



About the Author



Kevin Ford is a Principal of TAG Consulting. In demand as a public speaker and strategic leadership consultant, Kevin has spoken publicly to thousands of people on strategic planning and leadership. He led CEO roundtables with Jim Collins, Ron Heifetz, and Margaret Wheatley and was one of the featured speakers at the Organizational Development Summit with Peter Senge and Phil Harkins. He was the senior consultant for the redesign of the U.S. Army staff—the largest employer in the nation. While he consults with large corporations, government agencies, and small businesses, he heads up TAG’s faith-based practice. He has personally developed over four hundred strategic plans in a wide variety of industries. He is the

author of three previous books, including one that reached the top .04 percent of sales on Amazon. Kevin lives in Charlotte, N.C., with his wife and two children.



Ken’s expertise is in helping clients transform disjointed organizations and workgroups into high performing teams. He uses the organization’s metrics and initiatives as a basis for increasing per employee productivity. For the executive team, Ken uses customized tools and strategies that increase execution and productivity. Additionally, he advises leaders and instructs managers on how to unleash employee discretionary effort to drive long-term business outcomes.

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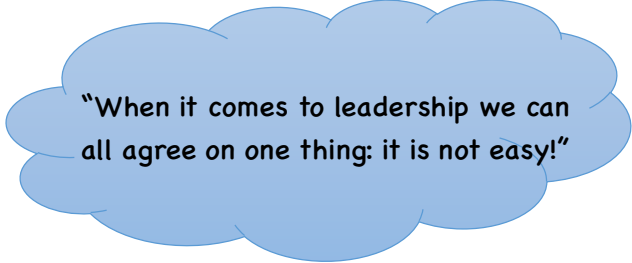
Leadership has Three Options

East Lake Meadows is a place of Atlanta of United States. This place was used for golf course by the legendary golf Bobby Jones and there was a public housing project decades ago. But later this area was regarded as “Little Vietnam” by Atlantans and local police called it “war zone”. This happened start with 650 units of desperately poor residents in the US, and then people feel hopeless and desire to escape, so they began to take drugs and alcohol which can lead to crime and violence. Mugging, shooting and robbery happed regularly here even during the daytime.

Tom Cousins, an entrepreneur and a successful businessman, who has passion on golf and want to break the cycle of poverty in East Lake Meadows decided to change the situation in this place. However, the problem in East Lake Meadows was not simple. There were many problems need to be settled, such as crime reduction, education, drug treatment and economic revitalization. And politicians, Tenants Association leaders,

government bureaucrats were involved if the the changing is put into action.

Firstly, he needed to persuade residents to move out for a time, because the community need to be rebuilt. But no one was willing to do so. Cousin realized that “people were going to have to do things that were the precise opposite of what they would normally be inclined to do.”. So he created a masterpiece of leadership, *The leadership Triangle*. He thanked it is important to bring people together to finish their common goals. And the most difficult thing for leader is to transform values, which is often conflict.



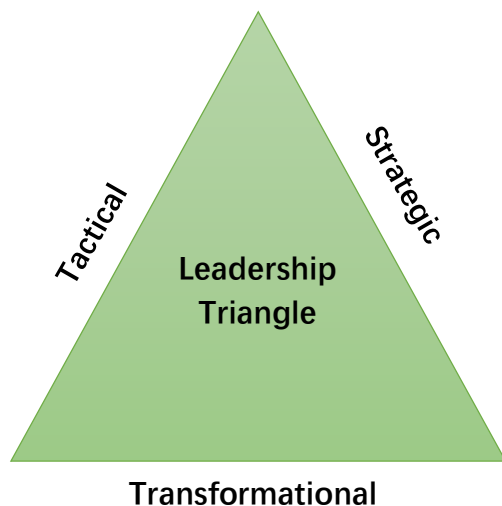
“When it comes to leadership we can all agree on one thing: it is not easy!”

Three Leadership Options

A classic leadership pitfall is to find a method which can solve problem before and use it in the future. And with the develop of the society, it may doesn't work anymore. Leaders need know more options to solve problems.

This book is to help readers understand in what occasion, what kind of options can be chosen to solve problems. In case to make wrong decision and produce more problem.

