



Issue 203 - February 2020



Is humility a key trait of highly effective leaders? Are charismatic leaders who can stir strong emotions more effective leaders?

Questions about these intertwined leadership characteristics recently came up in workshops and online discussions. Charismatic leadership seems to especially confuse many people. It's a popular media stereotype of strong leadership. As much as I enjoy reading *Fortune* magazine, they keep adding to this misguided leadership view by continually putting larger-than-life CEOs, politicians, and other leaders on their covers and featuring stories on their forceful personalities.

Numerous studies show that charisma isn't a key quality of highly effective leaders. A European study reports on "The Downside of Charisma" with this conclusion, "We found that leaders of the higher-performing companies were often not charismatic -- and were, in fact, less likely to be charismatic than the leaders of the lower-performing companies. The problem with charismatic leaders is that exceptional powers of persuasion make it easy for them to overcome resistance and opposition to their chosen course of action."

Charismatic leaders often don't listen. They're too busy overcoming resistance with their powers of persuasion. They often see humility as weakness. If they could shut up long enough to learn, they might discover that it's a vital trait for great leadership. From his good to great research, Jim Collins found humility is a hallmark of the very best leaders. In his *Harvard Business Review* article, "Level 5 Leadership, The Triumph of Humility and Fierce Resolve," he wrote, "Level 5 leaders, inherently humble, look out the window to apportion credit - even undue credit - to factors outside themselves. If they can't find a specific person or event to give credit to, they credit good luck. At the same time, they look in the mirror to assign responsibility, never citing bad luck or external factors when things go poorly. Conversely, the comparison executives frequently looked out the window for factors to blame but preened in the mirror to credit themselves when things went well."

Humility is a vital part of the me/we continuum so central to leadership. A leader with a healthy ego feels a deep sense of satisfaction in the accomplishments of the team or organization he or she is leading. Their ego is stroked by coaching, developing, and building others and watching them grow.

In this Issue:

Answering Questions About Powerful New Approaches to Leadership and Coaching Development

Engaging and Energizing: Are You Leading in the Key of E?

Thoughts That Make You Go Hmmm on... Hacking Our Pessimistic Neuro Programing

Tweet Reading: Recommended Online Articles

Read *The Leader Letter* in Weekly Installments

Feedback and Follow-Up

LAST CHANCE to REGISTER!



Public Workshops

The Extraordinary Leader

Toronto - Mar 2

The Extraordinary Coach

Toronto - Mar 3

Click to REGISTER NOW!



**View PDF Version
Past Issues
Practical Leadership Blog
Visit Our Site!
Let's Connect**



Share this!

Please forward this newsletter to colleagues, Clients, or associates you think might be interested -- or on a 'need-to-grow' basis.

A leader me-deep in their unhealthy ego is self-centered and diminished by the accomplishments of others. The leader must always be in the spotlight and have others defer to their authority. This leader works to build dependence and a parent-child relationship. This unhealthy ego drives the leader to seek all credit for team or organization accomplishments and blame others for all failures.

Less effective leaders often have low levels of emotional intelligence. A webinar participant in last month's Powerful New Approaches webinar (see first item in this newsletter) asked, "what are some good ways to coach toward greater emotional intelligence? This has proved difficult with low self-awareness in those with low EQ."

The best approach I've seen is 360 feedback. Low EQ awareness usually means it's a fatal flaw. When leaders get that feedback, they're often surprised or even shocked. They need to appreciate how fatal flaws drag down perceptions of their overall leadership effectiveness and the impact of that on engagement, service/quality, profitability, safety, etc. The challenge is often helping them understand that soft skills have become an even more critical priority. A strength-based 360 assessment and development process is the most effective approach to lower feedback resistance and raise energy for building a personal development plan.

This issue provides a follow up to last month's webinar with a link to watch the recording and a few answers to some of the questions raised. Engaging and energizing is a vital leadership task. You'll have a chance to determine if you're leading in the key of E. And we conclude our New Year's series on losing those fake news blues with thoughts grounded in reality.

May you find some ideas to continue to keep yourself, your organization, and our world growing better and better.

Was this forwarded to you?
Subscribe to receive *The Leader Letter* monthly!

Permission to Reprint

You may reprint any items from *The Leader Letter* in your own printed publication or e-newsletter as long as you include this paragraph.

