

Chapter 8

Reactive Leadership

An Insufficient Triumph of Development

The evolution of *Egocentric Mind* into *Reactive Mind* is a triumph of development. As we enter adulthood, we leave behind the over-independence of adolescence and adopt the messages from our surrounding environment about how we have to be in order to get along in the adult world. This allows us to successfully launch our careers, get married, create families, and take on roles in the community. Adopting the messages, mental models, values, morals, and roles prescribed by the surround is the very triumph of development that as parents we are championing. It also forms the structural limits of this IOS.

Reactive Mind is well suited for growing into adult life, but as life gets more complex—with the competing demands of expanding leadership roles, growing families, and mounting financial commitments—Reactive Structure likely meets its limits. All structures have limits and when we meet them we face adaptive challenges. Furthermore, as organizations today change to be more agile, innovative, empowering, engaging, flexible, creative, lean, and fast to market, the Reactive Mind faces additional adaptive challenges. Reactive Mind is not structured for leading transformative change. It was formed to merge with the prevailing culture. It is not yet mature enough to individuate from the prevailing culture and change it. Reactive Leadership is ill-equipped to lead the transformation into these new high-performing cultures and structures. Creative Mind or higher is required, especially by those leading the change.

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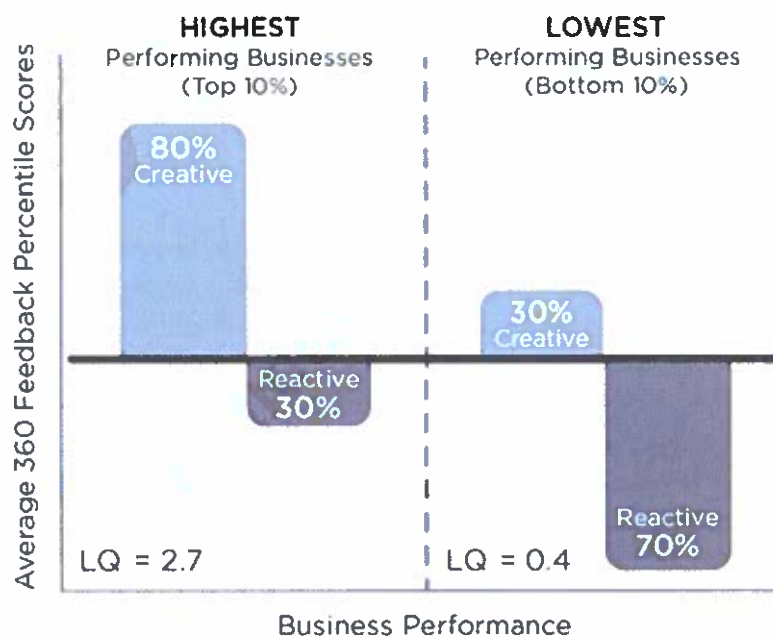
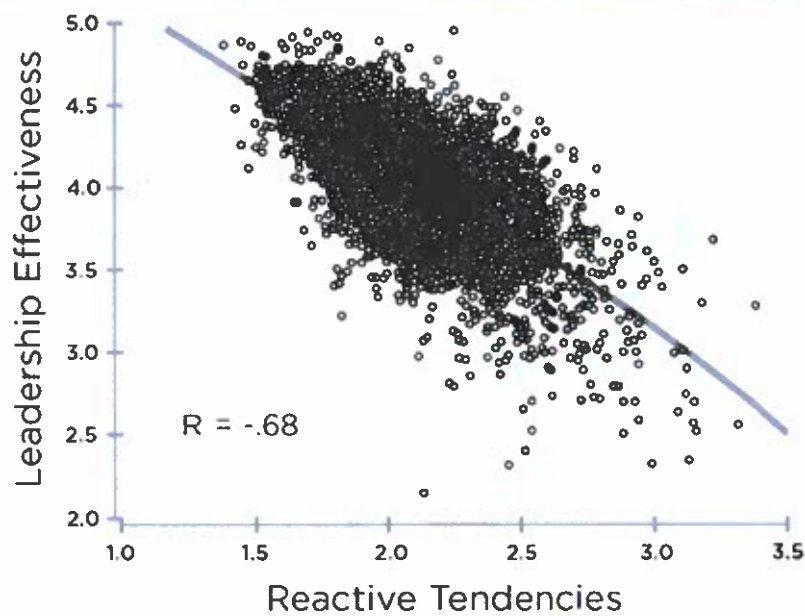


FIGURE 8.1 Reactive Leadership, Leadership Effectiveness, and Business Performance

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

We have already shown that Reactive Mind is inversely correlated to Leadership Effectiveness ($-.68$) and Business Performance ($-.31$). Reactive Leadership typically has a LQ of less than one, a competitive disadvantage. In underperforming businesses (bottom 10%), Reactive Leadership scores average at the 70th percentile (see Figure 8.1).

Our research provides solid evidence that Reactive Leadership lacks the effectiveness and complexity to orchestrate the kind of business transformations seen in the last chapter. To evolve beyond Reactive Leadership, we must first see it and know it deeply. We must see how it lives in us. Thus, in this chapter, we will explore Reactive Leadership, its strengths, the patterns of performance that it is designed to produce, and how it limits the high-performance required of leaders today.

LEAVE YOUR EGO AT THE DOOR

At work we often hear, "Leave your ego at the door." What we mean is this: *Leave the unconstructive parts of yourself out of the meeting—only bring the best parts.* Of course, this is impossible. We wear our ego and live through it as our IOS. Vertical development makes more of our subconscious ego conscious. We can then see it, manage it, and even transform it into higher level leadership. If development does not proceed, we are subject to the dictates of the ego. It has us—we do not have it—and it can take over on autopilot. In Reactive mode, we are subject to a host of invisible internal assumptions put in place a long time ago. If we do not see them, we cannot manage them or control them in the pressures of the moment, perhaps to the detriment of our best intentions.

I DARE YOU TO TELL ME THE TRUTH

Years ago, we were asked by the CEO, let's call him Duke, of a health care system to conduct a team building session with his senior team. Duke is one of the best, most visionary, and purpose-driven CEOs we had ever worked with. He was leading a progressive transformation effort, but it was bogged down with what he perceived as a lack of support by his top team.

We interviewed every member of the senior team and, after assessing the team dynamics, we called Duke to arrange a debrief. What he did next was a clue to how his ego/character/identity was organized: he chartered a plane and arrived at Bob's house the next morning. In that meeting, we laid out all that we had learned, including how he was contributing to the group's impasse. He took it well and eagerly agreed to go forward with the teambuilding.

A few weeks later, we arrived the evening before our three-day off-site. Duke picked us up at the airport. His van was packed full of everything we would need for our session. We were driving to his 13-bedroom *cottage* on the lake. "Wow," we thought. "This guy plays big. First, he charters a plane to meet us, and now we are headed to his 13-bedroom *cottage*."

Duke talked excitedly for the entire two-hour drive. Clearly he was genuinely committed to making this off-site successful. He knew that there would be some difficult conversations and that he had a part in what needed to change. He volunteered to go first to get feedback on his leadership style. Given his attitude, we were optimistic.

When we arrived at Duke's cottage, Duke asked us to help him unpack the van. As we were doing so, Duke asked Bob to load the refrigerator with all the food he had brought for the event. Bob picked up a big tub of tuna salad and, as he put it into the refrigerator, Duke said while standing over his shoulder, "Upper right shelf." Then Bob grabbed a jar of pickles and Duke said, "Lower left." Duke directed where everything went in the refrigerator. We wondered if this might have anything to do with what Duke's senior team might want to say to Duke.

The meeting started well, and then it came time for the group to get into the issues. True to his word, Duke volunteered to go first in receiving feedback. The group was slow to respond, reluctant to say anything. Then one brave manager cautiously spoke up. "Well, perhaps there is one thing. Sometimes you tend to control things a bit too tightly."

Duke's body posture changed visibly. He crossed his arms, frowned, and said sternly, "Just give me one example." His tone seemed to say, "I dare you." No one said a word.

We let the silence linger. The fear in the room was palpable. After a long minute of silence, Bob said, "I have an example." He told the story of Duke directing how the refrigerator was packed.

Duke continued to frown with his arms crossed. As the story finished, Duke relaxed and said, "I did do that, didn't I? Wow! Does anyone else have an example like that?"

The ice broken, Duke now seemed genuinely open to more feedback. The group had a lot to say about how he controlled everything, how he made major decisions within their jurisdiction, and how he would come into their meetings, uninvited, and take over. The group felt that Duke did not trust them to lead their areas of responsibility, even as they were leading a change effort designed to empower decision-making at lower levels.

Duke's initial Reactive behavior almost derailed the meeting. In that moment, his Reactive ego had him. He did not have it. Nor was he aware that this behavior prevented him from getting the feedback he needed. He was largely unaware of how much he needed to be *The Guy*—bigger than life, in charge, in control, and the one upon whom all success depended. This ego/identity need was controlling everything and jeopardizing the change effort.

To his great credit, after the ice was broken, Duke had enough maturity to make a shift and open up the meeting for a candid discussion. When it came time for Duke to provide feedback to the team, he had a lot to say about their caution and how they kept playing small. He talked about how they punted important decisions to him, about how they did not discuss the difficult issues in meetings, and how they played a Reactive "play-not-to-lose" game. He said that because they did not step up to the tough issues, he felt the need to take over.

Each member of the group was playing reactively while sponsoring a transformation that required that they play a different game—one that they creatively lead. Their unconscious reactivity was colluding to keep all of them stuck in a Reactive mode. Each was blaming the other, assuming that others were not committed to the vision that they collectively espoused. No one had the insight or courage to voice what was really happening. Had this dynamic gone unchecked, the change effort they cared deeply about would have derailed.

This is an example of how the inner game (ego, identity, IOS, and character), functioning at the Reactive level, runs the show. In this example, each member of the Senior Team was caught in the Reactive ego dance that is the norm. This dance scuttles our best intentions to operate

more effectively, innovatively, and agilely. Collective effectiveness and intelligence, required to pull off a transformation, are diffused in this dance. The Reactive operating system reaches a limit in the culture it can create and support. Unless it is seen and transformed, the Creative-level change in the system will fail. Each operating system is based and designed on different structural principles, and, since design determines performance, each Stage of Leadership gets predictable patterns of performance.

TWO PRIMARY MOVEMENTS

Two primary movements happen in the structure of the self as it transforms from a Reactive to a Creative Mind (see Figure 8.2). Understanding these two movements explains how Reactive leadership is organized and how it can be reorganized and transformed into Creative leadership.

The first movement has to do with a shift in how we optimize the tension between purpose and safety (see Figure 8.3). In the second parallel movement, identity shifts and reorganizes from being configured from the outside-in to the inside-out. Let's explore these two shifts one at a time.

