

Leadership for the Future

New Capabilities for a New World

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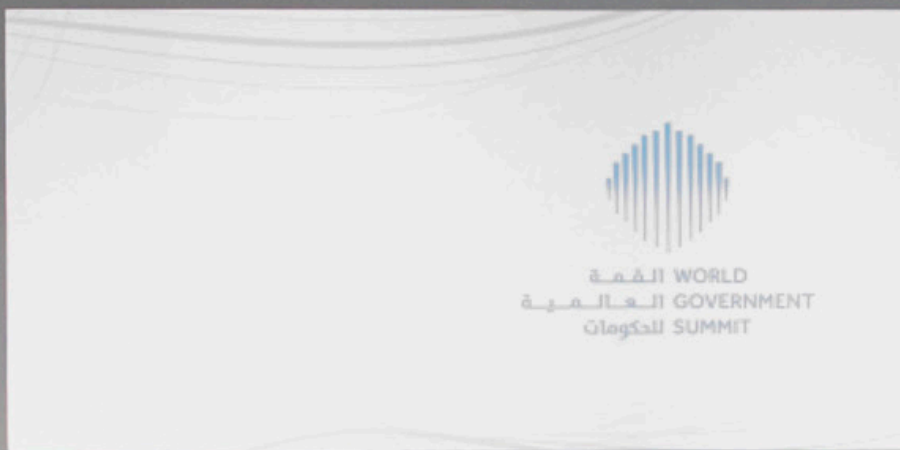
Answering Tomorrow's Questions Today

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UAE GOVERNMENT LEADERS PROGRAMME

UAE Government Leaders Programme

The Ministry of Cabinet affairs and the Future, through the UAE Government Leaders Programme, ensures the continuous flow of leadership at all levels to empower the government in achieving the main objectives of UAE 2021 vision.

The duties of UAE Government Leaders Programme include management and organization of UAE government leadership development programs, development and organization of workshops and personal leadership guide programs for the participants, creation of strategic relations with leadership development and government management centers, and contribution to building specialized capacities through training the government entities on guidelines for government programs in coordination with competent authorities, as well as advising the government regarding government leadership development and provision of world-class speakers in chosen topics of interest to the government. The Programme targets different leadership levels through four sub-programs determined according to career level in the ministries, authorities and federal institutions.



