is important to consider the entire organization as a system. This leads to innovation excellence and operational excellence.

Chapter 11, *Culturally Intelligent Leadership by Design*, by Elizabeth A. Tuleja, explores cultural intelligence (CQ) as a critical mindset and skillset for global leadership. Culturally intelligent organizations envision, plan, and create environments for both personal and organizational success. To be a culturally intelligent global leader, one must master openness, curiosity, and knowledge.

Chapter 12, *Leadership, Built-In*, by Perttu Salovaara and Bettina von Stamm, looks at the power of place and how designing appropriate workspaces for people can facilitate productivity and well-being in organizations.

PART 4: HOW TO TEST YOUR OWN EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP BY DESIGN PROTOTYPE

This part consists of Chapter 13, *Bringing It All Together*, by Jennifer Moss Breen and Madeleine van der Steege, in which we revisit the process of design and the take-aways of the previous chapters. This chapter also addresses how to evaluate exceptional leadership. Finally, it encourages you, the reader, to keep iterating the design process. In doing so, you remain outward focused and empathetic toward those whom you serve and lead.

Overall, the development of this book has been a powerful churn of ideas and discussion by passionate individuals. We hope that the final result offers you, dear reader, validation, ideas for moving forward, and frameworks from which to build your own excellence in leadership.