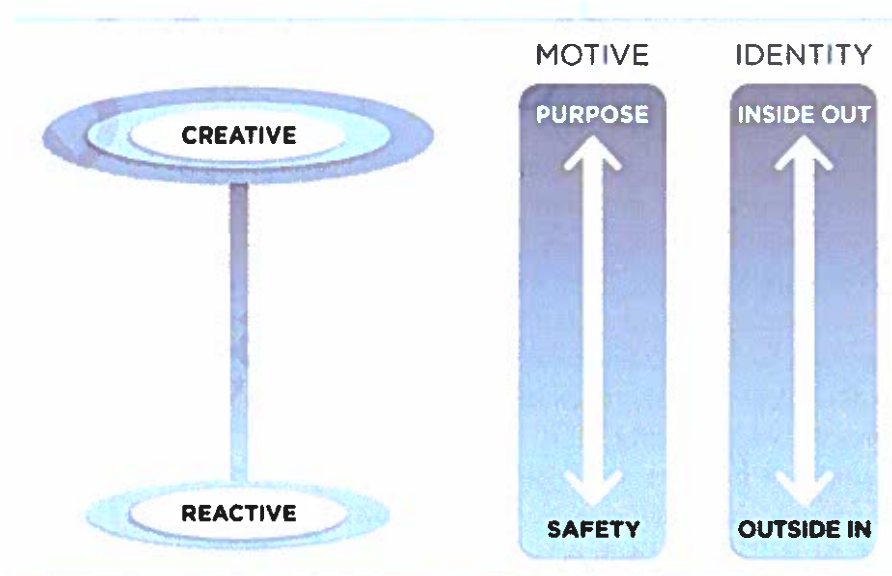


FIGURE 8.2 Two primary movements

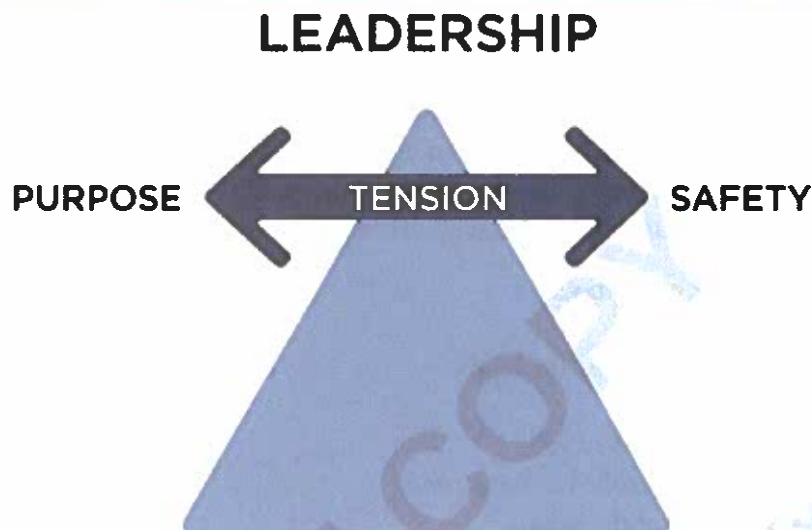


FIGURE 8.3 The tension between purpose and safety

First Movement: Purpose and Safety, Love and Fear

The primary tension in life and leadership is the tension between purpose and safety, between the part of us that wants to be about something great, make a difference, and merits our deepest commitment and another part of us that simply is not up for that much risk.

The tension between purpose and safety is not bad. It is not a problem, not something to fix. As a dilemma, a polarity, it cannot be solved, only resolved. It cannot be solved because we need to achieve both ends of the polarity. Both essential ends of this tension–resolution structure seek to be fulfilled, and they compete for our attention. This tension is inherent in all of us, all the time, in every meeting. It was evident in Duke's meeting. How we habitually resolve this tension defines which operating system we run—Creative or Reactive.

In the face of this tension, we need to make a choice that defines our lives and our leadership. In his poem, *Out on the Ocean*, David Whyte gets to the heart of this choice poignantly (Whyte, 1989). There is a story behind the poem. David was kayaking five miles out on the ocean one day. He got caught in a violent storm, and he spent a few hours fighting for his life. Exhausted, he finally reached the shore. As he recovered, he

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realized that something powerful had happened within him. He wrote this poem to discover what was awakened.

The first part of the poem is about the huge struggle amid immense turbulence. This image alone is a wonderful metaphor for the volatility and complexity through which leaders are often challenged to navigate. It is also descriptive of the seeming life-and-death struggle that comes with transformation. David ends the poem with this stanza:

with five miles to go
of open ocean
the eyes pierce the horizon

the kayak pulls round
like a pony held by unseen reins
shying out of the ocean

and the spark behind fear
recognized as life
leaps into flame

*
always this energy smolders inside
when it remains unlit
the body fills with dense smoke.¹

In leadership, there are such moments when everything is at stake, where the kayak of the soul “pulls round” and the eyes of resolve pierce the horizon. The choice to live is made, always in the face of fear. With poetic precision, David nails the core tension between purpose and safety—the spark and the fear reside together. As we orient on what we most want, we face what we most fear. Always this energy smolders inside. Always the spark of our purpose and passion awaits our commitment. Always fear lurks inside cautioning us not to move toward the spark. It is too risky. However, if the spark remains unlit, if we do not move toward the spark, fan it, feed it kindling, and cultivate it, the body fills with dense smoke. When we do not live at the edge of our

¹Printed with permission from Many Rivers Press, www.davidwhyte.com. David Whyte, “Out on the Ocean”, *Songs for Coming Home*, 1989. © Many Rivers Press, Langley, WA USA.

creativity and passion, we become toxic to ourselves and those around us. We either move through the fear toward our passion, or we slowly and inexorably die.

Our experience of life often mirrors David's—the tension between spark and fear, purpose and safety, is always inside. Each time we step up in our life or leadership to a new aspiration or vision, we meet fear at the door. Our biggest wants are met with our biggest fears. This is the deal.

Each of us is unique. With that uniqueness comes a passion, curiosity, or contribution that only we can make. Each of us wants to be a part of something great. We each want to make a contribution, and we have a vision, if we discern and distill it, of what that would look like if realized. *Leadership is the act of creating outcomes that matter most.* If we had our druthers we would orient our lives and our leadership on that which seems to want to come through us. We would birth that which most matters into the world. We work, in part, to fulfill these aspirations.

We all long for noble purpose, and we also need to pay the mortgage. We work to provide a safe and stable life for ourselves and our families. We want to establish a financial safety net for the future of those we care about. This is an important part of why we work. If we do not carefully tend to this part of life, we put ourselves, our loved ones, and our higher aspirations at risk.

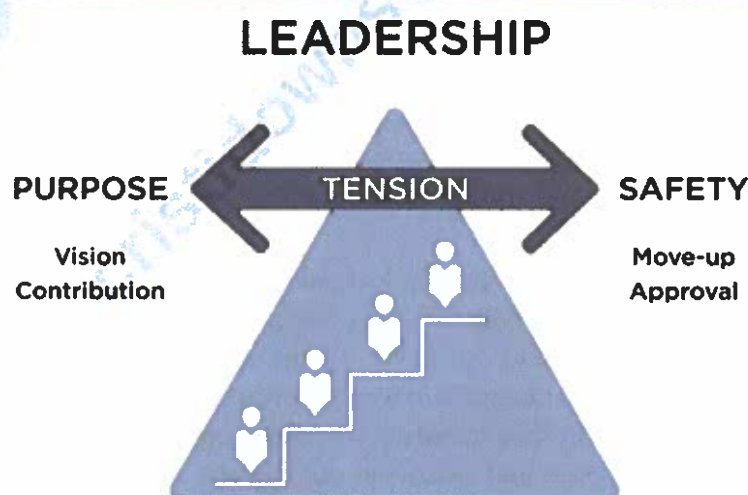


FIGURE 8.4 The tension between purpose and safety at work

Those of us who work in organizations usually want to move up. Perhaps we buy the myth that we are better off at a higher level, that self-esteem increases with altitude in the pyramid. Perhaps we believe we are more secure the higher we rise. We hold this notion despite the experience that caution increases the higher we go. Often we hear, "I no longer do the things, take the risks, that got me here." The higher we rise in organizations, the higher the stakes, the bigger the stakeholders, and the greater the fall. Still, moving up expands our impact, pays more, and makes it easier to finance and secure the future we want.

If we want to move up and we want to do that safely, we need to win and maintain the approval of those around us, especially those above us. When we look up, we are looking at those who control our future advancement. We tend to vest them with the keys to our future. To fall from grace, to lose favor with bosses, higher-ups, and with key stakeholders, is bad for the career. So we are in a dilemma: do we advocate for what we want and what we think is in the best interest of the business, or do we keep our heads low and live to fight another day?

This tension occurs in every meeting: How much do I say? How controversial am I willing to be? What will they think if I challenge the prevailing direction of my peers or those above me? How much do I care about this issue? Does it matter enough for me to take the risk of pursuing it? These questions come up often, and they beg for resolution (see Figure 8.4).

Most of us are looking for a safe path through, a safe place to be great. There isn't one. *There is no safe way to be great, and, there is no great way to be safe.* The safe paths have all been taken. The paths left to us require risk. Leadership is inherently risky. We either accept this and move to the edge, or we pull back in caution as the body fills with smoke.

In his book, *Play to Win*, Larry Wilson frames the choice as *Playing to Win or Playing Not to Lose* (Wilson, 1998). We frame it as *Playing on Purpose or Playing Not to Lose*.

From a Nazi prison camp, Dietrich Bonhoeffer learned and later wrote, "There is no way to peace along the way of safety. For peace must be dared, it is itself the great venture and can never be safe. Peace is the opposite of security. To demand guarantees is to want to protect oneself" (Bonhoeffer, 1998). If we orient our lives on safety, we remain constantly insecure. If we choose the opposite and orient on our highest aspirations, we live the futures we were born to create, and that brings its own security. It is counterintuitive. Caution is not the safe path. In leadership

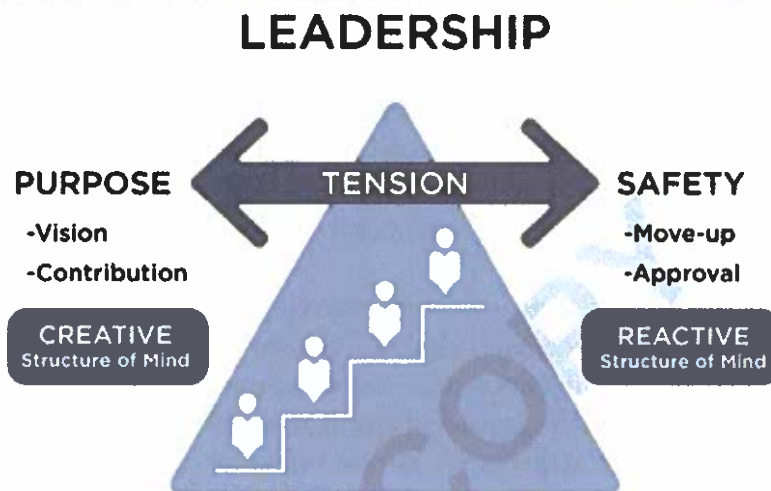


FIGURE 8.5 Purpose or safety, Creative or Reactive

positions, more people get fired for their caution than for their courage. If we play for purpose, we accept the inherent risk of leading, of living full-out, and that brings with it an inherent sense of security. This security is not rooted in powers outside ourselves, upon which our future seems to depend. It is rooted in our capacity to create the future to which we aspire. To lead is to live at the edge. There is no safe path. That's the deal.