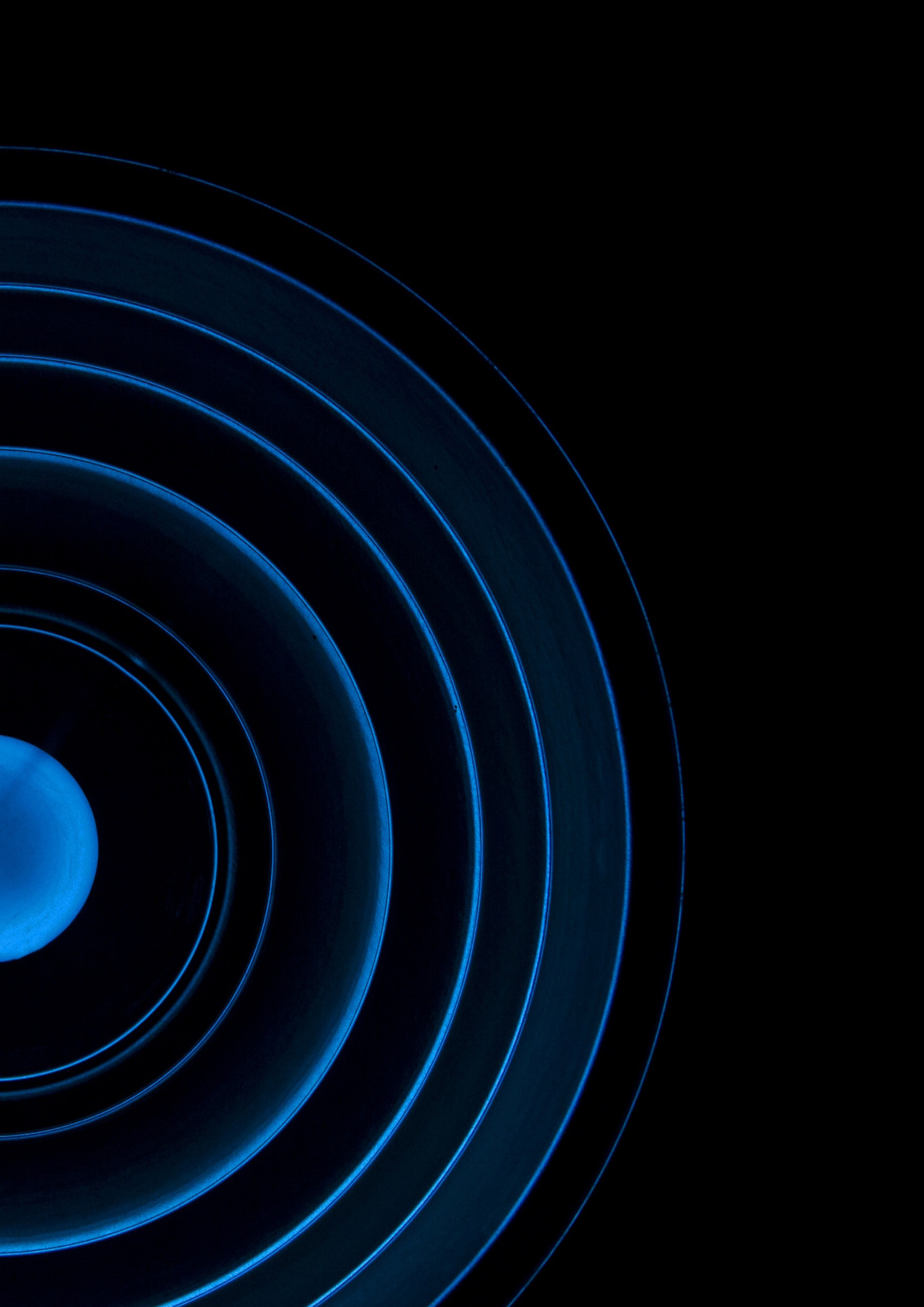


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New Capabilities for a New World

Unprecedented change defines today's world, creating the need for leaders to behavior and respond differently to help their organizations navigate this new, more unpredictable environment. The research findings in this white paper are a combination of conversations and interviews from multiple levels of leadership, to understand the issues they face. Numerous engaging interviews have been conducted to date, and the UAE Prime Ministers Office has identified key competencies and behaviors required of leaders going forward which complements the leadership findings.

Overview of Findings

The questions we asked included:

1. What are the most significant changes affecting your organization and what do you anticipate in the next 2-5 years?
2. What do these changes imply for your organizations?
3. What do leaders need to do more/better/differently to address these challenges?
4. What leadership competencies and associated behaviors are required to guide leaders as they transform?

Unprecedented Leadership Challenges

Broadly speaking, the findings show that respondents share a common concern about how to effectively lead their organizations into the future and are grappling with the implications of the myriad challenges they face. In this white paper we provide a synthesis of the findings and relevant observations from the interviews. We have confirmed that every aspect of how we work will change, requiring a shift in mindsets, skills and behaviors.

More specifically, four meta-themes emerged from the findings that help define critical leadership capabilities:

- **Clarity:** Being clear in all communication.
- **Connect:** Linking people, platforms and performance with technologies and capabilities.
- **Curiosity:** Success favors those with a growth mindset and the intrinsic desire to perpetually learn.
- **Compassion:** Recognizing that progress, growth and success depends on understanding people and their respective needs.

