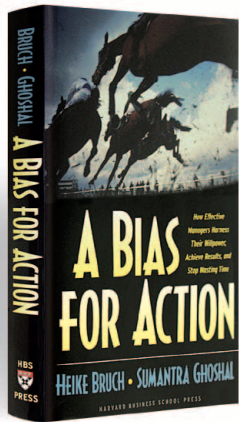


SOUNDVIEW Executive Book Summaries®

FILE: LEADERSHIP



By Heike Bruch
and Sumantra Ghoshal

**How Effective Managers Harness Their Willpower,
Achieve Results, and Stop Wasting Time**

A BIAS FOR ACTION

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

Managers blame many factors for their lack of accomplishments: a lack of motivation, limited time, not enough money, too much work, and corporate bureaucracy. But new research suggests that the amount of willpower managers bring to their jobs can be a critical element in their success.

In A Bias for Action, leadership expert Heike Bruch and management expert Sumantra Ghoshal demonstrate that managers often confuse activity with accomplishments, and motivation with true leadership. Their new study reveals that 90 percent of managers waste their time by procrastinating, becoming emotionally detached, and distracting themselves with busy-work. They point out that only 10 percent of managers truly act purposefully to get the most important work accomplished.

Based on the authors' research across numerous industries, and illustrated with personal case studies from BP, Sony, GE, Philips and others, A Bias for Action reveals how great managers get results by engaging their own willpower through a combination of energy and focus. The authors present simple strategies for bolstering willpower and provide ways managers can use the willpower of others to encourage collective action.

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What You'll Learn In This Summary

- ✓ How to create a culture that supports positive, purposeful action.
- ✓ Why some managers succeed in taking purposeful action while others do not.
- ✓ How many leaders deliberately reshape their personal behavior by re-energizing themselves or renewing focus on their work.
- ✓ How to define your challenges and overcome stress and negativity.
- ✓ How to overcome common obstacles such as conflicting demands and bureaucratic red tape.
- ✓ How to move from motivating others to fostering willpower in others.

A BIAS FOR ACTION

by Heike Bruch and Sumantra Ghoshal

— THE COMPLETE SUMMARY

PART ONE: HARNESSING YOUR WILLPOWER TO ACHIEVE RESULTS

Management Is the Art of Doing and Getting Done

Laura McCormick had just landed the most challenging role in her career. IBG, a \$7 billion conglomerate, had acquired her employer, Delta Technologies, a telecommunications supplier — and appointed her, at 33, one of two instructors in IBG's much-touted total quality program. Energetic, enthusiastic and articulate, she had risen quickly in her seven years at Delta.

Early in her new position, however, McCormick began to stall. Having squabbled before with Sam Butler, a manager from the factory floor, she considered him entirely unsuitable for the job of the second instructor and avoiding him whenever possible.

After three months and several managerial shifts that included the demotion of her boss and mentor, McCormick pushed on, running one program after another, attending meetings, tackling problems that cropped up, and spending hours each day answering e-mails and returning phone calls. She was constantly busy, but could see that morale was dipping and Delta was headed for its first quarterly loss.

When McCormick finally asked to relinquish the teaching role, her boss said, "I do not want to lose you." She polished her résumé and resigned a month later.

The Truth About 'Busy' Managers

What could have happened, for example, if instead of avoiding contact with Sam Butler, McCormick had tried to build a great relationship with him from the beginning? Like Laura McCormick, managers tend to ignore or postpone dealing with the organization's most crucial issues. Most managers spend their time making the inevitable happen instead of putting their energy into the exceptional things that create a company's future.

Most managers do not reach for the opportunities for significant achievements. Although their days are filled with a constant stream of meetings, conference calls, e-mails, voice mails, pages, etc., they tend to ignore or postpone dealing with the organization's most crucial issues. Those problems require reflection, systematic planning, creative thinking, and time. Instead, managers let opera-

tional activities requiring more immediate attention squeeze important problems out. Daily routines, superficial behaviors, and poorly prioritized tasks take up their capacities. This all makes unproductive busyness one of the most critical behavioral problems in large companies.

