

One  
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consulting

# Authentic Leadership – Defining your own authenticity

Kordsa Global 2016

Tim Bright

[www.oneworldconsulting.com](http://www.oneworldconsulting.com)

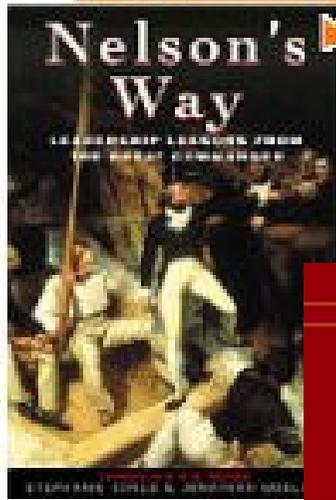
# Agenda

- What is authentic leadership?
- Different approaches to authentic leadership and how to apply it
- Exercises for you to explore your own authentic leadership alone and with others.

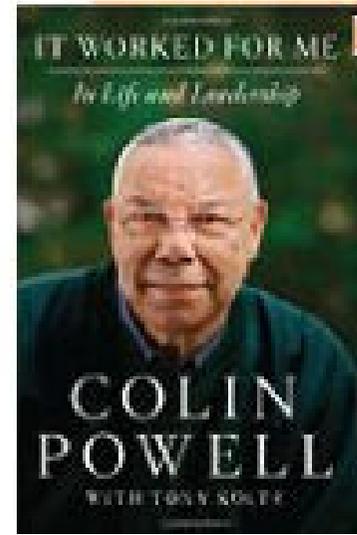
# The Leadership Industry is in crisis

- Not clear agreement on what leadership is
- Scandals in leadership over recent years
- Problems with “charismatic” leaders
  
- We haven’t found the keys to good leadership
  
- Is leadership an art or a science?
  
- Leading like others –
  - Jack Welch, Richard Branson,  
sports people,  
religious figures!

LOOK INSIDE!



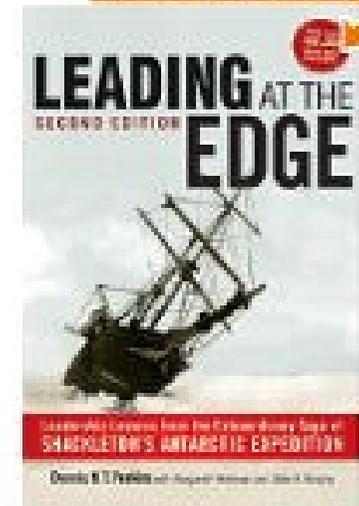
MONTGOMERY



IT WORKED FOR ME  
*In Life and Leadership*

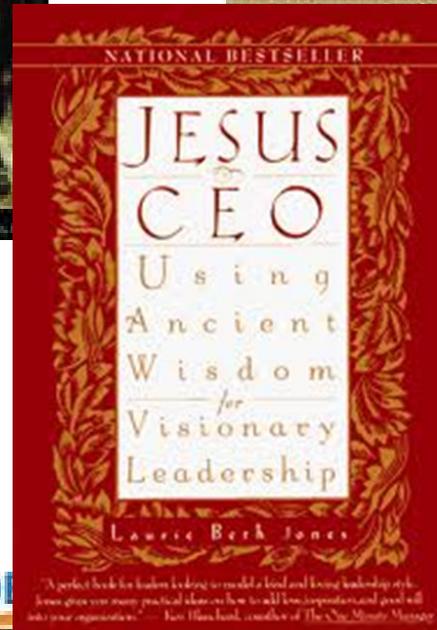
COLIN  
POWELL  
WITH TONY SOLTE

LOOK INSIDE!



LEADING AT THE  
EDGE  
SECOND EDITION

LEADERLESS LESSONS FROM THE POLARIS ARCTIC EXPEDITION  
Dennis B. Fouts with Douglas M. Stovall, John A. Stovall



JESUS  
CEO  
Using  
Ancient  
Wisdom  
for  
Visionary  
Leadership

Laurie Berk Jones

"A perfect book for leaders looking to model a lead and living leadership style. Jones gives us many practical ideas on how to all live, implement and put all into your organization." — Tom Harkin, member of The U.S. House of Representatives

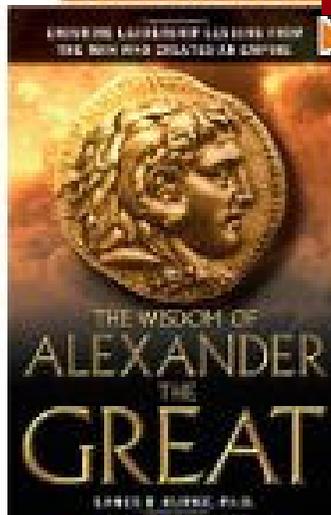
LOOK INSIDE!