Not surprisingly, leaders must have the confidence and courage to pursue the kind of change needed by their organizations and society, despite often fierce headwinds. First, let's look at each of these four meta-themes in more depth:



Clarity



Connect



Compassion



Curiosity



Clarity

Summary Insights

Leaders must communicate clearly and transparently. While obvious, the pragmatic implementation of this is often idiosyncratic to the individual leader. The following comments from the interviews are representative of the larger findings:

“We need more communication building skills. Personally, I need to do more of this with my team. Another is design thinking. We need to expand communication and design thinking skills in order to keep up the pace.”

“We need to be open and communicate about the changes and engage them to be aware. If you don’t communicate then leaders will not even know that they are leaders. It is not about titles, it is about skills.”

Of course, the benefits to the organization are many:

Why Clarity is Important

Leaders must intentionally cultivate external understanding in order to effectively communicate insights to their organizations internally. Without question, the absence of clarity leads to confusion and even contradiction, neither of which contribute positively to organizational needs. Here are a few suggestions on how to deliver Clarity that creates positive impact:

1. Answer Why

Beyond financial gain and pure business outcomes, research shows that people want to feel connected to a larger sense of why their organizations exist and how their own expertise and capabilities contribute and add value. Articulating a clear sense of purpose provides a guiding star that helps rally people around a common cause. Answering WHY also enables the organization to consider and develop multiple pathways to achieving the larger purpose.

2. Communicate to Energize Others

Leaders, organizations, and even society at large operates most effectively when people understand what is being asked of them. Furthermore, clear communication serves as a spark that energizes people since they can approach their efforts with a sense of direction, as opposed to less clearly focused objectives, even contradictory communications that may drive ‘busy’ work, but are often energy-sapping activities without a central intent.

Connect

Summary Insights

There is a clear interdependence between people and the larger systems in which they operate. Leaders must not only build and develop their own networks, but they must continuously add value back into their networks so that learning and insights benefit the larger community. With the advent of transformative technologies, it is tempting to rely on new solutions for fostering connection. There is little question that technological advances are changing the nature of interaction among people around the world. Yet engendering human connectedness remains vital to healthy organizations, irrespective of the latest technology. The connections between talent and technology as a response to business shifts are:

“More cross collaboration is needed. We should look more closely across the organizations. We can do a better job to find more opportunities to work across the entire platform. This will also allow us to achieve results faster.”

“It is necessary that technology is embraced positively but not as a total solution to all issues. And human interaction cannot be undervalued at all levels.”:

Why Connection is Important

Connection between people and technology stimulates the systems in which they operate, but it is the human quotient that provides the nuanced understanding to foster meaningful organizations and communities. The following suggestions will help leaders create more impactful, intentional and successful connections that ultimately support enhanced discretionary effort from individuals within every organization.

1. Adapt to Permanent Change

There is universal recognition that change is not the exception, but the rule in today's world. Stasis is the exception and for most organizations, a recipe for extinction. Therefore, by fostering more connected communities of people, leaders will be more effective at inspiring people to engage with each other for the sake of their organizations and, just as importantly, their own personal growth and development.

2. Adapt to 'And And'

Leaders must be open to pursuing multiple objectives simultaneously. They must protect the core while pursuing growth; they must be both hands-on and hands-off-by letting go they allow others to step up. Intentional networking and connection building introduces people to others they might not otherwise interact with, enhancing understanding; integrating talent development, flexible systems and process, and technologies to reinforce a culture of adaptability; and understanding sound data analytics and human empathy to develop sharper decision making abilities.

3. Adapt to Informed Informality

The world today is increasing personal and interpersonal, requiring leaders to develop a deeper and more genuine understanding for and appreciation of their stakeholders, whether those are colleagues, customers, shareholders or partners. The traditional command and control model of management, while useful in limited contexts, generally inhibits open dialogue and debate. Today's leaders and organizations will prosper by favoring a more dynamic and active approach to conversations with people. This informed informality does not eliminate the need for performance, but it does place a higher premium on how people behave and whether they are doing the right things.



“There is lot of focus on empowering people and getting the most out of individuals...”