How we resolve this choice determines from which operating system we live. If we orient primarily on safety, we live and lead reactively. If we orient on the pull of purpose and vision and accept the inherent risks, we evolve Creative Mind and leadership (see Figure 8.5).

The core of the Reactive operating system is a play-not-to-lose game. We react, reflexively, toward safety without even realizing it. Thus, the Reactive operating system is based on fear—designed to react to fear and reduce it. That is why it is called Reactive.

The core of the Creative operating system is a play-on-purpose game based on love. In this game, we orient on *what we love enough to risk for*. It is designed to create the future to which we aspire. That is why it is called Creative.

Second Movement: From Outside-In to Inside-Out

The second movement is a shift from an ego/identity structure configured from the outside-in to one that is lived from the inside-out. Kegan

calls this shift the shift from the *Socialized Self* to the *Self-Authoring Self* (Kegan and Lahey, 2009). The Reactive Self is oriented on living up to, or living out of, all the messages it has adopted from its environment. The Socialized Self is defined by what others have told it, that it must be in order to be worthy, good, and successful. Kegan says that, at this stage of development, the self does not have a self. Key people, institutions, cultural values, and important affiliations hold and define the self.

The Self-Authoring or Creative stage is the first wherein the self discerns its own internalized definition and identity. Stephen R. Covey describes the shift from Reactive Mind to Creative Mind as a transformation from the *Dependent Ego* to the *Independent Ego* (Covey, 1989). By Dependent, he means that the self depends on outside validation for its sense of worth, esteem, security, and well-being. The Independent Ego is self-validating and can act independently or autonomously. It can march to the beat of a different drummer, whether or not others approve. Larry Wilson describes this same shift as changing from a play-not-to-lose to a play-to-win game—a shift from a life lived out of the fear of not meeting expectations to a life lived on purpose. Psychologists identify this shift as moving from an external to an internal locus of control.

Bob: Early in my career, I was living and working within a Reactive operating system, before I knew there was such a thing, and with no awareness of higher-order systems. Slowly, I began to see the outside-in, Reactive Mind through which I was living and leading. I was then employed as the Director of Organization and Leadership Development in a large healthcare system. I reported directly to the Senior Team, and I was frustrated with their leadership. One of our external consultants wrote me and said, “I wish they would get excited about anything; even painting the flag pole would give us something to focus on.” I was so frustrated that I had a bottle of Maalox (antacid) on my desk. This was my level of self-awareness at the time.

What does a young, Reactive consultant do when he is frustrated with his leaders? He conducts a culture survey. So I did, to get the ammunition (data) necessary to prove to them how screwed up they were and then fix them. This is how I thought. Is it any wonder that I was ineffective in working with senior leaders?

When I received the results from the culture survey (on big green and white computer print-out paper) from the university, I walked eagerly

into my office to see what the numbers indicated. I looked at the top sheet, which contained the organizational results, and sure enough, it showed *they were screwed up*. I was thrilled. I had the ammo I needed!

Then, when I glanced at data for my organization, the Leadership Development Department, I got the shock of my young career. *We were just like them!* The area that I managed had results at the 50th percentile of the organizational norm base. We, the group that was supposed to stand for an optimal culture, were a microcosm of the organization with which I was so frustrated.

This hit me hard. It was a serious blow to my leadership, and I took it seriously. I tried working on it with my staff without success. So I called in a consultant to work with me. She interviewed my team, sat me down at breakfast the morning before the start of a three-day team-building session, and immediately said, "I have interviewed your entire team and, well, frankly, you are the problem."

I said, "What do you mean, *I am the problem?*"

She said, "You do not offer any leadership."

I said, "Oh, I know about that. What else did you find out?"

She responded, "What do you mean you know about that?"

My response was vintage Reactive Mind. I said: "How do you expect me to lead when I have no leadership? It is not my job to have a vision. I am a consultant to them. It is their job to have a vision, and since they do not have one, there is nothing for me to do. My hands are tied."

Initially she did not know how to respond, but then she asked me a stunning question, the central organizing question of the Creative Mind: "What would you do if you could?"

Then, all the stuff I wanted to do in the organization, in my career, and in my life poured out of me.

She absorbed all that, smiled, and simply responded, "Let's have a meeting."

That three-day off-site began a learning process that culminated a few months later in a revelation. I was sitting at home alone, reading a book, *A Guide to Rational Living*, by Albert Ellis, father of Rational Emotive Cognitive Therapy, a branch of psychology that has mapped out the core organizing assumptions of Reactive Mind (Ellis, 1975). As I read, I suddenly realized, "*They* are not the problem. *I* am the problem. I want to lead, I want to be an agent of change, and I want everyone to like me.

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That will not happen. That's a catch-22. How can I lead if I need everyone to be pleased with me all the time, especially the leaders above me in whom I vest the keys to my future?"

I realized that I believed that my worth and security were in their hands. I maintained my sense of personal worth, esteem, and security by always being liked and admired. I so needed their approval that I was afraid to lead. My Reactive strategy was to play it safe by always being agreeable, deferential, and non-controversial. One cannot lead from this risk-averse stance.

I had just discovered an assumption at the core of my Reactive operating system: *The approval of others funds my sense of self-worth and security.* I needed others to like and admire me, so much so that I was not leading.

This need for outside validation is why Covey calls this Stage of Development *Dependent* (Covey, 1989). At this stage, we are defined externally and dependent on external validation for our sense of self-worth and security. This puts us in the play-not-to-lose game in which we try to advance our objectives by trying not to lose.

My play-not-to-lose game was my unwillingness to risk the disapproval of those around me and above me. I was reflexively reacting to stay safe by remaining uncontroversial. I had an unconscious habit of staying off the radar screen, thinking I was leading. I was playing not to lose in search of a risk-free path, governed by the assumption that worth and security equal approval.

Seeing a belief like this can be transformative. If we continue to track the workings of that belief in our life and leadership and continue to challenge its validity by experimenting with new assumptions while focusing on creating what we want, this belief eventually gives way to Creative thinking. As the Creative Mind boots up, new possibilities emerge.

This is what happened for me. When I saw how much of my behavior was governed by this belief, I could free myself from it. As I began to notice, in real time, when this belief was cautioning me to play it safe, I became free to make other choices. I kept working at the same organization with the same key stakeholders, and together we achieved transformational results.

Having observed this core operating belief over time, I now know it is false. My essential worth is not measurable, it is immeasurable. It is not defined by how you see me and whether or not you like, approve, love,

or admire me. My future is not in your hands. Over the years, many leaders and clients had not supported my way of thinking or the direction in which I was leading, yet my life and career had progressed, quite successfully.

At this time, the core of my Reactive operating system went from subject to object. I was no longer blind to it. I no longer lived through it unseen. It no longer had me or defined me. I was not subject to it. I now had it as an object of my reflection. Now, when the voice of fear emerged in me, cautioning me to lie low and keep my head down, I recognized it as the voice of this old, false belief. It was not the truth, just the voice of a belief I had adopted. I could now put that voice in perspective and make my own choices.

As this happened, a different voice emerged, the voice that always knows the answer to the question, "What would you do if you could?" This voice leads the show in the Creative Mind. This is why Kegan calls this stage *Self-Authoring* (Kegan and Lahey, 2009) and Covey calls it *Independent* (Covey, 1989). I was no longer being authored by the dictates of this old belief. I was becoming independent of past conditioning to author my own life and lead from the emerging vision. Creative Mind is led by vision, by what matters most. I started managing my fear of disapproval and began to lead. My fear and preoccupation with safety receded. I still needed to create a safe and secure future, but that was now in my hands and was not foremost. The spark of my deep longings to live out the purpose and vision I cared about became foremost. The externally conditioned play-not-to-lose game receded, and the internalized vision began to lead. My operating system shifted from outside-in to inside-out, from Reactive to Creative Mind.

STRUCTURE OF REACTIVE MIND

This story illustrates another aspect of Reactive self-leadership—I did not see myself as part of the problem. *They* were the problem. The problem was outside me, and it was my job to fix it. Reactive Mind is outside-in because the forces that defined me and shaped me were outside me (external to me). I am not part of the problem (external). They are the problem (external). They hold the keys to my future (external). They have defined, over a lifetime, how I must be seen in order to be okay (external). All of this is external to me.



FIGURE 8.6 Reactive Structure

The Reactive Structure is problem-focused, driven by a fear that has its roots in unseen, un-reflected, and externally organized beliefs and assumptions. This way of relating the self to the world forms the core design of the Reactive operating system, displayed in Figure 8.6.

Reactive Mind is focused on problems, not vision. It is focused on removing, fixing, or reducing problems and threats. It is run by fear, motivated to reduce the internal conflict generated by the problem. Behavior is a reaction to this internal conflict, and the focus of behavior is to get rid of the problem. As you examine my story, you see all of these elements.

Another story further elucidates this structure:

Bob: Years ago, I presented the Reactive Mind diagram at an Insurance Sales College started by my early mentor, John Savage, one of the most successful life insurance salesmen in the world. He made the Million Dollar Roundtable on the first business day of every year. He was an extraordinary human being. After my presentation, a man came up to me and said in an animated voice, "You were talking about my life! We need to talk."

Over lunch he launched into a conversation by saying, "I have a problem."

"What is your problem?" I asked.

He said, "I am not learning anything here."

I was surprised by this, and so I asked, "What do you mean?"

He said, "I know how to sell life insurance and I am good at it, so I am not learning anything here."

I asked, "So, other than spending a week and some money, what is the problem?"

He said, "My sales results do not show it."

I said, "Tell me about your results."

He said, "When I look at my results, I get disgusted with myself. I also fear that I may not be able to make ends meet. So I swing into gear. I do all the things that John is telling us, and I am good at it. About nine months later, my results are much better—cash flow is up, and I am making a good income."