Author identified three primary type of leadership challenge, and come up with three ways of leadership behavior. A different set of skills, language, questions, and styles of interaction s needed when facing different problems.



Tactical Challenges

Tactical problems are solved by expertise. Leaders should identify the right expert who is competent to solve the problem and put him or her on the position.

Strategic Challenges

Strategic Challenges means that leaders should make decision facing those challenge outside their own organization to adapt the external opportunities and difficulties. And strategy is what make one's organization different to others'. Strategic option is used for solving challenge that rooted in the future, which is passing by generation or era.

Transformational Challenges

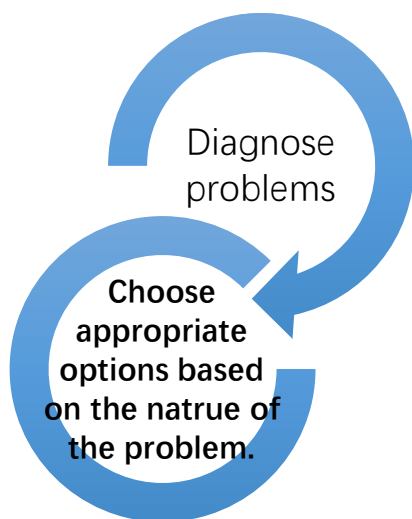
The most vital challenge is the transformational problems which relate to values, behavior, and attitudes, and often rooted in a system and easy to be ignored. *"The essence of a transformational problems is in the concept of 'competing values'."* The real work of leadership is indicated on transformational level, when a leader can provoke conflict over values and create real change.

The Leader's Role

Tactical – The leader is an expert. The tactical leader approaches problems with a particular knowledge base, or skill set, to solve specific problems.

Strategic – the leader is a synthesizer, identifying patterns and trends. The strategic leader sees beyond current realities.

Transformational – The leader is a facilitator. The transformational leader doesn't make decisions or establish strategic plans but, instead, facilitates a series of conversations among key stakeholders.



The Tactical Challenges

"A clear strategy, born out of a keen understanding of context, will result in a compelling vision"

People who work with Tom Cousins in the East Lake program indicate that Cousins never wavered in his vision, and he understand all stakeholders as well as the context. **Tenacious vision** and **environmental awareness** are the essence of effective strategy. Context is the root of strategy. A leader should know his or her players and the inner and outside environment. And the vision is a kind of by-product of a good strategy.

A leader is a synthesizer, who need know more knowledge. One should pay more attention on trends, and should be curious. One thing people can do to achieve this is to ask "why" five times. By asking a question and get the answer and then keep asking why repeated in at least four times, one will know more information.

When people choose the strategic option, they should adopt the **tone** of a vision-caster. And the vision must clear.

The **key question** for strategic option is “what’s the objectives?” And facing the strategic challenge, the key question will be situation-specific.

What’s the key questions?

Strategic – what’s our objectives?
Let’s accomplish it.

Tactical – what’s wrong? Let’s fix it.

Transformational – What’s the question?
Let’s discover it.

Strategic leaders should know their new strategy is correct response to the strategic problem. And **new strategies** are needed. A leader should take research, consider possible outcomes before making important decisions.

It is also important to **interact** with team members. And a good leader can always be **inspiring**.

Define your vision

A key element of strategic option is the ability to “sense the changes in the culture, industrial, and competitive landscapes and envision the future at the end of the change” (Ford, 2013, p.49). A good leader is who can envision the future and shape the team. Like Bill Gates who envision the prosperity of the personal computer, and Jeff Bezos of Amazon.com who envisioned the way of consumers buying books.



Seeing what is coming may be difficult for many people. There is a tool can be used, which is “distinguishing between manageable, incremental change and truly epochal change that require a transformed view of the future”. It is important to recognize fundamental change for the leader approaching strategic option. The solution may adapt ones business to seize new opportunities.

Furthermore, a leader should have a “big ears”. It means one need to pay attention. There are number of things one should do:

1. The customers, who insure your company's survival.
2. The regulatory environment, where laws can alter the competitive landscape in a single legislative session.
3. Complementary business, upon whom your organization relies for products, goods, and services.
4. Competitors, who may anticipate the future first themselves or may be making strategic mistakes your company must avoid.