Curiosity

Summary Insights

The term 'perpetually curious' resonated with the respondents. There is widespread agreement that leaders must have an appetite for learning, a willingness to shed default thinking and reasoning, and a desire to try out new ideas and approaches, knowing full well that failure is a real possibility. It was equally apparent that people who are not open to change or seeking out diverse perspectives will be increasingly marginalized in the organization, as the following comments indicate:

"The whole world, including governments, are becoming more complex, uncertain, and volatile, requiring greater agility. As leaders, we need to be more flexible and agile to deal with this change. We need to catch up and surpass the level of change that is happening to better respond to today's complex situation."

"There is lot of focus on empowering people and getting the most out of individuals. It's more about efficiency and productivity. There is lot of shift in terms of the individuality of leadership, including being innovative & creative."

"We need freelancers work within the organization. As an organization, we are already into that and more of that would be better."

Why Curiosity is Important

Being curious is the fuel that catalyzes learning and adrenalizes action. As people learn more, they become better informed and are able to debate ideas that often even challenge their own understanding of the world, and it provides a wider range of pathways for organizations to travel as they pursue their larger strategic ambitions. The findings highlight that leaders today must cultivate an inspired sense of inquisitiveness and encourage an atmosphere of sharing so that people gain a richer set of perspectives. The following suggestions provide guidance in how leaders can inspire curiosity:

1. Reignite Wonder and Youthful Questioning

Beyond financial gain and pure business outcomes, research shows that people want to feel connected to a larger sense of why their organizations exist and how their own expertise and capabilities contribute and add value. Articulating a clear sense of purpose provides a guiding star that helps rally people around a common cause. Answering WHY also enables the organization to consider and develop multiple pathways to achieving the larger purpose.

2. Do Not Treat Convention and Status Quo as Permanent Conditions

Leaders, organizations, and even society at large operates most effectively when people understand what is being asked of them. Furthermore, clear communication serves as a spark that energizes people since they can approach their efforts with a sense of direction, as opposed to less clearly focused objectives, even contradictory communications that may drive 'busy' work, but are often energy-sapping activities without a central intent.

3. Cultivate Self-Awareness

Leaders, organizations, and even society at large operates most effectively when people understand what is being asked of them. Furthermore, clear communication serves as a spark that energizes people since they can approach their efforts with a sense of direction, as opposed to less clearly focused objectives, even contradictory communications that may drive 'busy' work, but are often energy-sapping activities without a central intent.

Compassion

Summary Insights

Compassion is closely linked throughout the meta-themes. One cannot be clear in their communication without understanding the audience for their intended communication; building purposeful networks and connections is not sustainable if the effort lacks compassion for others; curiosity cannot evolve into a multi-dimensional cultivation of understanding when compassion is lacking since it closes down an open mind. In today's world of revolutionary change, including new technologies like artificial intelligence, the need for people to be more human has never been greater, as was echoed by many of the respondents:

"Looking into people's wellbeing. You cannot sustain improvement if people are not balanced. The imbalance leads to mental health issues increasing. They need bring it into the system. People need the right balance between work and home.

"Empathy is missing. Leadership is about empowering others. It is no longer about incompetent individuals."

"I do not think we need more followers, we need more empowered leaders with the togetherness and collaboration."

"We need to appreciate differences. I need people that are keen in different areas to produce a greater leadership mosaic. We need to get people out of survival mode to productive mode."