Purposeful Action

How can managers turn busyness, or what the authors call "active nonaction," into purposeful action — consistent, conscious and energetic behavior that shows a bias for action? Purposeful action is action-taking with undivided resolve to produce results. Those who exhibit purposeful action possess energy and focus. The following are four kinds of managerial behavior that are based on the levels of energy and focus that managers display:

- **The Frenzied:** Forty percent of managers are distracted by the many tasks they juggle every day. They are highly energetic but very unfocused and appear to others as frenzied, desperate and hasty.
- **The Procrastinators:** Thirty percent of managers procrastinate on doing the work that really matters to the organization because they lack both energy and focus. They often feel insecure and fear failure.
- **The Detached:** Twenty percent of managers are disengaged from their work altogether. They are focused but lack energy and seem aloof, tense and apathetic.
- **The Purposeful:** Only 10 percent of managers get the job done. They are highly focused and energetic and come across as reflective and calm amid chaos. ■

The authors: Heike Bruch is a professor of leadership at the University of St. Gallen in Switzerland.

The late Sumantra Ghoshal was a professor of strategic and international management at London Business School and co-author of *Managing Across Borders*.

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Distinguishing Purposeful Action From Active Nonaction

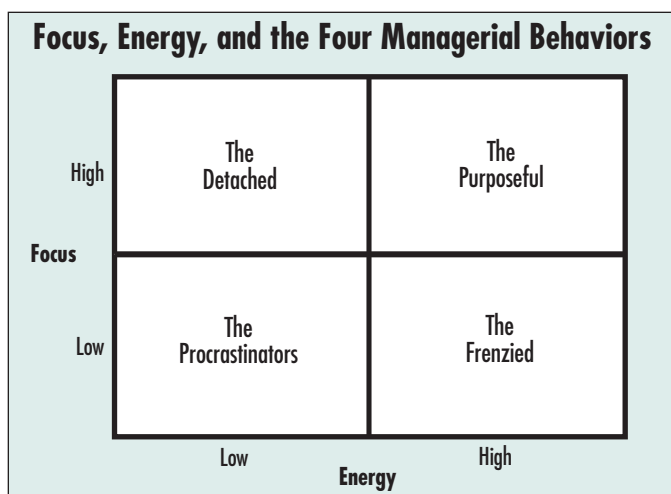
Few managers use time as effectively as they could. Most managers are aware of their unproductive busyness and complain about the problem. Managers who take effective action — those who make the seemingly impossible happen — rely on a combination of two critical aspects of executive work: energy and focus.

We think of energy as exertion or vigor deriving from intense personal involvement, and focus as concentrated attention. By plotting the two dimensions of energy and focus against each other, we discovered a powerful framework for understanding the causes of active nonaction and the sources of purposeful action that correspond with the four types of managerial behavior: the procrastinators, the detached, the frenzied and the purposeful. (See graph below.)

Energy Displayed at Sony

The development team that created the Sony VAIO computer displayed effective energy when it created the first personal computer to let users combine other Sony products and services, such as digital cameras, camcorders, and portable music systems. Responding to CEO Nobuyuki Idei's challenge to create an integrated technological platform to provide home entertainment to the burgeoning generation of kids with digital dreams, Hiroshi Nakagawa and his team put in 100-hour weeks to create the kind of breakthrough product that Idei had hoped for.

One manager, Kazumasa Sato, was so committed to the project that he spent every weekend for three years watching customers in the electronics shops of Tokyo's Akihabara neighborhood. The insights he developed into consumer buying patterns helped Sony create a shop layout that enhanced traffic flows and, ultimately, sales of the PC. In the end, VAIO captured a significant share in Japan's highly competitive PC market.



Energy

Energy is vigor fueled by intense personal commitment and involvement. It is the emotional tenacity that can release immense inner resources when the stakes are high. In business, energy allows quick and effective action in high-pressure situations. The Sony team illustrates these three critical elements of energetic behavior:

1. *Energy requires that the action be subjectively meaningful.* Managers do many things, but they put energy only into those projects that mean something to them personally — as the VAIO project clearly did for the team at Sony.

2. *Energy implies that managers take proactive action and initiative.* Their need to act comes from within — as it did for Kazumasa Sato during all those weekends he spent in electronics shops. Energy leads managers to develop goals and initiate actions, rather than to be constrained by situational requirements.