"So what is the problem?" I asked.

He responded, "I look at my results nine months after that, and they are way off. I get disgusted with myself and swing into gear all over again. And this has been my career. It has not gone anywhere. My results are up and down. They are nothing like John's."

This conversation depicts a problem-focused and fear-driven Reactive operating system. His behavior was intended to get rid of the problem, but mostly it is designed to get rid of the inner conflict that the problem is creating—the feeling of being disgusted with himself. There is also a complete lack of a Creative orientation. Nowhere does he talk about what he is trying to achieve, his vision, or why he cares about his profession.

Structure determines performance. Reactive Mind gets a predictable pattern of performance, a pattern described well in the salesman's story. Reactive Structure is designed to oscillate. As the problem grows (results fall off), so does fear and inner conflict. As the inner conflict gets bigger, the tendency to react to it grows. As our salesman reacted (by selling), he reduced the problem (increases cash flow). Things are looking good, right? Well, not for long. He is winning at a play-not-to-lose game.

He has cycled through his Reactive loop once, and things are improving. He is feeling better about himself. He is feeling less fear and less self-disgust, and he is more secure. Since Reactive Mind is a play-not-to-lose structure run by fear, the fact that he is feeling better sets up the next downturn in his results. The problem now is smaller (more income), his

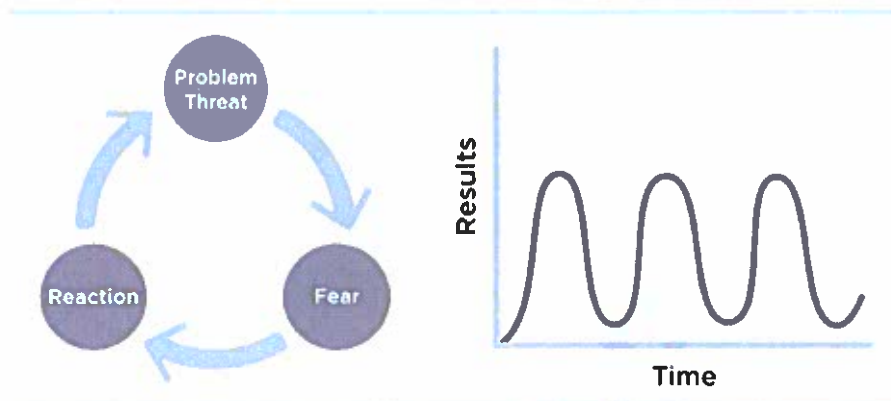


FIGURE 8.7 Pattern of results over time for Reactive Structure

fear and self-disgust is less, and so the tendency to continue his Reactive strategy (swinging into gear) is reduced. He reduces his reaction, the problem returns, and he starts all over.

The design of any structure determines its pattern of performance over time. When we operate from a Reactive Mind, here is the predictable pattern of results (see Figure 8.7).

Reactive Mind seeks equilibrium. It is designed to go back to normal. Reactive Structure is a balancing loop. Peter Senge describes balancing loop structures as being designed to maintain homeostasis (Senge, 1990)—like a thermostat, designed to keep the room at a constant temperature. However, the temperature is never constant; it oscillates up and down within acceptable parameters. As the temperature gets too hot, the air-conditioner turns on, and the temperature goes down. As the temperature gets too low, the air-conditioner turns off, and the temperature goes up. Since the thermostat is designed the way it is, it gets the pattern of results that it was designed for: a relatively steady-state temperature.

Reactive Structure is designed the same way. It is a balancing loop structure that creates an oscillating pattern of results around a set point. It is a good structure for maintaining equilibrium. The human body has thousands, if not millions, of balancing loop structures that help maintain homeostasis. Without them, we would quickly die. So, Reactive Structure is not bad. It is simply inadequate for achieving higher performance and maintaining it, or improving it further. Reactive Structure is designed to maintain current reality.

Reactive Structure functions like an immune system to keep things as they are. In their book, *Immunity to Change*, Bob Kegan and Lisa Lahey describe this same oscillating pattern of results by using the familiar example of New Year's resolutions (Kegan and Lahey, 2009). We all make them, and often make the same ones a year later. Why do we set goals and then act in ways contrary to our commitments? Because we have competing commitments, which are often run by internal beliefs that drive behavior designed to maintain the current equilibrium.

The same structure was running the salesman. Beneath his pattern of results are some powerful unseen beliefs, operating on autopilot and structured from the outside-in (how others see me defines me, and I must live up to their expectations in order to be okay).

Suspecting this, I drew, on a napkin, the pattern of oscillation, pointed to the troughs in the pattern, and told the salesman, "We know what happens to you here. You get disgusted with yourself and your fear of not making ends meet swings you into high gear."

He nodded in agreement.

Then, I pointed to the peaks and asked, "What happens to you here, when you start to succeed?"

He got wide-eyed, as if a scene was passing through his mind, but he said nothing.

I asked him, "What just happened? What did you just notice?"

He said, "Oh, that would not have anything to do with it." Three times I asked him to tell me what he saw, and three times he dismissed what popped into his awareness as having nothing to do with his problem of on-again, off-again performance.

Finally, I said, "Humor me. What did you notice?"

He then said, "I thought of my dad and the church."

I asked, "What does your dad have to do with this?"

He responded with the deliberateness of someone coming into a new awareness. He said, "My dad tried all his life to be successful and never was. You do not think that I would be worried about what my dad would think of me if I were more successful than he ever was, do you?" As he said this, his eyes widened like a deer caught in the headlights.

He had answered his own question. I then asked him, "Tell me about the church."

He said, "I have been taught all my life that it is bad to have money."

I did not talk theology with him about the misinterpretation of this way of thinking. Instead, I said: "So, let me see if I understand. Here (pointing to the troughs in the oscillating pattern), you are disgusted with yourself and here (pointing to the peaks), your dad is going to hate you and you are going to hell. Is that about it?"

He looked at me stunned, sobered, and simply nodded in recognition. He was seeing, perhaps for the first time, the underlying assumptions running the pattern of his performance. This was a breakthrough moment for him. It held the possibility of a transformation in his IOS.

This salesman, like me in my story, was at the mercy of the assumptions he had adopted earlier in his life because they made sense at that time. They were not his assumptions. They were given to him. Reactive Mind forms an identity externally—from the predominant environmental message and from the conclusions we make from those messages about how we should be: we are okay if we live up to the self-defining assumptions supplied by our environment.

Since these assumptions may not be mature enough for the complexities of our adult life, they become the structural limit to what is possible for us. They seek to maintain a state of equilibrium and often drive behaviors that compete with our vision and commitments.

If you are clear on your vision, and you are repeatedly falling short of achieving that vision, the highest leverage place you can look is into your belief system. The inner game runs the outer game. Underneath the fear, doubt, and inner conflict that govern Reactive Leadership, we find unconscious beliefs. The full picture of the Reactive Structure of Mind is displayed in Figure 8.8.

Reactive Structure is designed to maintain equilibrium between current beliefs (unseen and externally defined) and current reality. It is not designed for change or transformation. Insidiously, Reactive Leadership is initially self-reinforcing. It works at first. Things get better, and we feel better. However, the reaction, while aimed at fixing the problem, is designed to reduce the inner conflict. Since the inner conflict is motivating the reaction, predictably the action we are taking will attenuate as soon as the inner conflict is reduced to an acceptable level.

Since the inner conflict has its source in beliefs and assumptions designed to have us live up to environmental expectations, the direction of our reaction is to establish equilibrium with these expectations—to

**A REACTIVE structure of mind seeks EQUILIBRIUM
between current reality and beliefs.**

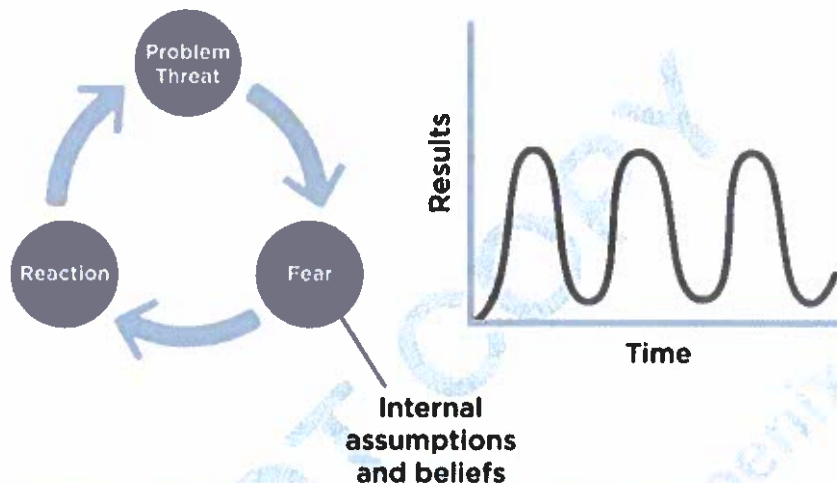


FIGURE 8.8 The full picture of Reactive Structure

re-establish current reality in a way that keeps us meeting the expectations of that current reality. Thus, Reactive leaders habitually seek safety over purpose.

Some people might describe this as *staying within a comfort zone*; however, as Robert Fritz points out, this is not a *comfort zone* but a “Zone of Tolerable Conflict,” one designed to manage discomfort, not produce comfort (Fritz, 1989).

Reactive Mind has a high energetic cost. This salesman was working hard and not creating what he wanted. Of course, he was not clear about what he wanted. He just did not want to feel bad about himself, a self that was formed from a set of erroneous, externally defined, and irrational assumptions. Until these assumptions are seen and challenged, the pattern will repeat. Eventually, fatigue sets in as energy is expended without result.

The Creative Mind and its IOS are designed to create what matters most, to create the future to which we aspire, to get better results more consistently and at a much lower energetic cost.

CORE OPERATING BELIEFS

One of the most transformative practices is to see into and rewrite our IOS code. Our IOS is made up of a host of well-patterned beliefs, assumptions, and mental models. Most of these are accurate and serve us well. Some are not. Maturing our IOS requires us to observe, reflect on, and modify the invisible assumptions embedded in our IOS. This is hard because they operate beneath the surface. We do not see them, we see *through* them, and we are subject to them until we can make them an object of our reflection.

The most powerful beliefs are the beliefs and internal assumptions by which we establish our identity. These powerful self-defining beliefs get incorporated into the core of our IOS throughout our life from emotionally powerful, positive, or painful experience. They also are installed by important people in our lives—parents, teachers, coaches, bosses, mentors, political leaders—and by institutional, national, and cultural affiliations. As we adopt these assumptions, we live by them and reinforce them. The brain puts them on autopilot so that we do not have to think about them anymore. They are just seen as *true*.