Why Compassion is Important

Organizations are dynamic, highly animated amalgamations of sub-cultures that support a wide range of talent and perspectives. This collision of influences creates a rich, unique blend of capabilities that, when thoughtfully aligned, can lead to breakthroughs in innovation, performance and contribution to society as a whole. Compassion is at the core of this, and the following serve as helpful tips for ensuring compassion is central to every leader and their organization:

1. Lead by Example

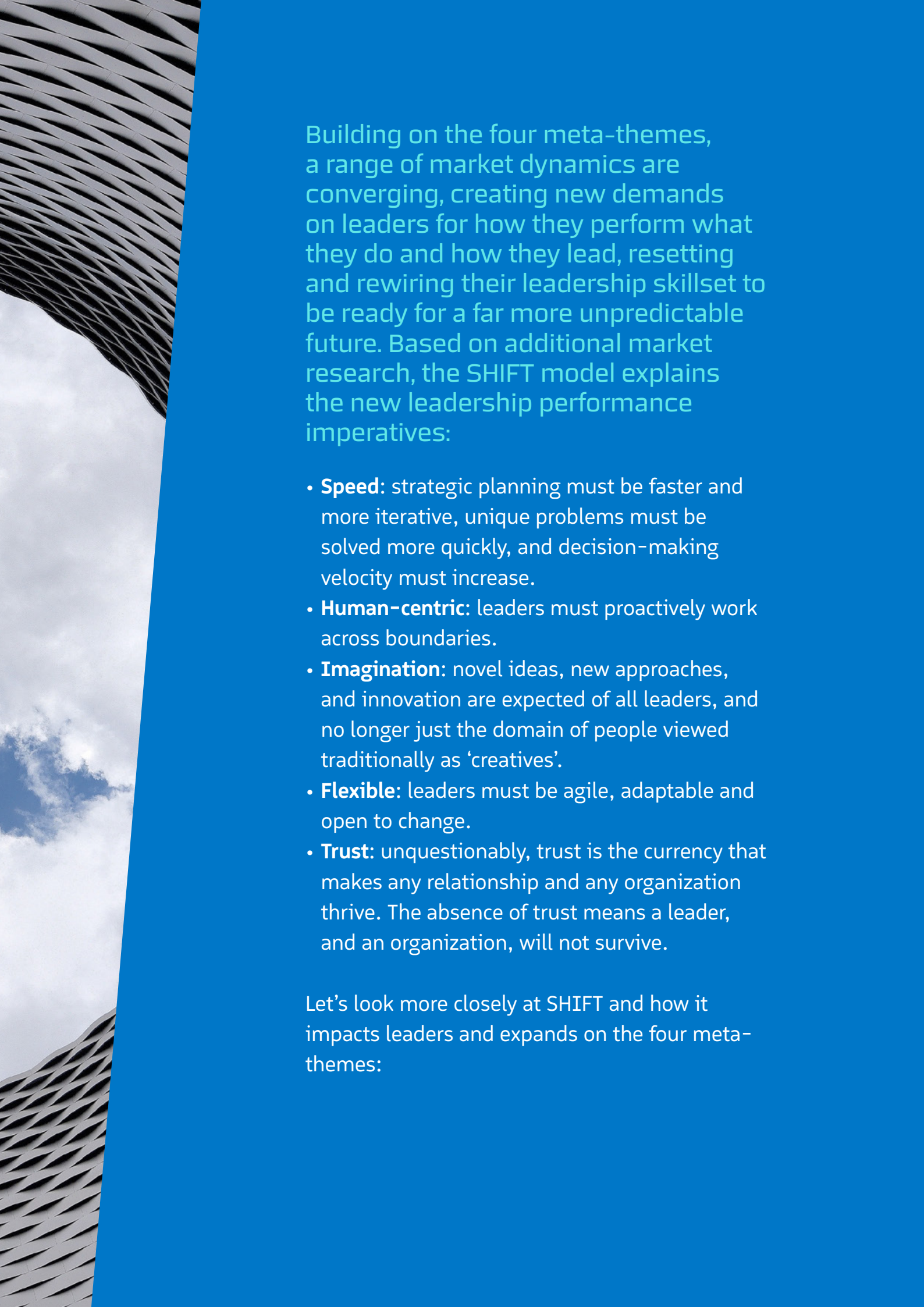
Innumerable studies show that people respect and respond to those whose integrity is true and moral compass is pointing due north. Leaders cannot credibly last long if they demand from others qualities they themselves are not willing to practice. Living by a clear set of principles and values that are transparent to others is part of leadership success. Similarly, displaying a willingness to be vulnerable and an unequivocal sense of personal accountability will affirm to others the actions and contributions leaders demonstrate themselves and expect from those around them. Conversely, those who inject their organizations with questionable practices and behaviors create toxic cultures that inevitably drive performance down and people out.