When a person wants to make change, he or she must prepare to meet opposition. If one can see the future, the ability to stick the vision can be helpful to make breakthrough. People need to distinguish the want-tos and the need-tos and willing to embrace unlikely alliances.

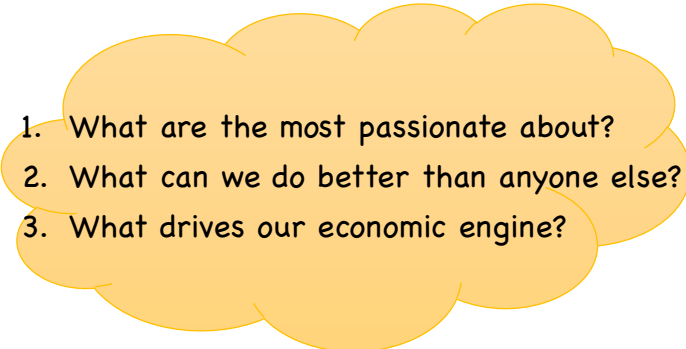
In the Strategic option, one must bring about a preferred future as a team builder, and make sure the connection of team members and create alliances, and think creatively about who should be included in the team.

Communicate Your Mission with Clarity

A leader who use the strategic option must make the communication crystal clear. Thus, employees can know their mission clear.

To achieve this, leaders can make sure the **values and missions** which drive the organization are clear, so employees will feel they are being called to change the world. Secondly, leader should make it clear that who your **customer** is, and what will take to get them. Thirdly, according to Marcus Buckingham’s research that great business leaders know how to keep things simple, leaders should make the “**core score**” clear, which means leaders should be clear of what the team has

to achieve and how to measure it. Fourthly, the key products should be recognized clearly. The last but not least, make the “hedgehog concept” clear. It means find the concept between three questions and never deviate from it. The questions are as follows:

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1. What are the most passionate about?
 2. What can we do better than anyone else?
 3. What drives our economic engine?

Knowing the strategy, vision and clarity of mission, it is also important to act it!

The Tactical Option

It is important to hire employees who can think and do their job naturally. And the Tactical Option skill in this chapter is to help readers understand how to select the right people for the team.

First of all, let's think some basic questions as “**Why do I bring people on teams?**” There are three answers:

1. **You bring people to fulfill.**
2. **The promise of the role with excellence.**

Interviewer ask typical questions to see whether the person can do this job and how well he or she can do. To see whether a person can do thing naturally, a interviewer may consider if it is a volunteer position, whether the employee still have passion. Those who can naturally dose things are needed for the team.

3. **Bring people on team to fulfill the promise of your mission.**

There are two clues can be considered. First one is biography. The person's life story can tell what his or her concern and passion. Second, is performance. This means to identify whether the person really do thing related to the mission. To insure the long term success, selecting people

based on mission fit is the best way.

Furthermore, to identify the person who are uniquely designed to solve the problem a company facing, there are two practical tools. They are **Intentional concept** and a **list of qualities** that describe the best selectors of people.

Leaders have variety of leadership style. When look into the common quality that lead them into successful leaders is the power of **Intentional Difference**. Those who have the Intentional Difference have six components: Talent, Skill, Knowledge, Experience, Passion, and Outcome. When using the Tactical Option work of putting team together, it is important to make sure they are balanced, diverse, and stable. And it is recommended to learn how to use Intentional Difference.

There is a list of qualities of people who can be considered to hire in the team.

1. Great people-pickers are Success-Intuitive
2. Great people-pickers are Placement-Aware
3. Great people-pickers are Future-Oriented
4. Great people-pickers are Unselfishly Opportunistic
5. Great people-pickers are Time Conscious

Building People

One question in team building is that “why do people work”. When people achieve the basic final need of living, what motivate people of working?

The answer is that people work to gain the prize of personal achievement and, financial stability, and the prize of purposeful living. Job provide people social good, personal achievement, relational enhancement, which is important than job itself. So a good leader should provide those for team members. Besides, creating a climate of trust, provoking healthy conflict, inspiring high commitment, providing honest feedback and focusing on results is essential on team management.

Empowering People

It is not rare that people want to quit teams, but leaders should know the reasons.

Here are some examples:

Team members quit to-

- pursue attractive promises.
- pursue a bigger prize.
- pay a more affordable price.

Here is another question:

Why do team members engage on a high level?