3. *Energy is what pushes managers to make exceptional efforts when tackling heavy workloads or responding to tight deadlines.* That kind of energy drove the VAIO team members to work 100-hour weeks until they achieved their objective.

Focus

The other critical element of purposeful action — focus — is essentially energy channeled toward a specific outcome. There are three conditions that managers must fulfill to develop focused behavior. They are:

1. *Rather than merely reacting to developments as they arise, or meeting routine requirements, focused managers are goal oriented.*

2. *Focus requires that a manager is intentional, channeling all activities toward achieving the desired goal.*

3. *Focus requires personal discipline.* Focused managers protect themselves against the usual noise of everyday demands that will inevitably tug at their attention and emotions.

High-Energy, High-Focus

About 30 percent of the managers studied were procrastinators who exhibited low energy and low focus. About 20 percent exhibited the low energy and high focus of the detached. Forty percent were the frenzied who showed high energy and low focus, and about 10 percent of the managers were purposeful managers.

Purposeful managers make deliberate choices and embody both focus and energy. They tend to exhibit a strong sense of personal significance, an ability to thrive in chaos, and an ability to step back and reflect. These managers also appear more self-aware than most people. Their clarity about their intentions, combined with discipline, helps them make careful, high-quality decisions about where and how they spend their time. ■

Marshaling Energy and Developing Focus

Managers can harness the necessary energy and focus to succeed and engage fully in their work by developing a combination of strategies that includes defining a goal, mastering techniques for overcoming negativity, and then learning ways to visualize that goal.

Clear, challenging goals give people a sense of meaning and direction, and they help sustain people through the effort needed for achieving them. A manager must also personally believe he or she can achieve the goal.

When defining a worthwhile goal, one should:

- Choose a goal that is well defined and concrete.
- Pick a goal with which one can personally identify.
- Set a goal that feels personally challenging.

Harnessing Energy and Focus at Lufthansa

When Lufthansa underwent its transformation in the early 1990s, every manager confronted painful tasks under difficult circumstances. Most of them experienced a substantially increased workload and long-term strain as well as a very high level of emotional tension. Some managers fell victim to a gradual but inevitable erosion of their emotional energy. Others found ways to re-energize themselves and continue to pursue their projects.

How could these managers sustain their emotional force? They relied on two simple but effective mechanisms. First, they appeared to have a valve for regulating the flow of their emotions. They knew exactly how to process their painful emotions and inner tensions. For some it was an intensive sport that helped them let off emotional steam. Others relied on the help of a personal “crying wall” — their partner, a good friend, or a colleague with whom they could share their fears, frustrations, and inner burdens.

Second, most of these Lufthansa managers had a “personal well” — a distinct source of positive energy — from which they could draw regular replenishment. Personal wells could be anything from a hobby to a special place that had a re-energizing effect, but they all shared certain characteristics: They were associated with positive experiences as well as with a comprehensive — physical, emotional and mental — sense of well-being. Overall, the well served two purposes: It was a reliable source of positive energy, and it was a source of emotional strength, a place to refuel.

The Ability to Visualize and the Courage to Commit

For managers to gain traction and begin making real progress in their work, they must create vivid mental pictures of what they want to achieve, and stake their jobs on a personal commitment to that vision.

Focus begins when you simplify your goal or intention into a vivid mental picture. Visualize what you want to accomplish. This picture will help you sustain purposefulness, intentionality and discipline through the action-taking phase. The clearer and more vivid your picture, the stronger your passion and personal attachment to the goal. Vivid pictures are especially important for staying committed to long-term objectives.

You also need a concrete mental model of ways to enact that intention. If your goal is to roll out a new product, then you should not only imagine what the product and its customers look like, but you should also see yourself performing a set of actions, for example, to bring that product to market. A model of specific actions also prepares you mentally and emotionally to overcome the inevitable speed bumps. You must also develop the courage to commit to your intention.

Managers who want to cultivate a bias for action must take full responsibility for their intentions or goals. Without this kind of personal commitment, it is easy to go astray or blame others for setbacks. To make such a commitment, your intellectual assessment of your job must align with your own intuitive and emotional desires. The resulting intention exists beyond the reach of measurable rationality and constant personal cost-benefit analysis.