2. Celebrate the Value of People

The most enduring success is the result of the explicit recognition by leaders that people matter. Therefore, inspiring, guiding, developing, challenging and listening to them remains the single greatest need leaders must perpetually address for their organizations in particular, and society overall, to prosper.



WHAT'S NEXT



Building on the four meta-themes, a range of market dynamics are converging, creating new demands on leaders for how they perform what they do and how they lead, resetting and rewiring their leadership skillset to be ready for a far more unpredictable future. Based on additional market research, the SHIFT model explains the new leadership performance imperatives:

- **Speed:** strategic planning must be faster and more iterative, unique problems must be solved more quickly, and decision-making velocity must increase.
- **Human-centric:** leaders must proactively work across boundaries.
- **Imagination:** novel ideas, new approaches, and innovation are expected of all leaders, and no longer just the domain of people viewed traditionally as ‘creatives’.
- **Flexible:** leaders must be agile, adaptable and open to change.
- **Trust:** unquestionably, trust is the currency that makes any relationship and any organization thrive. The absence of trust means a leader, and an organization, will not survive.

Let's look more closely at SHIFT and how it impacts leaders and expands on the four meta-themes:



HUMAN CENTERED

Summary Insights

As leaders gain experience over time, they also accumulate a certain amount of wisdom about the factors that most consistently enabled their success. First among equals was an explicit recognition that most successes they had along the way were due to how they worked with others, as opposed to the depth of domain expertise they have. This was not true at the start of their careers, when one's school marks and technical skills were perceived to be more important. But as they navigated their careers, the realization grew that working with others effectively and working across boundaries, are vital to sustained leadership success. The importance of cultivating and nurturing trusted relationships through a deliberate effort to step outside of silos and build relationships and networks with others has become a consistent need among today's leaders. This logic envelopes all stakeholders both inside and outside the leader's organization, as these respondents indicate:

"...Collaboration, not working in silos. People are experimenting together. Government employees will move across entities based on projects. The concept of free agent will be more common."

"The Life leader. We need to create a leader who is great in organization and society and can be successful everywhere, and can make others great and feel safe to speak up."

"In order to be the best leader, they have to become the customer themselves. Not necessarily all the customers have the same issues, but leaders need to live the journey of the customer for them to serve them. If you do not have it, you cannot give it. Leaders should go down to that level to understand the challenges and solve the challenges."

Why Human-Centricity is Important

While some leaders are better dealing with people than others, all leaders depend on people and their collective contribution to help the organization succeed. A crucial ingredient for success is recognizing that energizing others and leading by example is required of leaders and, simultaneously, knowing when to step back so others are able to step up. The days of command and control, giving orders and demanding results are long-gone. Leaders who learn to let go of past practices and lean into the perspectives of others will be able to catalyze them into aligning around a common cause.

IMAGINATIVE

Summary Insights

As the interviews reinforced, we are in a period of time when Design Thinking and Human-Centered Design principles are gaining significant importance with organizations worldwide. They are more than a fad: they are proven methods for innovating and ideating solutions to often vexing problems.

Interestingly, several respondents said that they want future leaders to regularly push themselves and others to step outside their comfort zones and challenge conventional wisdom in an effort to poke at existing systems and provoke people into trying new approaches. Being imaginative implies that a person must have a growth mindset and are, therefore, open to new ideas. As another respondent affirmed:

“There has to be someone who inspires you. Leaders need to believe in you, and they need to provide the right environment for you be inspired and to execute.”