How to think like  
STEVE JOBS

DANIEL GOLEMAN

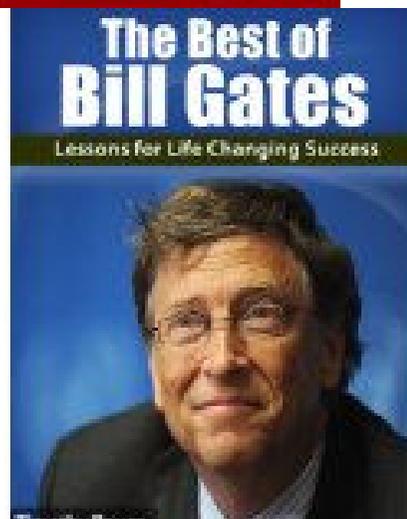
LOOK INSIDE!



LEARNING LEADERSHIP LESSONS FROM  
THE MAN WHO COLLECTED AN EMPIRE

THE WISDOM OF  
ALEXANDER  
THE  
GREAT

DAVID S. JORDAN, Ph.D.

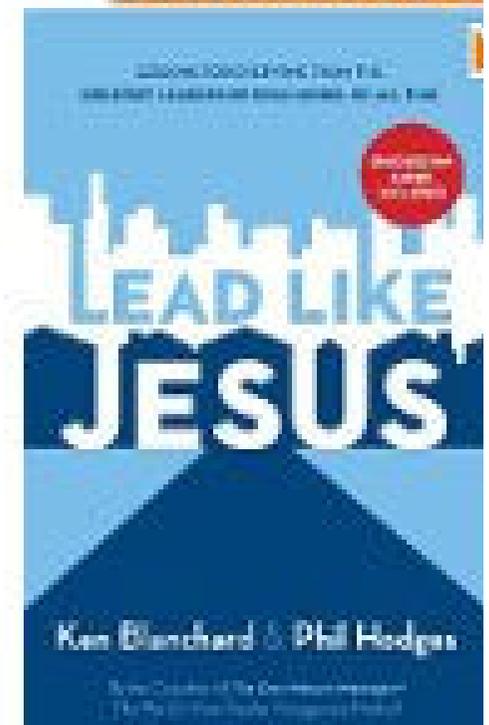


The Best of  
Bill Gates

Lessons for Life Changing Success

Timothy Ferriss

LOOK INSIDE!



LEAD LIKE  
JESUS

Ken Blanchard & Phil Hodges

Seven Classics of the Christian Imperative  
That Have Inspired Millions of Followers

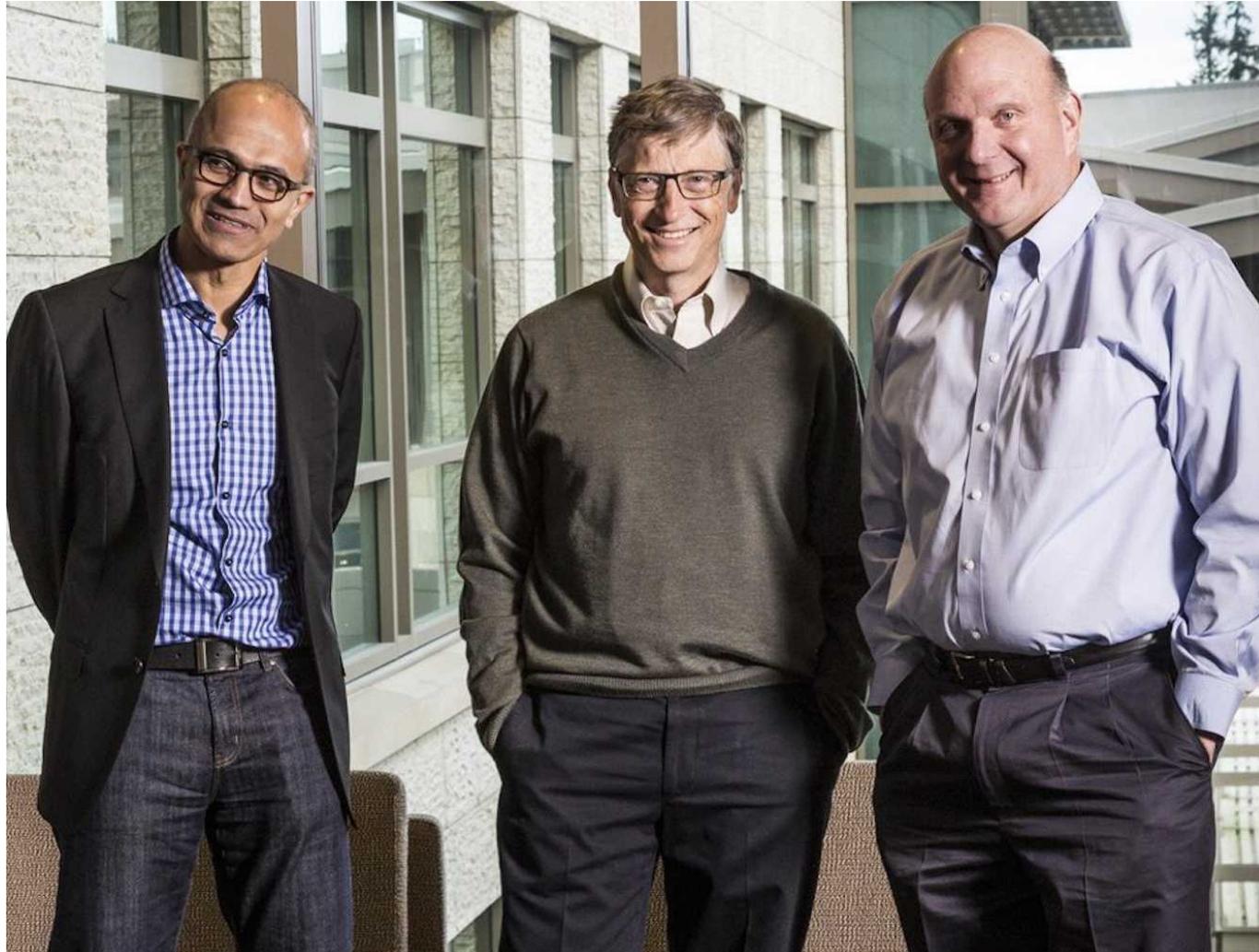
# But.....