"Reprinted with permission from *The Leader Letter*, Jim Clemmer's free e-newsletter. For almost forty years, Jim's 2,000+ practical leadership presentations and workshops/retreats, seven bestselling books, columns, and newsletters have been helping hundreds of thousands of people worldwide. His web site is www.clemmergroup.com."

Answering Questions About Powerful New Approaches to Leadership and Coaching Development



Last week, I delivered a 45-minute webinar on **Powerful New Approaches to Leadership and Coaching Development**. This webinar condensed the key research and approaches from *The Extraordinary Leader* and *The Extraordinary Coach* workshops. An 11-minute Q & A session followed the webinar presentation. I was able to answer just seven questions and couldn't get to many others. [Click here](#) to access the archived webinar and Q & A session (starts at 45:15).

Here are a few of the questions and summarized answers with links for you to drill deeper into the topic:

When dealing with a workplace focused on weaknesses, what would you suggest a person do to introduce strength-based development?

The evidence from research papers on [Developing Strengths or Weaknesses](#) or [An Overview of Key Insights from "The Extraordinary Leader"](#) persuades some people. Others find stories/examples more convincing such as [Are You Focused on What's Wrong to Make Things Right?](#) An exercise I described in the webinar is outlined in a 3-minute interview clip at [Towering Strengths Overshadow Weaknesses](#). It draws from participant's personal experiences with the best and worst leaders they've ever known. This turns lights on for some leaders.

Peruse our [focusing on strengths](#) for more articles, blogs, webinars, videos, whitepapers, and case studies.

In selecting companion competencies for development, should we choose to focus on areas that are already strengths?

If the competency companion isn't already a profound strength (90th percentile), then leveraging that strength by developing it further is often a good choice. Other times it might be selecting a companion or behavior that's most visible or likely to have the fastest/highest impact.

If I am strong in a number of competencies, what how do I leverage those strengths?

[Leadership Lift: Significantly Boost Effectiveness by Raising Strength Clusters](#) addresses some of your question. You'll find resources on leveraging strengths at [Cross-Training and Competency Companions](#).

There are times where people may be missing a competency or skill to move to the next level. How do "fatal flaws" feed into a personal development plan?

Joe Folkman's guest blog, [When to Work on Weaknesses](#), addresses some of this. As I mentioned on the webinar, we have lots of research like - [Motivating Leaders to Implement Individual Development Plans](#) and [Building Leadership Strengths 2 - 3 Times More Effective Than Fixing Weaknesses](#) - showing the power of working on strengths to turbocharge personal development plans.

Can strategic thinking be learned?

The competency we call "Develops Strategic Perspective" is a skill that can be learned – in most cases. Some leaders really struggle with this competency because they're so caught up in details or find long term visioning very difficult.

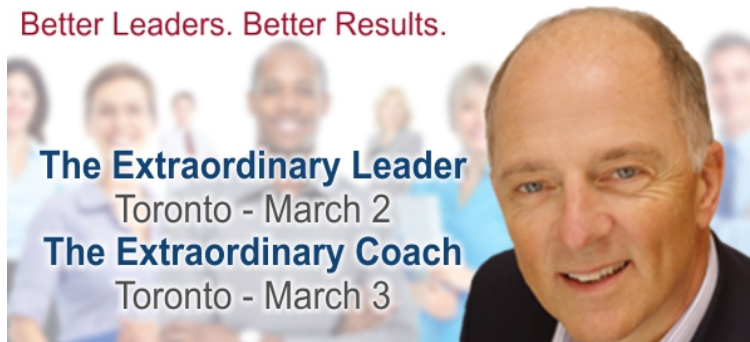
Zenger Folkman's correlation research on the "[competency companions](#)" for Strategic Perspective studied the behaviors or competencies most frequently found in leaders scored at the 90th percentile. Customer focus, innovation, analytical skills, and communication were among the 8 most frequently found in high strategic leaders.

How can you handle your CEO when he is not understanding your point of view or critique?

Upward Leadership and dealing with a boss or senior management is one of the most popular topics and questions I am regularly asked. I've written quite a bit about this. Click on [Upward Leadership](#) for a selection of articles and blogs.

Given the vast number of webinars now available, we were delighted to have hundreds of sites register and join us. And we got the truest feedback of all – they stayed until the very end!

I am facilitating our only 2020 public workshops of **The Extraordinary Leader and The Extraordinary Coach workshops in Toronto on March 2 and 3**. Registration closes February 15 for *The Extraordinary Leader* and February 26 for *The Extraordinary Coach*.