Bob: One of my deeply embedded assumptions is that I must be perfectly successful in order to be okay. I come by this belief honestly, and most of the experience that created this belief was positive. For example, when I was 13, I tried out for the football team. I had never played football, and most of the guys on the team had been playing for a few years. I did not know that you needed to work hard to get noticed by the coaches, so I stood patiently on the sidelines waiting to be put on the practice field. As such, I was not seen as a player. Since the coaches did not have the heart to cut me, I ended up on the “Taxi Squad.” The few of us on this squad practiced together on another field. The real team had eight male coaches. We had Mrs. Dixon, a nice lady who knew nothing about football.

At this time, I was not moving in the circles in which I wanted to move. The cool kids were on the football team, and as long as I was on this Taxi Squad, I had little chance of getting accepted into their group. To make matters worse, all the cheerleaders practiced near where the team practiced, and I did not have their attention either. I was a nobody.

One day, Mrs. Dixon did not show up and the coaches were forced to allow the Taxi Squad to practice with the team. What happened that day

changed my life. I was playing left defensive tackle and after a play in which I must have done something right, one of the coaches picked me up, lifted me up above his head and screamed into my face, "That was great! Do that again."

I was so unaware of what I just did that I asked him what I had done.

He took a personal interest in me for the rest of the practice. He taught me how to play that position. Soon, I was wreaking havoc on the offense. That week I went from Taxi Squad to captain of the team. I started on offense and defense for the rest of the season. I also moved into the center of the boys with whom I wanted to be friends. I even piqued the interest of the cheerleaders. I went from *nobody* to *somebody* in one practice.

I learned that day that I am *somebody* if I am first string, captain of the team. I learned that I had to be the best, first string or else I would be a nobody.

This story illustrates how the driven nature of my personality began to form. I could tell other stories about how this drive was refined into the need to be flawless at everything I did. So, I entered adult life believing that my worth and self-esteem, the success and security of my future, depended utterly on being flawlessly successful all the time.

That belief served me well. I worked very hard at everything and created early success in my career. The belief worked well until it met its limits when, in order to scale the business growing up around me, I had to teach others how to do what I had learned to do.

Of course, I assumed I would be a good mentor, however, that was not the case. My perfectionist standards and fear of failure combined to make me inept at letting go to others so that they might learn. What made this so difficult for me was that I had to let go when we were working with key clients. I did not do this gracefully. Every time one of my colleagues was not performing well enough, I became terrified that I would lose the client. Consequently, I took over the session and later pointed out all the ways my colleague could have done better. This approach so undermined their confidence that no one could learn from me, and I was failing to scale the business.

My perfectionism and need to be successful had me. I did not have them. I did not start to face this belief until after two years of failing to scale the business. Once I saw how I was the problem, as I dropped into this belief structure to see its illusion, and as I began to see my

TABLE 8.1 Identity beliefs: X = Relationship, Intellect, and Results

Relationship	Intellect	Results
Liked	Smart	Number one
Loved	Self-Reliant	Best
Approved of	Brilliant	Perfect
Accepted	Superior	A winner
Belong	Above it all	Higher than others
Supportive	Distant	In charge
Submissive	Aloof	In control

fear-driven perfectionism as resulting from another irrational belief, I began to mentor more effectively and the business began to scale nicely.

The structure of these core identity beliefs is simple:

- Worth = X
- Security = X
- I am OK if I = X
- To be is to be X

We fill in these equations with specific Xs, depending on our formative life experience. Different people choose different Xs to complete these equations. There are the three main categories of Xs with which we identify at the Reactive level—relationships, intellect, and results. The most common Xs are shown in Table 8.1.

X is always a good thing. There is nothing wrong with wanting to be successful, liked, admired, or smart. What forms the self-limitation is that these beliefs are structured from the outside-in. We are identified with always being X or seen as X. Not to be X or not to be seen as X, is not to *be*. For me, not to be flawlessly successful, is not to be. This makes not being X (or seen as X) threatening. Not to *be* is not okay. The structure of these beliefs is all-or-none.

These beliefs form the core of the Reactive operating system—the mechanisms by which we form our externally validated identity. Because we need to be seen by others as X, our self-esteem, security, and future are in their hands. They make us up. How they see us defines us. We depend on external validation, living within the confines of a Socialized Self, as the Self-Authoring, Creative Self lives beyond the bounds

of these Reactive beliefs. We tend to oscillate and return to normal as we react to meet the expectations of these beliefs. This is how Reactive Mind is structured and, since structure determines performance, how it performs.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Reactive Structure is inadequate to lead effectively today because volatility and complexity put a premium on the ability to adapt and recreate the organization in new and innovative ways. Reactive Structure is designed to return to normal for six reasons.

First, Reactive Mind forms in the transition out of adolescence when the challenge is to join with, to merge with, the prevailing cultural reality. Development succeeds to the extent that we take on the mental models, values, rules, and ways of operating that are structured into the world of which we are members. We build our lives, roles, careers, and identities such that we succeed within the current culture. Reactive Mind is designed to fit into and to replicate what is, not change it.

Second, Reactive Mind is problem focused—organized to remove the problem. At best, when we try to fix our way forward, we eliminate the problem, which returns us to homeostasis, not to a new future.

Third, Reactive Structure of Mind is designed to reduce the inner conflict (fear, anxiety, and self-doubt) created by the problem. As such, it orients on safety in a play-not-to-lose game. Since we get what we avoid, Reactive Structure tends to reestablish what we do not want.

Fourth, if our Reactive strategy is successful, it attenuates the inner conflict that is motivating the very behavior we are using to make change. This sets up the likelihood that we will stop reacting as the inner conflict recedes, and thus, the problem returns.

Fifth, the inner conflict we feel is generated by beliefs and assumptions that run on autopilot. These beliefs are externally structured and were formed by taking on the dominant assumptions of the current cultural reality. Worth and safety are maintained through external validation. We live, therefore, reactively. We are motivated to live up to the expectations of others, which we mistake as our own. This dependency on external validation creates fear, keeps us habitually in a play-not-to-lose game, has

us seeking safety over purpose, and thus sets up the oscillating/balancing loop structure that maintains current reality in a way that is consistent with our belief structures and consistent with current reality as it is.

Sixth, Reactive Structure orients toward safety. The choice to pursue a larger purpose and vision gets compromised. There is no risk-free path to creating the future we want. The safe paths all lead back from whence we came. To lead transformation is a risky business. It requires the biggest risk of all: that we change fundamentally. Reactive Structure, in its unconscious, play-not-to-lose, fear-attenuating, externally dependent structure, is simply not designed to lead into a more purposeful vision of the future.

The work of transforming into the Creative Mind is to individuate from the current normative cultural assumptions and expectations—to be our own Self-Authoring person. We then become less dependent on meeting the expectations of those in the culture. Purpose and vision become the primary drivers of our leadership. This developmental move paves the way for a far greater capacity to stand for change in the current situation. This is the stance of transformative leadership.

THE LEADERSHIP AGENDA

Most organizational transformation efforts today are aimed at establishing a high engagement, high fulfillment culture of innovation. So many of these efforts fall short of intended results because we try to create change from within a mindset designed to maintain the status quo. The Reactive Mind sets up a return to normal as shown in Figure 8.9.

When we set the vision of a new, transformed culture and business performance, that vision usually requires leadership behavior and capability beyond the boundary of our current belief structure. If it did not, we would likely have created it already. When the new vision is a stretch beyond the confines of our current operating system, we are in an adaptive challenge, like Duke's senior team and when I wanted to scale my business.

Choosing to create outcomes that lie outside the bounds of our belief system produces conscious or unconscious anxiety, fear, doubt, and other forms of internal conflict. Reactive Structure is designed to reduce this anxiety and so we typically default to old behavior, behavior consistent

Chapter 9

Reactive Leadership at Work

From Patriarchy to Partnership

In the last chapter, we showed how Reactive Mind is structured and how it generates the predictable pattern of returning to normal. We showed how this structure is not mature enough to lead transformational change. In this chapter, we will build on that by showing how leadership, functioning collectively from a Reactive Mindset, has a natural tendency to establish patriarchal organizational structures and cultures. We will also show, as we try to transform these cultures, how they tenaciously reestablish themselves, unless we lead them from a Creative Mindset. To understand this we need to delve more deeply into the nature of the dynamics that play out when leadership teams come together and lead reactively.

MOVING FROM PATRIARCHY TO PARTNERSHIP

Since most organizations are still led predominantly by men, and since most cultures are heavy on top-down control, we tend to create cultures of Patriarchy. Patriarchy evolved in times when most of the population was illiterate. The over-controlling tendency of patriarchy has its place when the workforce lacks the basic knowledge and capability required. It also works well in times of crisis and business turnarounds. It may well be the optimal structure for these situations. However, the global consensus in developed economies is that to compete in today's complex business environment and fulfill on the Promise of Leadership, we

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Reactive Structure, is to establish and reestablish Patriarchy. We will explore this more fully in the next chapter.

TAKING STOCK

- Do you love more than you fear?
- What is the energetic cost of how you show up? To yourself? To others?
- How much of what you are afraid of has ever actually happened?
- How do the voice of fear and the voice of love speak to you? Which one gets most of your attention?
- What if I stopped waiting for those around me to do most of the changing?

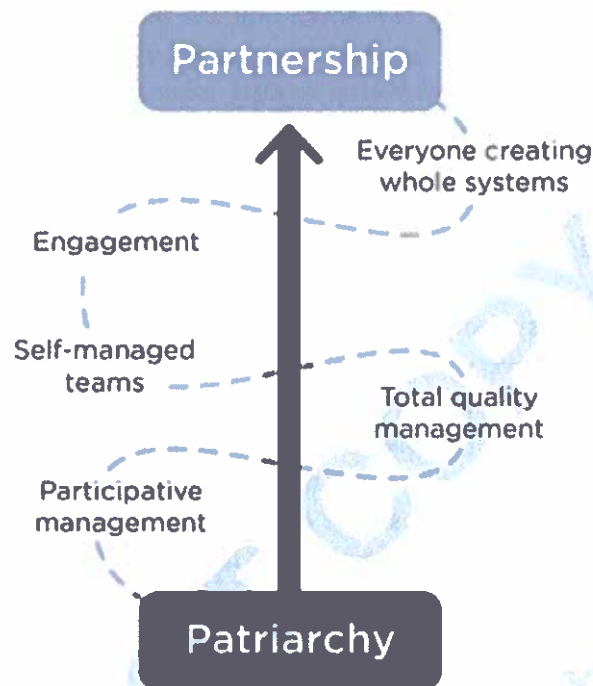


FIGURE 9.1 Moving from Patriarchy to Partnership

need to move toward cultures of Partnership, toward organizations that are more diversely led, and engage more people in cooperatively creating, innovating, and taking responsibility for the success of the business. The emerging form of organization asks everyone (customers, suppliers, employees, managers, and leaders) to partner in the organization's success. We call this transition the movement from Patriarchy to Partnership.