Asking questions such as, “Does it feel right?” and “Do I really want it?” forces you to reflect on what the goal means to you personally instead of allowing you to base your choice on potential rewards. Focused managers must go through inner consensus building in which they resolve their own conflicts and doubts. ■

Moving Beyond Motivation To Willpower

On Jan. 11, 49 B.C., Julius Caesar made a crucial decision: to cross the river Rubicon with his army, thereby effectively declaring civil war against Pompey, who held power in Rome. With the words *alea iacta est* (the die is cast), Caesar resolved to return with his legions to the city. Once he crossed the Rubicon and ventured into the Roman heartland, he knew there was no turning back. Either he and his soldiers would take the city, or Pompey would destroy them.

Before he crossed the river, taking Rome had been merely an idea, a wishful desire that he might achieve. After the crossing, it became an unalterable course, with the force of his whole will behind it — which in itself practically ensured success.

To move from “motivation” to “willpower,” a manager must undergo precisely this decisive shift to total

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Moving Beyond Motivation to Willpower

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commitment. An unwavering committed force of will underpins the two hallmarks of a purposeful manager: energy and focus. Willpower separates the executives who remain stuck in unproductive behavior from those who overcome their procrastination, detachment or frenzied busyness to develop a strong bias for action.

Many managers have never witnessed or experienced willpower in action. Only 10 percent of the managers studied have felt fully engaged and driven toward a goal for which success is the only option.

Motivation Versus Willpower

Motivation is often triggered by external stimuli or the expectation of some reward. Both intrinsic motivation (the internally driven desire to do something) and extrinsic motivation (the expectation of some reward) are volatile because they are susceptible to changes from one's environment and one's inner preferences. A more attractive opportunity could come along or obstacles could appear that render a reward worthless.

On the other hand, willpower implies the commitment that comes only from a deep personal attachment to a certain intention. Willpower springs from a conscious choice to make a concrete thing happen. This commitment to achieving something represents the engagement of the human will. Volitional managers are infected with an incurable need to produce certain results. Willpower enables managers to act in a disciplined way even in situations when they have no desire to act, feel unmotivated because they do not expect to enjoy the work, or feel tempted by alternative opportunities.

A move from motivation to willpower manifests itself in three ways. They are:

1. It feels easy to begin taking action toward your objective. You know what you want, and you do not need further information or external stimuli to get started. You do not suffer from the painful hesitation and doubt that motivation often implies.

2. You will find that your perception is biased. All of your attention, energy and preferences will focus on your intention, and you will constantly look for information that will help you realize it. You will block out contradictory information and will not feel tempted by alternative opportunities that present themselves or distracted by surprise disruptions.

3. With willpower, you will respond in new ways to obstacles. Faced with negative feedback, lack of interest from management, resistance from colleagues, or any other impediments to purposeful action-taking, motivation often dissipates. With willpower, barriers will only make you redouble your effort and commitment.

Four Stages of Volitional Action

These are the phases that people pass through on their way to volitional action:

1. *Forming your intention.* This is a period of seeking, exploring and beginning to formulate an objective.

2. *Committing unconditionally to your intention (crossing your Rubicon).* This is the point where superficial attachment to an idea ends. You accept the challenge and essentially declare war. You cannot turn back.

3. *Protecting your intention.* Volitional managers find ways to change and discipline themselves, and *manipulate their environment* to stay the course.

4. *Disengaging your intention.* You must establish “stopping rules” right from the beginning. ■

For Additional Information on how a Swiss entrepreneur crossed his own Rubicon, go to: <http://my.summary.com>

Crossing the Rubicon

How does a person cross his or her own personal Rubicon? How can managers align emotional and rational forces to embolden themselves to act persistently and purposefully — and perform their jobs with a bias for action? First, volitional managers discovered their deepest, innermost feelings about their goals. Second, their thoughts about their goals assumed a new clarity, and they became confident of achieving their objectives. Third, they aligned their emotions and thoughts about their goals.

Aligning Thoughts and Emotions

People can align their thoughts and emotions by relying on one or more of the following three strategies:

Strategy #1: Harnessing the emotions that support your goals. Managers who adopt this strategy deliberately establish positive responses to strong emotions for their intention that keep them on track. Often, they rely on specific visceral images.