Why Imagination is Important

Imagination is unleashed most effectively when the obsolete management mantra of ‘don’t screw up’ (which fosters a risk averse mentality) gives way to the encouraging people to fail faster, learn and improve, in perpetuity.



FLEXIBLE

Summary Insights

The interviews highlighted another key finding: leaders must not become rigid in their work habits, beliefs and practices. Just as being imaginative requires a growth mindset, so to does being flexible. Indeed, agility, adaptability and openness to change are expected as an essential requirement of today's leaders. Flexibility suggests that leaders must be capable of pivoting, whether in a new direction and/or to embrace a new point of view. Leaders must avoid the sunk cost fallacy whereby they invest more because of emotional commitment, even if the project is failing. Being able to recognize when to stop investing, irrespective of commitment and effort to date, and pivoting in a new direction are attributes of a healthy leadership perspective illustrating that the person is not locked in and is able to adjust as they learn new information, as these respondents indicate:

“Each leadership style is different. It doesn't work as well by having two leaders with the same way of thinking. Others may not be able to reach or stretch, so we have to have different ways of thinking, and therefore different styles of leadership. We all need to understand that having differences is not a bad thing, it is a plus. We need to build on each other's difference.”

“People think there is a formula but there is no one formula. Each leader needs to look at his own character, the environment, and the organization. They need to know, identify, and adjust accordingly. When they move onto another context they need to adjust and recalibrate to the new environment they need to understand the landscape and how to adjust given the context.”

“If you want to lead, your approach needs to be different and flexible. Best practices for other may not be the same for the rest of us. People talk about taking risk, but then they go back and follow others. Instead, learn from others, then create your own version.”

Why Flexibility is Important

Innumerable pathways exist to encourage flexibility. From mini-scenario plans to stakeholder ethnography to rapid test and learn—pursuing any or all of these will inspire people to think more broadly about possible alternative futures and responses. Similarly, allowing quick adjustment and adaptation in real time will help build much stronger capabilities in the organization's talent.





TRUST

Summary Insights

Leaders face a myriad of challenges and demands that add stress to their already hectic professional lives. If they cannot trust their colleagues and organization, then it leads to individual and organizational toxicity. Simply put, the absence of trust means the organization will not survive long. So it is incumbent on leaders to energize people and lead by example by fostering trusted relationships and trust in the organizational workplace. Trust is the currency that positively animates relationships to other stakeholders as well, as echoed by respondents:

“Feedback is very important. The leader also needs to be open and give the right weight to feedback. There is not one formula, and knowing this has really helped me as leader. People can look at things from their own style and perspective.”

“We need to trust and nurture young and emerging leaders to have the right maturity and experience to be able to take the right decision.”

Why Trust is Important

Trust is earned by following through on promises, being genuine to one's word, and adhering to a clear set of values that helps others see behaviors that are worthy of emulation. When trust is broken the effort to repair is near impossible. Therefore, how leaders exemplify the qualities they espouse and expect, including transparent communication, determines whether trust is built and sustained.

UAE's Government Leadership Model (GLM)

Leadership Spirit

Achievements and Impact

Enabler of People

Inspires, encourages, and motivates others; reinforces human capabilities and talents through empowerment, effectively leverages others' capabilities and demonstrates emotional intelligence

Role Model

Shows values of integrity, humility and respect; embraces and promotes the concepts of happiness and positivity; makes substantial contributions in representing the country in a positive way

Open to the World

Open-minded to different experiences; embraces the values of peace, tolerance and coexistence; enjoys an extensive network of relations and is well-versed in global culture

Futuristic

Well-informed about global trends; able to imagine the future; anticipate and analyze opportunities through developing future scenarios and proactive plans

Innovative and Disruptive

Catalyst for change at the individual and institutional level; entrepreneurial, Risk Taker and adventurous for whom nothing is impossible

Agile and Fast

Creates an environment which promotes and empowers change, achieving goals in the quickest possible way and makes efficient use of available resources with self assurance in different situations