It doesn't work...

It's not authentic, it's fake

And you can't sustain it.

# 3 CEOs at Microsoft



# Bill Gates



# Steve Ballmer video



Satya Nadella



# Leadership

- Leadership is more of an art than a science.
- The context or situation is key.
- Leadership is different in different sectors.
- Effective leaders are very different from each other.
- There are no rules of leadership that apply to all cases.
- Except perhaps one...

**Effective Inspirational Leaders are Authentic.**

**They know who they are and we know who they are and we believe in them.**

**“Be yourself – more - with skill”**

Robert Goffee & Gareth Jones

[www.whysouldanyonebeledbyyou.com](http://www.whysouldanyonebeledbyyou.com)

# What is a Leader?

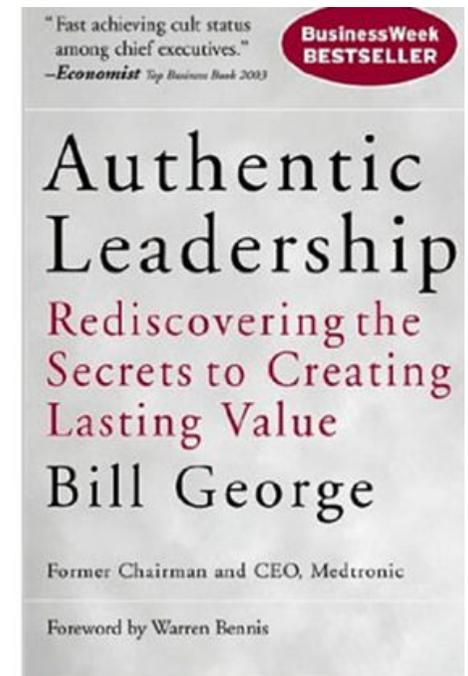
- At the most basic level “someone with followers”
- So we need to think about the followers’ perceptions.
- Who is worth following?
- We want to follow ‘real’ people, whom we see as authentic. Not robots or fakes.
- How can we be authentic leaders?

# So what does 'authentic' mean?

- Greek *authentikos* - original, genuine, principal
- “Of the same origin as claimed; genuine.”
- “Conforming to reality and therefore worthy of trust, reliance, or belief.”
- “true to one's own personality, spirit, or character”

# Authentic Leadership

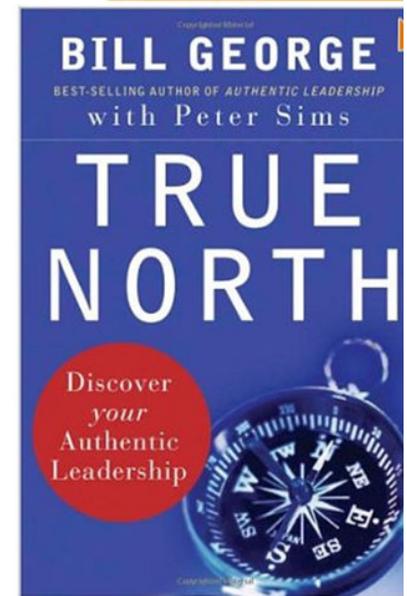
- Dominant approach – Bill George and Warren Bennis
- George (2003) - businesses that survive and flourish for the long term are authentic, sharing five characteristics –
  - a clear purpose
  - strong values
  - leading with heart (demonstrating passion)
  - engaging in effective relationships
  - demonstrating self-discipline



# Exploring this 'authentic leadership'

- George says companies must have a meaningful purpose, examples often come from the healthcare sector
- Bill George from Medtronic, Merck and Johnson & Johnson often used as examples.
- It's easier for your company to have a meaningful purpose if your products save lives.