Dan Anderson of Conoco used this volitional strategy while battling an oil and gas monopoly in Europe. By visualizing the characters in the film *The Untouchables*, he could see himself as “busting the system” — an image that gave him the force to meet his objective in a very challenging situation.

Strategy #2: Managing the emotions that distract you from your goal. Most managers have mixed feelings about an objective right from the start. To stop derailing yourself, you need active self-management of both negative and positive reactions. Some emotions tempt you toward a goal that conflicts with the intention on which you have already decided.

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Crossing the Rubicon

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Peter Meyer, a young lawyer responsible for the building laws for a major urban entertainment center in Europe, loved his role in the ambitious, extremely challenging project. A recent change in his firm's promotion policy diminished his chances to become a partner, and the center's investor was questioning its potential profitability. When delays and lack of acknowledgment lessened Meyer's passion for his job, he envisioned leaving his firm and starting his own business.

Soon, the constant friction between his job dissatisfaction and his excitement about alternatives began to wear him down. He knew he had to manage his emotional distractions to stay on track. As he weighed his options, he realized that, in a private practice, he would never work on what he loved — big challenging projects like the entertainment center. He realized how passionate he felt toward his project. He saw himself as a top lawyer in a powerful firm, not a soloist who accepted mundane jobs to survive. Gradually, opening his own office lost its appeal. Because of his exceptional effort and success, his firm made an exception to its policy and made Meyer a partner eight months later.

Strategy #3: Achieving the state of flow. Volitional managers search for solutions in which their thoughts and emotions about their goals naturally overlap, and, if necessary, they modify their goals to harmonize with their emotions. Achieving such a state of flow requires greater courage and effort during the process of decision making. In the long term, you will have more emotional energy for meeting your objectives in the flow state.

To act with willpower, then, you must expand and reinforce your flow area in many ways. You must first become aware of your emotions and your learned responses to them, and learn why you might be resisting your established intention. By taking time to reflect, assessing your feelings, and applying visualization tools, you can reorient your undertakings, redefine your

goals, or strike out on a new path. By addressing the emotional issues that might hinder you later, you will enter fully into a state of flow.

The Limits to Self-Discipline

With Strategy #1 and Strategy #2, you build self-discipline and strength, so the rationality of your goal overrides the ups and downs of powerful emotions. To muster the energy for what does not initially excite them, successful managers generate positive energy while dealing actively with their negative responses to strong emotions.

Sometimes these strategies for harnessing willpower can be limiting — especially when they involve leveraging emotions to create energy for action. Overly disciplined managers can become easily overwhelmed and fraught with inner turmoil. By denying their needs, they can feel increasingly irritated and alienated. Therefore, managers should not overuse the first two strategies. ■

Overcoming the Three Traps Of Nonaction

There are three common traps of nonaction that keep managers from leaping with a bias for action. They are:

- **Overwhelming demands.** Some day-to-day jobs are so demanding that they leave little time for reflection on what really matters.

Rather than simply responding to any request that gets thrown at them, purposeful action-takers manage their demands by developing an explicit personal agenda, practicing slow management, structuring contact time, and shaping demands and managing expectations.

- **Unbearable constraints.** Many managers feel discouraged by corporate constraints to pursue goals they consider significant. Rarely are these constraints as absolute as managers make them out to be.

To remove themselves from this trap, purposeful action-takers adopt strategies that include: mapping relevant constraints, accepting trade-offs, selectively breaking rules, and tolerating conflicts and ambiguity.

- **Unexplored choices.** Focused on job demands and constraints, most managers develop tunnel vision and concentrate on immediate needs and requirements, and are unable to exploit their freedom to make choices about what they would do and how they would do it.

Purposeful action-takers, in contrast, avoid this trap by being aware of their choices; by expanding their opportunities and their freedom to take action on the choices they have; by developing personal competencies that both create choice and enhance their ability to make things happen; and by learning to enjoy both the freedom and the responsibility that choice brings with it. ■

Managing Your Emotions

One way to manage the emotions that distract you from your goals is to transform negativity into positive energy. To do this, you can do the following:

- ✓ Use positive mental pictures.
- ✓ Process negative thoughts with trusted friends and colleagues.
- ✓ Inject humor around your fears.
- ✓ Use other people's nay-saying to mobilize your pride and spur you toward your goals.
- ✓ Distance yourself from negatively charged situations to decrease their power.