On the journey from Patriarchy to Partnership (see Figure 9.1), leaders, despite the best of intentions, block their own progress (Block, 1993). Early in our careers, before we fully understood how the Reactive IOS operates, we were surprised to watch leaders, deeply committed to transformation, fall into old patterns of behavior (over-control at the top, caution in the middle, blaming from below) that undermined the very change effort they championed. The inconsistency between their behavior and vision was rarely obvious to them. These inconsistent behaviors led to many mixed messages, which created a climate of caution. People avoided taking the change effort seriously. They sat on the sidelines, waiting to see which way the wind would eventually blow.

We are so familiar with patriarchal, top-down systems that we are blind to the ways that we continually “act out” that system, even while trying to change it. Our externally based mental models, identity, beliefs, and assumptions are formed in, and by, that system. We are subject to them. They are on autopilot. Thus we neither see them, nor do we see the inconsistency between the new vision and the way we are showing up as leaders, individually and collectively. This is the primary reason why transformation efforts fail.

When we try to change the system, we run smack into ourselves. *We are the primary obstacle to the very future we are committed to creating.* Moreover, we seldom notice when we are in the way. If we want to transform the performance of organizations we lead, we must do most of the changing. We cannot just sponsor change or merely redesign systems and processes; we must redesign ourselves! *The organization will never perform at a higher level than the consciousness of its leadership.* As we change the system, we must change ourselves; otherwise, the change we champion will become the *flavor of the month*.

NAVIGATING TWO JOURNEYS

Moving from Patriarchy to Partnership requires navigating two journeys simultaneously, the *system journey* and the *personal journey* (see Figure 9.2).

We tend to spend most of our time on changing the system (without a Whole Systems approach) and relatively little on the profound personal changes required of us. We try to change culture as if it is separate from ourselves. We try to change *it*, not *us*. Our observation is that the deep work of change is internal. Since 80% of adults are living and leading from a Reactive Mind, most organizations are structured and function reactively. The shift from Patriarchy to Partnership is a move from a Reactive to a Creative organizational structure and culture. Reactive Mind is incapable of ushering in the needed change. Creative level leadership is the minimum system (IOS) requirement.

System change requires a transformation in consciousness within the leadership. The work required of change leaders is to discover how we personally contribute to the culture we are trying to change. When we lead change, *we are the culture we are trying to change*. To be

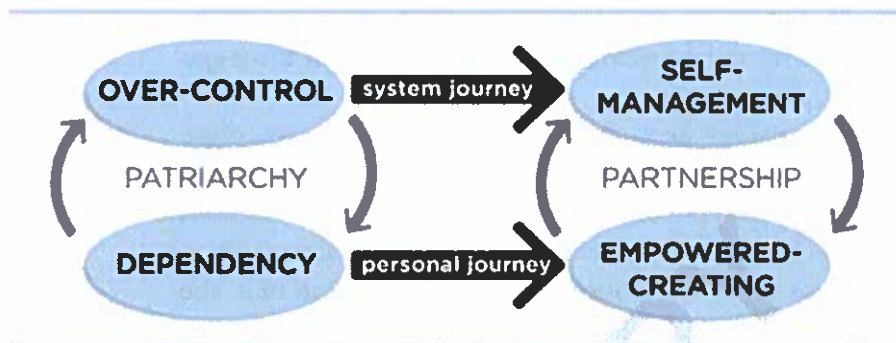


FIGURE 9.2 Two journeys

transformed by the effort, we must see how our ego/identity/character structure is organized to produce the current culture. This requires us to see into how our Reactive IOS is organized and the ensuing cultural dynamics. We need to see how we are the culture we are trying to change.

THREE CORE REACTIVE TYPES

One reason why Reactive Mind naturally gravitates toward establishing and reestablishing patriarchal structures and cultures has to do with how the three Reactive types—relationship (heart), intellect (head), and results (will)—interact. These are the three main ways that we form our Reactive Mind. Therefore, there are three basic types of people, and these three types, as they develop into the Reactive Mind, form their ego structures in different ways. These type differences, when they are reactively on autopilot, create patterns of behavior that result in patriarchal cultures, limiting leadership effectiveness and business performance.

In her book, *Our Inner Conflicts*, Psychologist Karen Horney identified three basic “trends” in the way we form our character or ego structure (Horney, 1945). She labeled them: *Move Toward*, *Move Against*, and *Move Away*. We call these three types the *Heart type* (relationship), *Will type* (results), and *Head type* (intellect). These titles reflect the essence, gift, and strength around which each type organizes its character/ego/identity. Each will leverage their core strength.

These three character structures show up in many different forms and diverse bodies of work. The Enneagram describes nine different types: three of them are *Move Toward* types, three are *Move Against*, and three

are *Move Away*. In our efforts to integrate the field, we came across Pathwork, a spiritual system of development wherein we wear three ego masks: *Love, Power, and Serenity*.

As this three-way typology kept showing up, we became even more curious and turned to science. The atom is composed of electrons, protons, and neutrons. Electrical circuits have a negative lead, positive lead, and neutral or ground lead. The waveform of energy is a down wave, up wave, and the stasis or neutral position at the top and bottom of the wave.

We began to think that there are three basic energies that explain the three core types. *Heart types* are the electrons—the negative, feminine charge. They are the down stroke in the wave. They are yin, the receptive energy. They move toward others to form bonds of relationship. *Will types* are the protons—the positive charge, the up stroke in the wave of energy, the yang or masculine energy. They move outward and proactively act on the world to create results. *Head types* are the neutron—the still, stasis position in the wave of energy. They are the ground and balance between yin and yang. They remain neutral, still, and composed and bring knowledge and truth to any endeavor.

Each of us is a unique blend of all three energies. Metaphorically, each of us is our own unique shade or color, made up of the three primary colors. While each of us has all of these energies, strengths, and gifts, we tend to have one that is primary. Each type—Heart, Will, and Head—organizes its personality around one of these basic energies. This is core to who they are, their essential nature. As we mature, we tend to develop our primary energy orientation first. We leverage our best. Other strengths tend to develop later or remain under-developed. At the Reactive Stage, while we are always a blend of all three, one of these core behavioral tendencies is usually central to our identity and to how we deploy ourselves. Understanding these three types and how they interact at the Reactive level helps us understand the natural tendency of Reactive Structure to create patriarchal cultures.

As we explore each of these types, keep in mind that each of the three character types (Heart, Will, Head) has its origin in our unique essential nature. We organize our ego structure, our core identity, in a way that expresses the best in our individual, essential nature. We put our best foot forward and pack our best into our Reactive Structure and strategies.

Heart Type. Heart types *move toward* others. Like electrons, the receptive, feminine charge, they move toward others to form relationship bonds. They establish their core ego identity in relationship to people. They form their character around their gift of Heart. They are relationship oriented. This is their essential nature and gift. At the Reactive level, they are identified with that gift. They establish their self-worth and security by ingratiating themselves with others. Their self-worth and security depend on others liking, loving, or accepting them. The core beliefs that make up this type are, "I am okay if you like, love and/or accept me," and "I am not okay if you do not." The strength of this type is that it moves toward others to establish relationship as its first priority. The limitation, at the Reactive Stage, is that Heart types give up too much power in order to be liked. The core fear is rejection. Since not being accepted, loved, and liked feels like death, this type of person tends not to push controversial issues, to be conflict-averse, and thereby fails to lead. At the Reactive Stage of Development, we call the Heart type the *Complying type*.

Will Type. This type is the opposite of the Heart type. These people *move against* others. Rather than ingratiating themselves to others, they compete in order to triumph over others. They are protons, the positive masculine charge. Rather than giving up power, they take up power and use it to get ahead. They organize their character structure around their strength of will. Their core strength and gift is their inner drive to make things happen and get results. They are naturally gifted at using their personal power to accomplish and create what they want. This is their essential nature. They are born to lead and to drive things forward. As they develop into the Reactive level, they identify with this capacity. They organize their identity around their gift of will and use of power. Their core beliefs are, "I am okay if I am the one who gets results, if I am perfect, if I move up the organization, and if I am the one in charge and in control." Their core fear is failure. Failing at anything, or even coming up short, feels like death. Their strength and gift is driving results forward. The limitation, at the Reactive level, is taking up power at the expense of others and seeing others as resources to be used to accomplish what they want. Hence, they can leave a host of maimed bodies in their wake. They do not delegate, develop teamwork, build trust, or mentor others gracefully because trusting others with results risks failure. We will call this Will type, at the Reactive level, the *Controlling type*.

Head Type. This type *moves away* from others in rational, analytical distance. They form their character structure around their gift of

Head—Intellect. They are usually intellectually brilliant and quite rational. They seek knowledge and truth. This is their essential nature and gift. At the Reactive level, they are identified with that gift. They establish their sense of worth and personal security by demonstrating their analytical and critical capabilities. Like neutrons, they remain detached. They remain in their head, staying above the fray, and provide rational explanations for what is going on around them. Their self-worth and security depend on others seeing them as smart, knowledgeable, and superior. Their core beliefs are, “I am okay if I am smart, self-sufficient, superior, and above it all and can find the flaw in others’ thinking.” Their strength is remaining composed and rational amid chaos and conflict, analyzing what is going on from a safe, rational distance and providing brilliant analysis to complex and conflictual situations. Their limitation is that they play from the neck up. They are often experienced as cold, distant, disengaged, overly analytical, critical, or arrogant. Their core fear is vulnerability while life and leadership are inherently vulnerable. They protect themselves from vulnerability with the safety of the rational analytical world. Consequently, they tend to stay in their head and provide analysis, but often come across as being harshly critical, finding fault, and feigning superiority. We call this Head type, at the Reactive level, the *Protecting type*.

GIFTS OF EACH TYPE

We defined each type by describing their core strength or gift. Each of us, at the core, is a uniquely gifted person. We form our character around our native strengths. This leads us to develop some very valuable and admirable qualities. The *Will/Controlling* type serves others and the organization by mastering the ability to achieve results, push for aggressive growth, accomplish important priorities, and organize vast resources toward the accomplishment of a worthy objective. Organizations need such people of drive to succeed in a competitive marketplace. The *Heart/Complying* type becomes loyal, hard-working, gifted at creating harmony, sensing others’ needs, and helping and supporting others. Organizations need these qualities as well, so that people can work together. The *Head/Protecting* type brings the strength of the analytical mind to bear on complex problems. They stand apart to gain perspective and engage with unemotional calm, clarity, and often-needed insight.