Engaging and Energizing: Are You Leading in the Key of E?



Are people in your organization leaping out of bed eager to get to work? Or is work a four-letter curse word? What's the Laughter Index in your workplace?

In the most effective organizations, leaders are often "leading in the key of E" by engaging and energizing people. It's so vital. And too rare. Leadership researcher and author, Tom Peters, says many managers believe work is serious business. He jokes that etched in stone over the entrance to business schools, the inscriptions read, "All ye who enter here shall never smile again." If suppressed laughter does spread the hips and produce gas that may explain a few things!

How do you get people to take the stairs rather than the escalator? Make it more fun. A few years ago, Volkswagen produced a short video of a fascinating experiment in Stockholm. They fitted stairs beside an escalator with electronic piano keys as steps. People could go up the escalator or walk up the stairs and make music. 66% more people suddenly choose to take the stairs. Climbing the stairs was no longer work. It was fun. Click [Piano Staircase Initiative](#) to join the fun.

German organizational professor, Nico Rose, surveyed 900 middle managers to assess what workplace factors stressed out or energized them. In [Lack of Fun at Work Kills Motivation](#), he writes, *"given that having fun at work is such a serious matter – an interesting follow-up question is: What are the drivers of perceived fun at work? In order to clarify this, I ran another linear regression; this time, using (lack of) fun as the target variable.*

These are the three most important drivers of fun at work:

- *Strength orientation*
- *Meaning in work*
- *Working atmosphere among colleagues"*

Building strengths is vital to an energized workplace. Michelle McQuaid found "78% of employees who report having a meaningful discussion with their manager about their strengths feel their work is making a difference and is appreciated. These employees are most likely (61%) to be leaping out of bed in the morning to get to work." Playing to our strengths is much more fun.

Research also shows that **putting purpose at the core of your organization** boosts engagement and effectiveness. Purposeful leadership is even more critical for younger generations. They are Generation Why, as in why does this organization exist?

Are you having fun? Do you let your face know about it? Are you energizing your organization? Or are you the boss who energizes the room by leaving it?

Thoughts That Make You Go Hmmm on... Hacking Our Pessimistic Neuro Programing



These comments and excerpts come from my last two blogs on **Lose Those News Blues and Leave the Dark Side: The World's Never Been Better** and **Don't Start the New Year Losing Touch With Reality**

"In Christian tradition, the four horsemen of Famine, Pestilence, War, and Death usher in the apocalypse. Compared to 100 years ago, deaths from infectious diseases are way down; wars are rarer and kill fewer people; and malnutrition has steeply declined. Death itself is in retreat, and the apocalypse has never looked further away."

- Ronald Bailey, **Impending Defeat for the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse**, *HumanProgress*

"The challenges facing the human family right now are big and scary and there's no guarantee we will overcome them. However, stories are powerful, and right now the ones that matter are getting lost in the noise, overshadowed by the drumbeat of doom. It's high time we changed the narrative."

- Angus Hervey, **99 Good News Stories You Probably Didn't Hear About In 2019**, *FutureCrunch*

"You hear about this stuff a lot less because articles and television segments about these developments don't make you more likely to respond in the comments section, more likely to share on social media, more likely to call into a talk radio program, or more likely to vote for a particular candidate. It doesn't make you believe that the world is full of people who are being unfair to you, that you're a victim, or that other people are responsible for your problems."

- **The World Is Getting Better. It's Just That No One Tells You About It**, Jim Geraghty, *National Review*

"Not only are most **apocalyptic claims** we've grown accustomed to **not true**, the reality is that things are **getting better**...**Progress** means that things are getting better – even in the areas our friends and family worry about the most. Our views on the state of the world are decades behind. We need an update and an infusion of data-rich realism."

- Joakim Book, **Worldviews Are Pessimistic Because They Are Outdated**, *HumanProgress*

"Even though we no longer live among large predators, evolution has not removed our negativity bias. We pay attention to problems, threats and disasters, which is why we pay attention to the crime, war and disaster served up by the media."

- Henry Edwards, **The Daily Better: 365 Reasons for Optimism**

"The foretellers of ruin have consistently been wrong, whereas the advocates of human resourcefulness have nearly always been right. So instead of ecological collapse, I predict that humanity can look hopefully forward in the twenty-first century to an age of environmental renewal."