PART TWO: CULTIVATING A COMPANY OF ACTION-TAKERS

Developing Purposeful Managers: The Organization’s Responsibility

How can leaders instill willpower in others and ultimately create organizations that consistently demonstrate a bias for action? Once they have transformed themselves into purposeful doers, they must craft a context within the organization itself that supports purposeful action-taking. Leaders can do this by undertaking two main tasks: overcoming the challenges inherent in building an organization of managers with a bias for action, and weaving the values of volition and personal responsibility into the cultural fabric of the company.

Building an Organization of Purposeful Managers

People engage their willpower only when they think they have personal control over their situations. To benefit from volitional action that aligns with corporate goals, leaders must ensure that people at every level internalize the overall purpose of the company. That means crafting a shared vision and a set of common values that everyone authentically subscribes to as a personal source of identity and meaning. To build a context for volitional action, purposeful leaders must develop in their people a shared commitment to an overall direction as well as to a set of common values and mutually agreed-upon norms of behavior.

Creating the Space for Volitional Action

BP’s corporate CEO John Browne believes that people work better in smaller units because the closer they can identify with objectives and targets, the better things happen. Therefore, the best way to achieve excellent overall performance is to divide up the big long-term targets of the company into small units that can take full ownership of those targets.

When Browne restructured the company into 150 business units, he yielded to the unit managers a great deal of freedom to run their operations autonomously. By creating space for volitional action, BP created a performance-contracting process designed to provide a clear line of sight between the performance of individual business unit leaders and the corporate-level business goals. The contract, defined annually and reviewed quarterly, specifies financial goals and high-level nonfinancial target. Targets are taken very seriously; failure to meet them usually means a transfer for the manager.

Weaving Purposeful Management Into the Organizational Culture

To unleash people’s willpower, leaders must not only

build an organization that supports the exercise of freedom and choice, but they must also embed volitional behavior as a central element of the company’s cultural core. A company’s culture (its shared values, informal norms, habits and traditions), not its structure (its explicit, tangible, formal regulations, rules and strategy), stimulates and sustains a manager’s courage to exercise choice and ability to enjoy freedom.

At GE, Jack Welch spent two decades relentlessly breaking up corporate bureaucracy and insisting on decentralized initiative to release the entrepreneurial spirit of his managers. ■

Unleashing Organizational Energy for Collective Action

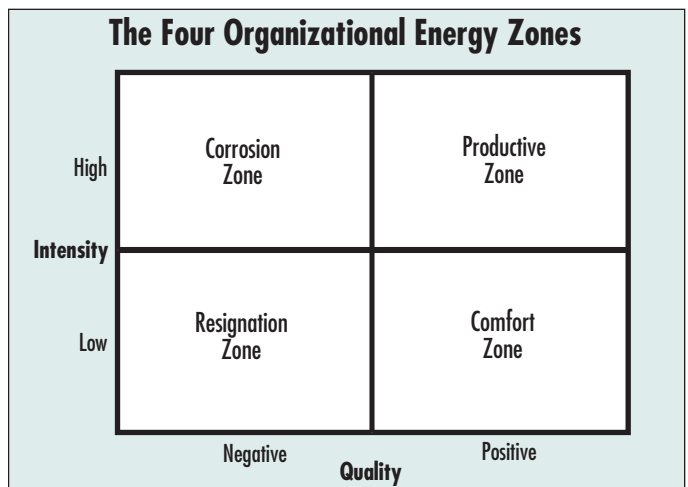
Marshalling organizational will to support the productive energy and focus not only of individual managers, but also of the company itself, is the final aspect of building a bias for action. In companies that have successfully focused their organizational energy, the leaders unleashed the energy inherent in their organizations, and created a strong collective force that fueled purposeful action-taking and led to extraordinary results.

These leaders brought their organizations around specific strategic initiatives by first mobilizing the organization’s energy, and then focusing it. They succeeded because they nurtured their organization’s energy in a way that their people could sustain it steadily over time.