TABLE 9.1 True gifts of the Reactive

COMPLYING	Claiming Your True Gift
Conservative	Loyalty and fidelity to the organization's purpose. Champion of values and preserver of heritage.
Pleasing	Love for self and others. Willingness to give of oneself in service to others' needs.
Belonging	Builder of community and organization, committed purpose.
Passive	Service. Non-attachment, acquiescing to the needs of others, flowing with, egoless.
PROTECTING	Claiming Your True Gift
Distance	Wisdom through detachment, care and reflection.
Critical	Discernment through being inquisitive and challenging limited thinking.
Arrogance	Strength of character without the need for credit. Mentoring others into their own "bigness."
CONTROLLING	Claiming Your True Gift
Perfect	Constant pursuit of continuous improvement balanced with acceptance for things/people as they are. Desire to create outstanding results.
Driven	Willingness to work and risk for what you love. Doing whatever it takes to realize your deepest longings.
Ambition	Desire to create outstanding results. Personal energy to pursue worthy results.
Autocratic	Service through personal strength, persistence, and influence. The integrity to do what is needed even if it is controversial.

Each type has its own strengths and gifts, summarized in Table 9.1. Each Reactive dimension in the table is a dimension of the Universal Model and measured on the LCP. The gifts listed describe the full maturity of that gift when it is free of Reactive limitation.

While leaders who function out of Reactive Mind will likely be less effective, this does not mean that there is something wrong with the

leader. On the contrary, at the Reactive level, each type of leader organizes around a core gift or strength. The limitations of Reactive leaders come not from their giftedness, or lack thereof, but because they run their strengths through a Reactive Structure of Mind. This creates liabilities.

GIFTS HUNG ON A REACTIVE STRUCTURE

At the Reactive level, we are identified with our gifts, and this becomes the limiting factor of the very gift or strength we try to offer. The inner game runs the outer game, and the Reactive, play-not-to-lose game is a limiting game. When we hang our core strengths on a Reactive Structure, we effectively remove the gift from the field of play and introduce liabilities.

For example, if we are a Heart type, our core belief might be, "I am okay if I am accepted." With this belief, we move toward relationships, but our need to be accepted limits our power. We fear not being accepted because not to be accepted is not to be. This emotional risk is huge. Therefore, we will avoid conflict and we do not deal with important issues in order to have cordial relationships. As a result, our relationships suffer. In this case, the need for acceptance subverts the very thing it wants—relationship. The gift is removed/diminished. Furthermore, since not to be accepted is not to be, rejection feels like death. Consequently, we are in a compulsive relationship with our core strength. We have to be acceptable all the time. We overplay this strength by always trying to stay within the good graces of those around us. We cannot *not* play it safe in our relationships. In a leadership role, this means we will not advocate clearly and strongly for what we think is important; we will hold back in crucial, conflictual conversations; and we will limit our vision to what is safe and acceptable.

Complying seriously interrupts leadership effectiveness, as clearly seen in the Inner Circle Correlation Matrix (Table 9.2). Reactive Complying is inversely correlated to Achieving (−.75), Systems Awareness (−.61), and Authenticity (−.72), and since these Creative Dimensions are highly and positively correlated to Leadership Effectiveness (.91, .84, and .78, respectively), Reactive Complying turns the core gift into a liability. Furthermore, Complying is inverse to Relating (−.44) and, thus, it undermines its own gift—reducing the quality of relationship and teamwork

that the Heart type most cares about. When Heart types hang their gift on a Reactive Structure, the gifts become Complying liabilities.

The same can be said for the other two types. Each organizes their identity around their essential, unique, and gifted nature—whether that's being smart and knowledgeable in the case of the Head/Protecting type, or the power, drive, and ability to get results in the case of the Will/Controlling type. Since these types form Reactive beliefs from the outside-in—"I am OK if you see me as X"—not to be X (e.g., seen as smart or seen as in control) is not to be. This sets up a compulsive relationship to the core gift. We have to be seen as X (smart or in control) or else, and the "or else" is not to be, or we will lose identity and safety.

Since this is unacceptable (failure is not an option, and being seen as stupid is a fate worse than death), these types are always overusing these gifts. They are always super-rational, analytical, and critical or they are always pushing and controlling. Thus, overextension of a strength becomes a weakness. Over-controlling fails to build the trust, teamwork, and bench strength required for high performance—the very thing that the Controlling type is trying to achieve. Remaining overly analytical and critical is experienced by others as cold, aloof, and harsh. It, therefore, fails to get the message across because others are put off by the delivery.

All of this can also be seen in the Inner Circle Correlation Matrix. Controlling is inverse to everything, most notably Relating ($-.64$), Self-Awareness ($-.74$), Leadership Effectiveness ($-.41$), and Business Performance ($-.21$). Furthermore, Controlling is inverse to Achieving ($-.24$), thus working against its own gift, the very thing Will types care most about—creating results. The same pattern can be seen for Protecting. It is inverse to all the Creative Dimensions and inverse to its own strengths (Self-Awareness at $-.74$, Authenticity at $-.38$, and Systems Awareness at $-.51$). Protecting, too, undermines its own gift, what they care most about—the honest exchange of learning, knowledge, and wisdom.

Notice how each of these types takes their gift off the table as they hang it on a Reactive Structure. This is why (and how) a Reactive relationship to our core strength over-extends it, creates liabilities, and reduces effectiveness.

If managed well, the differences between the types can cause each to play to their strength; the best qualities of each person are available for the team and organization. This ideal, however, seldom happens. The collective intelligence is usually well below the average intelligence of

TABLE 9.2 Inner Circle Correlation Matrix

Business Performance Index	1	.61	.50	.48	.50	.57	.61	-.21	-.31	-.40
Leadership Effectiveness	.61	1	.85	.76	.78	.84	.91	-.41	-.56	-.63
Relating	.50	.85	1	.87	.72	.80	.76	-.64	-.75	-.44
Self-Awareness	.48	.76	.87	1	.66	.73	.66	-.74	-.74	-.36
Authenticity	.50	.78	.72	.66	1	.78	.86	-.23	-.38	-.72
Systems Awareness	.57	.84	.80	.73	.78	1	.88	-.40	-.51	-.61
Achieving	.61	.91	.76	.66	.86	.88	1	-.24	-.41	-.75
Controlling	-.21	-.41	-.64	-.74	-.23	-.40	-.24	1	.83	.09
Protecting	-.31	-.56	-.75	-.74	-.38	-.51	-.41	.83	1	.23
Complying	-.40	-.63	-.44	-.36	-.72	-.61	-.75	.09	.23	1

(Based on 500,000 rater surveys)

group members because when these differing types come together, they often trigger each other's liabilities. The conflictual and dysfunctional dynamics we often see in leadership teams can be explained by what happens when opposite types react to each other.

REACTIVE DYNAMICS—TRUE TO TYPE

Several years ago, we consulted with the Senior Team of an oil refinery. Two senior managers could not get along. They could not be in the same room with each other, and this was causing major problems. We were hired by the president and asked to "fix them."

Let's call these two managers Ken and Jack. Ken was the VP of Technical Services, and Jack was VP of Operations. Most of the 500 people who worked at the plant reported to one of these two men. When we first met with Jack, he described Ken, saying: "He is a wimp! He cannot make a decision. I cannot get anything I need out of his organization. I have no use for him."

Ken described Jack as an "animal." He thumped his chest with both hands saying: "He is a big hairy ape. He sits in meetings all day beating his chest. He is an egomaniac. I cannot stand him and I cannot work with him." Needless to say, we had our hands full.

First, we administered the LCP to each manager. We also interviewed several people who worked for and with each of these men.

When the profile results came back, Jack scored very high on the *Controlling* and *Protecting* dimensions. He was described as excessively *Ambitious*, *Autocratic*, *Arrogant*, and *Critical*. He was also scored low on Relationship dimensions—on *Caring*, *Teamwork*, *Mentoring*, *Collaboration*, etc. What bothered Jack the most, though, was that he was scored low on *Integrity*. He thought of himself as a high integrity person and had read many books on high-involvement, high-fulfillment workplaces. He cared passionately for people and sought to empower them through his leadership. His interview data validated his high *Controlling* and *Protecting* scores. People described him as Jekyll and Hyde—good Jack, bad Jack. They never knew which they were going to get. One day he would show up in an inspiring way, talking about high involvement, empowerment, and engagement. On other days he would take people apart. He dominated every meeting and left little room for discussion. Jack did not

walk his talk, thus his low Integrity scores. Jack was a high Controlling type with a Protecting backup style.

Ken was a Complying type with a Protecting backup style. He scored high on *Pleasing, Belonging, Passive, and Distant*. He had low scores on *Achieving Results, Strategy, Decisiveness, and Courage*. This would suggest that he was not leading, but playing cautiously and letting key issues fester. When we talked to Ken's team, they told us Ken was very smart and technically competent, but he was indecisive and did not confront the difficult issues to improve Tech Services. This was hard news for Ken to swallow.

To both men's credit, they leaned into their feedback. We met with both men separately for some time. Jack got a lot of insight about his demanding, caustic, over-controlling behavior. He defined himself as a turnaround guy who did not want to be one any more. He discovered the belief that he is only as good as his latest turnaround. One failure, he feared, would ruin his career. Failure was not an option. He looked squarely at his core organizing belief: "I am my results, and not to get results is not to be." Since these belief structures are all-or-none, one failure meant the ball game is over. He acknowledged that these assumptions were very emotionally powerful and that they had driven his behavior all his life. Second, he realized that they were false. They are simply too extreme (success every time or else) to allow for him to lead with greater flexibility, agility, and inclusiveness. As soon as results began to slip, he reacted from the fear of failure. He then took people apart or took over. He did not mentor, he dictated. He realized that if he were to become the kind of leader he aspired to be, he needed to change this assumption. He began to challenge his automatic angry, aggressive reaction as it came up in his body. He started to ask good questions instead. He started to listen.

Ken, too, began to see into his Reactive operating system and found a core organizing assumption that he needed to be a nice guy. He wanted people to like him. His leadership was constrained by the belief: "I am my relationships. I am a good person if people like me. Not to be liked means I will be rejected, and that is unacceptable." He, like Jack, came to two conclusions. His need for approval had him playing too safe and did not enable him to say what he knew needed to be said. Since he is a people person, he could say things in a way that would likely be heard. Second, he realized that he could live with people not liking him.