Smart, Effective and Efficient Decision Maker

Adopts a critical, analytical style of thinking; is mindful and gutsy of all decision parameters in achieving the most desirable outcome

Focuses on the government's ultimate goals and achievements

Strong advocate in achieving the government's objectives; adds value in all aspects of work performance relating to national goals

Life-long Learner

Seeks self-development in order to acquire and enhance diverse skills to meet future needs; passionate for knowledge, research and exploration

Well-versed in Advanced Technology

Awareness of new technologies and trends such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how to get the most benefits out of these technologies which will transform the way we live and work in the future to achieve people happiness

Future Outlook



The UAE Government leaders program designed a co-competency framework that fulfils the current and future skills and behaviors that leaders should obtain and have, providing high-level insight and guidance for leaders.

When the UAE Government Leaders Program designed the framework, being an **Enabler of People** was identified as one of the key focus areas, which includes the following areas of practices and behaviors:

- **Develops Talent**
- **Accountability and Responsibility**
- **Strong Strategic and Organizational Communication**
- **Enables Collaboration**

Enabling people also requires being a Role Model, which includes the following practices and behaviors:

- **Passion, Enthusiasm, Values and Ethics**
- **Inspires, Motivates and Empowers Others**
- **Exhibits Happiness and a Positive Outlook**

In order to manage in a global world, **leaders need to be open to the world, which includes the following:**

- **Convinces Others and Has Impact**
- **Encourages Diversity**
- **Deals Well with Uncertainty**

The aforementioned people behaviors are crucial. In addition, leaders must have a **future outlook**. Three practices and behaviors have been identified:

1. The leader should be **Futuristic**, understand global trends and how they affect his/her business in the following areas:

- **Strategic Foresight**

In addition to the strategic foresight, leaders should be innovators who are able to disrupt the current status. This competency includes:

- **An Innovator and a Creative Thinker**
- **A Risk Taker**
- **Realigns and Redesigns Work Practices**

2. Leaders can't innovate without also being **Well-versed in Advanced Technology**, which requires the following:

- **Staying up to Date with Technology**

3. Today's rapidly changing world will require leaders that are **Lifelong Learners** who can:

- **Continuously Develops and Learns (Self Development)**

The last part of the UAE Government Leadership Model focuses on achievement and impact, encompassing three areas:

- 1. Focuses on the government's ultimate goals and achievements**
- 2. Smart, Effective and Efficient Decision Maker**
- 3. Being Agile and Fast**

In more detail:

1. **Focuses on the Government's Ultimate Goals and Achievements**

- **Aligns to and drives national/Government objectives**

2. **Smart, Effective and Efficient Decision Maker**

- **Effective Decisions**
- **Intellectual Capital/ Encourage others to learn to make effective decisions**

3. **Being Agile and Fast**

- **Understanding of Global Markets and Industry Developments**
- **Responds and adapts quickly**

The above model was designed to equip potential leaders to unleash their capabilities. Using this model, the UAE Government can meet the challenges of the 4th industrial revolution, achieve vision 2021 and the UAE Centennial 2071.

Conclusion

Leaders are expected to do extraordinary things, which may often feel like a burden, especially when the very essence of leadership success is often predicated on leaping into the unknown, handling ambiguity and disruption, and convincing others to follow. Leaders must increasingly lead in situations where the rules and boundaries have not been created, which means they must discover what does and does not work as they navigate their way through the uncertainty.

The Four Meta-Themes and the SHIFT model help explain what leaders must be able to do if they are to succeed, and doing these well is a long and non-linear process. It means letting go and opening ourselves up in different ways. The leadership research indicates that each person's deliberate effort to make progress in these areas brings the promise of having an even

greater positive impact on the institutions that shape our prosperity and our experience as human beings. The UAE Government competency model provides guidance on the behaviors that will enable leaders to fulfil their potential and help the country achieve its long-term ambitions.

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