The Four Organizational Energy Zones

The typical energy states of organizations can be framed in terms of two characteristics: intensity and quality of energy. (See graph below.) The quality of organizational energy distinguishes between positive energy (e.g., enthusiasm, joy, satisfaction) and negative

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Unleashing Organizational Energy For Collective Action

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energy (e.g., fear, frustration, sorrow). Intensity refers to the strength of organizational energy as seen in the level of activity, the amount of interaction, and the extent of alertness and emotional excitement. The intersection of intensity and quality determines an organization's energy state, which usually falls into one of four categories: the comfort zone, the resignation zone, the corrosion zone, and the productive zone.

While different departments in the same organization can sometimes function in different zones, most organizations function overall in one predominant energy zone at any given point. The goal for any company is to find itself in the productive zone.

Moving an Organization Into the Productive Zone

Companies that have achieved truly radical change had leaders who adopted one of three approaches for focusing the energy of their organizations and moving them into the productive zone. These strategies are:

- **The Slaying-the-Dragon Strategy.** Companies using this strategy drive their people out of the comfort zone by focusing their emotion, attention and action on a crisis or a threat to overcome. Leaders must clearly define and describe the “dragon” by identifying a distinct and tangible threat (e.g., bankruptcy, a particularly dangerous competitor, or a disruptive technology).

- **The Winning-the-Princess Strategy.** These companies mobilize their organizations into the productive zone by building people's enthusiasm for realizing a specific, motivating dream. This strategy relies on leaders creating energy from a belief in a vision for the future, for example, or in the potential of a new product, a new market, or a new acquisition.

Other companies adopt a third strategy of combining the first two, and although this is done less frequently, the results often prove stellar. Companies without either a dragon to kill or a princess to win inevitably fall into one of the energy traps: They gradually decline to mediocrity and eventually face a full-blown crisis. ■

Freeing Your People to Act: A Mandate for Leaders

There are six strategies that leaders can use to help their people engage their willpower toward a bias for action. These strategies are:

- **Strategy #1: Help managers visualize their intention.** To build commitment, managers must have a clear and vivid picture of what they wish to achieve. Purposeful leaders stimulate their people to transform

How Philips Slew the Dragon

In July 1990, Dutch electronics giant Philips shocked the financial world by announcing a loss of more than \$1 billion, driven primarily by the company's semiconductor division. At the heart of the radical turnaround the division would achieve lies a classic example of the slaying the dragon strategy adopted by Heinz Hagmeister, the division's new CEO.

Jan Timmer, Philips's new corporate CEO, initiated one aspect of this strategy — activating strong, vivid emotions. In one meeting, he shocked all the members of the senior leadership team by presenting them with a dummy newspaper report postdated by seven months with the headline “Philips declares bankruptcy.” Participants in that meeting initially regarded the report in disbelief, but the actual financial figures Timmer presented soon revealed that bankruptcy was indeed unavoidable unless they cut costs immediately.

their ideas into concrete intentions.

- **Strategy #2: Prepare managers for obstacles.** Instead of obscuring obstacles and downplaying risks, as a purposeful leader you must ensure that managers fully understand the potential costs and benefits of an engagement before they commit to it.

- **Strategy #3: Encourage managers to confront their ambivalence.** True commitment requires that managers confront their emotions and reflect on whether they can personally stand with their head and heart behind an intention.

A Climate of Choice

- **Strategy #4: Develop a climate of choice.** To create managers who act from personal willpower, you must offer them choices, make them perceive and develop the courage to use these choices — and then step back. Find new ways to support your managers' actions while not defining and determining what they do.

- **Strategy #5: Build a self-regulating system.** Have your managers define, right from the start, their stopping rules: certain critical events or intermediate results that, should they occur, trigger the project's termination.

- **Strategy #6: Create a desire for the sea.** The French World War II pilot and philosopher Antoine de Saint-Exupéry wrote: “If you want to build a ship, don't drum up your men to go to the forest to gather wood, saw it, and nail the planks together. Instead, teach them the desire for the sea.”

To be creative and to engage willpower, managers must not only have the freedom to act but also *feel* that they have it. Leaders must provide managers that space and freedom in which to act, as well as convince their managers to *use* that freedom. ■