- Ronald Bailey, **The End of Doom: Environmental Renewal in the Twenty-first Century**

"Ratchet, hatchet, pivot; ratchet, hatchet, pivot. In every cycle, the stakes get higher, as our species expands in numbers and in the extent of its reach across the world. In every cycle, new obstacles emerge. And in every cycle, millennium after millennium, humanity as a whole has muddled through."

- Ruth DeFries, **The Big Ratchet: How Humanity Thrives in the Face of Natural Crisis**

"Today, the drumbeat has become a cacophony. The generation that has experienced more peace, freedom, leisure time, education, medicine, travel, movies, mobile phones, and massages than any generation in history is lapping up gloom at every opportunity."

- Matt Ridley, **The Rational Optimist: How Prosperity Evolves**

"Those who sow fear about a dreadful prophecy may be seen as serious and responsible, while those who are measured are seen as complacent and naive. Despair springs eternal. At least since the Hebrew prophets and the Book of Revelation, seers have warned their contemporaries about an imminent doomsday. Forecasts of End Times are a staple of psychics, mystics, televangelists, nut cults, founders of religions, and men pacing the sidewalk with sandwich boards saying 'Repent!'"

- Steven Pinker, ***Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress***

"The truth is that the good old days were awful. Despite what we hear on the news and from many authorities, the great story of our era is that we are witnessing the greatest improvement in global living standards ever to take place."

- Johan Norberg, ***Progress: Ten Reasons to Look Forward to the Future***

"Factfulness is...recognizing when frightening things get our attention, and remembering that these are not necessarily the most risky. Our natural fears of violence, captivity, and contamination make us systematically overestimate these risks."

- Hans Rosling, ***Factfulness: Ten Reasons We're Wrong About the World--and Why Things Are Better Than You Think***

Tweet Reading: Recommended Online Articles



This section summarizes last month's LinkedIn Updates and Twitter Tweets about online articles or blog posts that I've flagged as worth reading. These are usually posted on weekends when I am doing much of my reading for research, learning, or leisure. You can follow me on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/JimClemmer> and connect with me on LinkedIn at <https://www.linkedin.com/in/jimclemmer>

My original tweet commenting on the article follows each title and descriptor from the original source:

It's way too easy to lose sight of the big picture. We need to zoom out to get a more accurate perspective.

20 Ways the World Got Better in 2019, in Charts, Elijah Wolfson, *Time*
"It's difficult, in the context of the daily onslaught of bad news and its demands on our attention, to remember that when you look at the long arc of human civilization, there are many, many things that continue to get better."

Research on the age and positions of leadership development participants shows why organizational performance is so low.

The Virtues of Early and Powerful Leadership Development, Jack Zenger, *Forbes*
"Today a major dose of self-awareness via a 360-degree feedback process is most often reserved for upper-middle and top management."

Joe's research shows the competencies where leaders are aligned and misaligned with how others see their effectiveness.

Do You Know Yourself? You're Not As Good or Bad of a Leader As You

Think, Joe Folkman, *Forbes*

"Leaders have some awareness of where they fall on the distribution based on their leadership effectiveness but overestimate weakness and underestimate strength."

Read *The Leader Letter* in Weekly Installments



The items in each month's issue of *The Leader Letter* are first published in my weekly **blog** during the previous month.

If you read each blog post (or issue of *The Leader Letter*) as it's published over twelve months, you'll have read the equivalent of a leadership book. And you'll pick up a few practical leadership tips that help you use time more strategically and tame your E-Beast!

Feedback and Follow-Up

I am always delighted to hear from readers of *The Leader Letter* with feedback, reflections, suggestions, or differing points of view. Nobody is ever identified in *The Leader Letter* without their permission. I am also happy to explore customized, in-house adaptations of any of my material for your team or organization. Drop me an e-mail at jim.clemmer@clemmergroup.com or connect with me on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), or my [blog](#)!

Live, learn, laugh, and lead -- just for the L of it!



Jim Clemmer

President

Phone: (519) 748-5968

Email: jim.clemmer@clemmergroup.com

Website: www.clemmergroup.com



Please forward this newsletter to colleagues, Clients, or associates you think might be interested -- or on a 'need-to-grow' basis.

Did you receive this newsletter from someone else?

Subscribe to ensure you don't miss the next issue!

The CLEMMER Group

476 Mill Park Drive, Kitchener ON N2P 1Y9

Phone: (519) 748-1044 ~ Fax: (519) 748-5813

service@clemmergroup.com

www.clemmergroup.com

©2020 Jim Clemmer and The CLEMMER Group