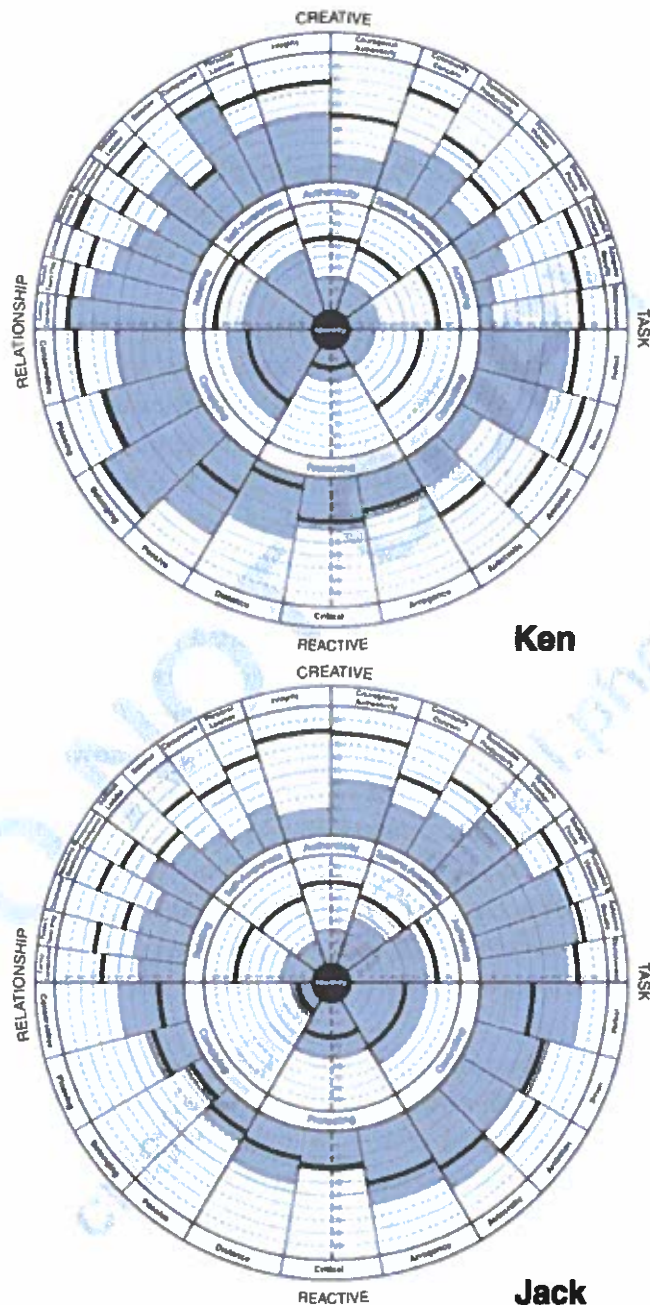


FIGURE 9.3 Ken and Jack's Leadership Circle Profiles

His belief, too, was all-or-none. One person's disapproval meant the end of the world. Ken realized the irrationality in this false belief, and he began to challenge his fear and step into conversations that required courage.

Once Ken and Jack had enough insight into the way they were reacting, we brought them together for a meeting. They each put their LCP's down, side-by-side, and looked in silence at the results (Figure 9.3). Then they looked up at each other and said, "No wonder."

They could see that they were opposite types who triggered each other. Ken was looking for approval from Jack, and as soon as Ken showed any caution or indecisiveness, Jack clobbered him. Ken's indecisiveness threatened Jack to the core. He needed the output of Ken's team to get results and so when Ken hesitated, Jack erupted, which sent Ken further into caution. Each triggered the worst in the other. Both were brilliant men, but the dynamics between them had them playing at a low level of collective effectiveness.

As they saw the dynamics, they saw how each contributed to it. They saw the opposite ways they had each configured their ego/identity structure. They realized that each represented their shadow opposite (more on this later). Each saw his part in the name-calling, and both acknowledged that they were playing from the fear of rejection and failure. As each man took in the other man's fear, compassion and understanding grew. They saw how they were playing in a not-to-lose game that kept them in an oscillating pattern of bouncing off of each other and getting nowhere productive. They agreed to change the game, and they did. It was not always smooth between them, but they made it work. The plant was much better off because of it.

There were other players in this story. Jack and Ken had peers and a boss on the leadership team. Each contributed to the dysfunctional dynamics between Ken and Jack. Some of Ken and Jack's peers were Protecting types. Their play-not-to-lose strategy was to move away. They kept a safe distance from the explosive relationship. They could analyze what was going on, but would not jump in and help resolve it. In this way, they colluded in the dance. The boss, the President who brought me in to "fix them," was a strong Complying type who lacked the power to challenge Jack and Ken to clean up their act. So, every member of the Senior Leadership Team contributed to the ineffectiveness of the team. It was not all on Ken and Jack.

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To break through to higher business performance, we must take on the Leadership Agenda inherent in that goal. Ken and Jack took on this challenge. Theirs is a story of vertical development happening inside a business conversation. Ken and Jack had begun the shift of mind from Reactive to Creative.

REACTIVE TYPE DYNAMICS IN THE UNIVERSAL MODEL

The Leadership Circle Profile and the Universal Model integrate the best of Cognitive and Rational Emotive Psychology, within the Type framework at various Stages of Development, and relate all of this to what we have learned from the field of Leadership and Organizational Development about what works and what does not.

There is a solid $(-.76)$, inverse relationship between *Reactive Leadership* and *Creative Leadership Competency* (see Figure 9.4). This relationship shows dramatically how running our gifts and strengths through a Reactive IOS takes those gifts and strengths off the table.

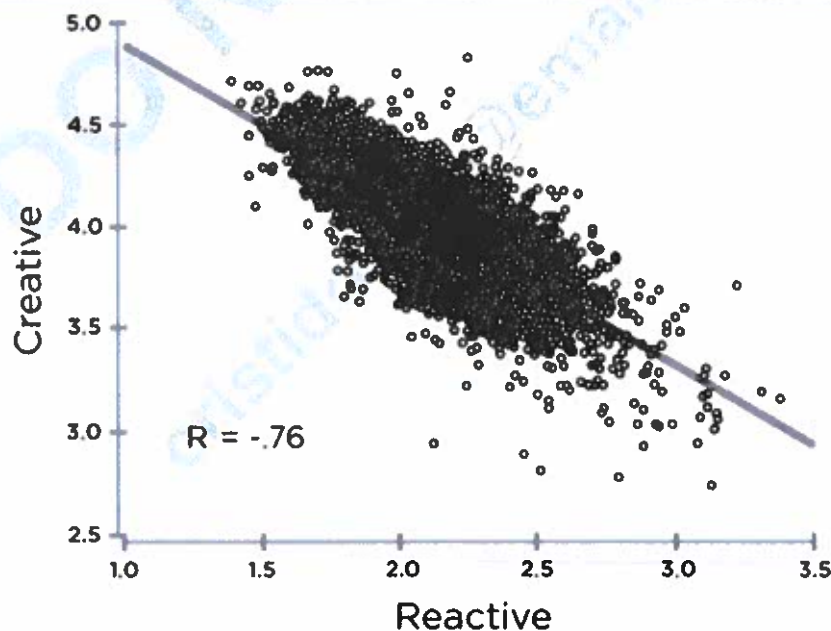


FIGURE 9.4 Correlations between Creative and Reactive

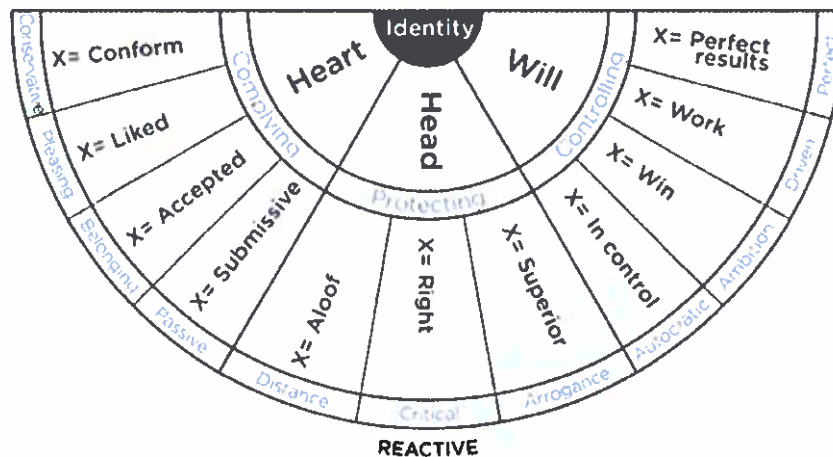


FIGURE 9.5 Reactive domain and associated beliefs and behaviors

The bottom half of the circle is a complete map of how Reactive Mind structures itself (see Figure 9.5). The 11 measures of Reactive behavior, run from well-researched self-limiting beliefs, fit neatly into one of the three types and form the core organizing beliefs and behaviors of each type. Since the opposite types of Complying and Controlling are displayed on opposite sides of the circle, with Protecting in the middle, the Model and the Profile are very useful in explaining the dynamics between types (e.g., Ken, Jack, and the Senior Team).

Providing leaders, like Ken and Jack, with feedback through the lens of this model elucidates the Reactive Mind and enables a leader to make the subject-object shift that Kegan describes (Kegan, 1998). The LCP invites leaders to:

- Learn how they are establishing their identity;
- Explore the Reactive beliefs to which they are subject—beliefs that run on autopilot;
- See clearly the behaviors that these beliefs are running;
- See how they might be playing-not-to-lose;
- See their predominant Reactive type;
- Learn how they may be sub-optimizing the tension between purpose and safety;

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- See how their leadership is set up to return to normal—maintain the status quo;
- See how they contribute to the functional or dysfunctional team dynamics;
- See how they may contribute to creating results that are contrary to best intentions.

This dynamic model maps out how Reactive Mind is organized, how leaders behave when they are run by a Reactive IOS, and the organizational dynamics that can play out between leaders of different types. The Universal Model and LCP describe the structure, beliefs, and behavior patterns of leaders, individually and collectively.

NATURAL SELECTION PROCESS—CREATING COLLECTIVE PATTERNS OF PATRIARCHY

The Ken and Jack story (and Duke's refrigerator story in Chapter 8) represent the kind of type dynamics that, when taken to a larger scale, naturally sort themselves out into patriarchal structures and cultures. How do the interactions of types establish patterns of patriarchal behavior and structure?

In his book, *Beyond Ambition* (1991), Robert Kaplan observes that Controlling types tend to move up. Their strengths are ready-made for senior levels, and they are ego-driven to move up. Since their self-esteem is often related to their altitude in the pyramid, they work unceasingly to advance, succeed, and expand their power base. This serves the organization's need for people who will expand, push aggressive agendas, grow the organization, and step up to the rigors and demands of leadership. Consequently, the top levels are populated predominantly by Controlling types.

Complying types tend not to move up as readily. Since they do not measure self-worth in the same way that Controlling types do, they are not as driven to move up. Also, because using power and taking risks may not get them liked (which is how they measure their self-esteem and security), they have not developed the repertoire of behaviors that seem natural to Controlling types. So they are less likely to end up in the most senior positions. Instead, they populate middle and lower levels