To increase the value they receive
To return the value they receive
To share the value they receive

Empowered team must be full of people who not only want to receive value, but also want to returning and sharing it.

At the end, there is a model called The stage of role attachment to help people practice the theory.

The Transformational Option

Discover your code

The code is the essential of an organization. It is about the organization's history, values, practices, assumptions, memories, heroes and stories. And with time goes by, it filters what is not true and keep the essential of the organization.

One of the main tasks in using Transformational Option is to find the code.

Cracking the code by looking at the symbols which are expressed in five primary forms: myths, traditions, heroes, decisions and visuals.

Myths shape the history of an organization, and traditions are important parts of the soul of an organization. Heroes embody the heart and soul of an organization and decisions are "turning point". And visuals are the outer face of an organization.

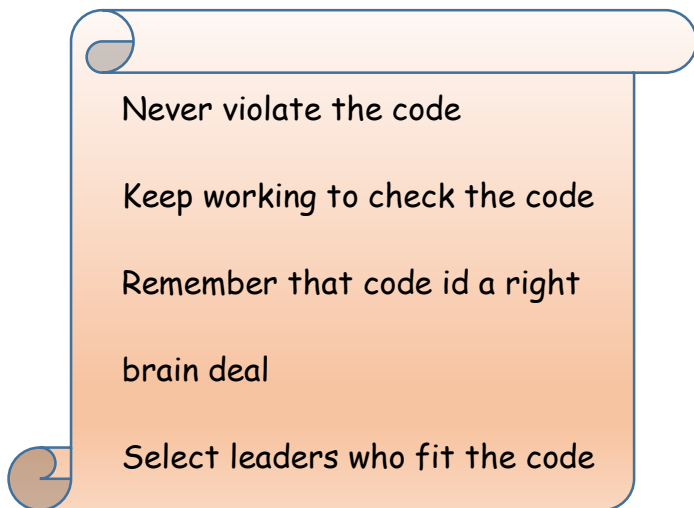
There is a list of problem which belong to transformational, when...

- It impacts manipulate stakeholders
- Is id complicated by deeply held values
- It will result in loss for someone
- A solution may not be found
- You have a history of failing to solve the problem

- People are overly dependent on the authority figure.
- It is related to your code

The first job for leaders is to define reality, and what challenging they are facing. This list can help leaders to identify in what occasion, the Transformational Option can be used.

Furthermore, to deep the understanding of the knowledge as leading from the Transformational Option, here are some tips.



Develop Your Adaptive Capacity

When you look up the dictionary, you will find that leadership is “noun”. It requires personal authority and it concerns power. Leadership is not only leader but also an

activity. One must know what kind of authority he or she have and can define the challenge the team facing and considering all od the stakeholders. When exposed the competing values, many leaders who are closest to success often fail. If the values in competition were not clear, face down together and communicate to discover what they are. Besides, changing bring stress. Leaders should keep the change at a tolerable rate. Finally, people doing the main work of leadership by their own, so leaders should give the work back to the team.

Persevere Though Conflict

A key to transformation and show the difference between leaders what people do with the conflict. There are two ways to handle conflict in this book.

Facing a conflict, people can choose to respond it from the **Red Zone** or the **Blue Zone**.

When a personal issue happened in an organization, leader should keep the conflict focused on values and interests that transcend the personal. The red behavior come from our

pain and our view of the world.

Blue Zone	Red Zone
This conflict is professional	This conflict is personal
It's about the organization	It's about me, or you
The mission of the organization rules	Emotions rule without being acknowledged
I must protect the team and the business	I must protect myself
The conflict is reframed into a discussion of values	The conflict escalates to destructive level

As a blue zone leader, a basic principle to leading through conflict is pushback. Leaders can ignore the opposition or try to get around it. It's helps because it shows you the strategy currently using is not working. And pushback can allow people to step back and think an alternative solution.

Besides, leader should know that themselves are part of the problem. Thus, they can manage themselves, by understanding how and when they can slip into red zone.

In conclusion, this book using examples explains three options: the Strategic Option, the Tactical Option and the Transformational Option to help leader to solve different problems. It is essential to use them in reality and different context.

References

Ford K., & Tucker. K. (2013). *The leadership triangle*. New York: Morgan James.