# Exploring this 'authentic leadership'



Also there are assumptions of goodness built into this –

- “Your True North represents who you are as a human being at your deepest level, your most cherished values, your passions and motivations, and the sources of satisfaction in your life. When you follow your True North, your leadership will be authentic, and people will naturally want to associate with you”
- “Your True North begins with the gifts you were given at birth by your Creator.”

# Critique of Bill George's approach

- This is an essentialist approach, based on the belief that we have an essential self, a 'true north'.
- For many writers it's a religious approach.
- It's a consistent view, we are fundamentally good - and if we act in accordance with that we'll do good things and be good leaders.
- As students of leadership we must be aware of the assumptions in the approaches we use.

# Different views of Authentic Leadership

- For Bennis and George, 'authentic' = 'good'.
- I think 'authentic' = 'true to yourself' – not about good or bad ethics.
- What do you think?
- Can you be an authentically evil leader? (Hitler?)
- And what does that say about your views of human nature?

# An alternative approach – Managed Authenticity

- Rob Goffee and Gareth Jones, a series of books and articles.
- “Why should anyone be led by you?” (HBR, 2000)
- Looking at leaders who *inspire*. 4 qualities in authentic leaders -
  - Selectively show **weaknesses**
  - Use **intuition** to guide actions
  - Demonstrate ‘**tough empathy**’
  - Reveal their **differences**.

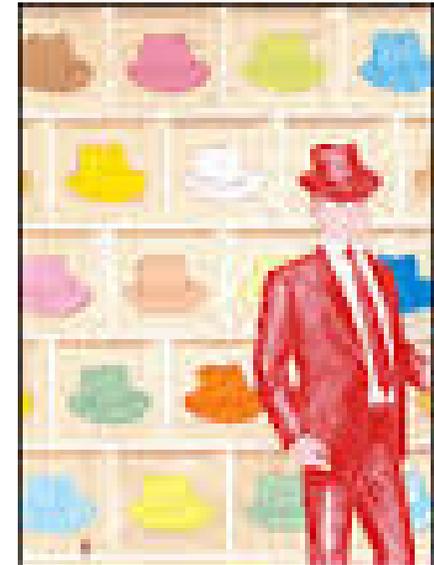
“Be yourselves - more - with skill.’

There can be no advice more difficult to follow than that.”



# Managing Authenticity

- Goffee & Jones 2005 *Harvard Business Review* article.
  - You can't lead successfully by copying someone else.
  - Authenticity is not innate it's relational. It's attributed to you by others.
  - The challenge of leadership is to manage your authenticity.
- 
- *Manage the perception*
  - *Know yourself and others*
  - *Use where you come from*
  - *Conform, but only just enough*



# A paradox or a balance?

“Effective leadership involves a complex balancing act between using your authentic differences and adapting your behaviours to context. Being authentic is not about being the same all the time. The most effective leaders are authentic chameleons. The chameleon always adapts to context but remains a chameleon.”

(Goffee & Jones)

<http://www.oneworldconsulting.com/owc-articles-alt.php?id=016>



So how can you use this as  
current and future leaders at  
Kordsa Global?

# Authentic Leadership

## Get to know yourself and your origins better by:

- **Exploring your autobiography.** Familiarize yourself with your identity anchors – the people, places, and events that shaped you. Share these discoveries with others who have had similar experiences.
- **Avoiding comfort zones. Step out of your routines,** seek new adventures, and take some risks.
- **Getting honest feedback. Ask for 360-degree feedback** from close colleagues, friends, family, and so on.

(From Goffee & Jones, *Managing Authenticity*, Harvard Business Review, December 2005)

# Authentic Leadership

## Get to know others better by:

- **Building a rich picture of your environment.** Don't view others as one-dimensional; find out about people's backgrounds, biographies, families, and obsessions.
- **Removing barriers between yourself and others. Selectively** show a weakness or vulnerability that reveals your approachability to your direct reports, assistants, colleagues and so on. Share your mistakes.
- **Empathizing passionately with people. Care deeply** about the work you and other people do.
- **Letting others know what's unique (and authentic) about them.** Give people feedback that acknowledges and validates their origins.

# Authentic Leadership

- **Leadership is a relationship.** Simplest definition of a 'leader' – someone who has followers.
- **You don't decide if you are authentic or not, others do.**
- **Being authentic is about meaning.** Look for meaning for yourself and others. **A key role of leaders is as meaning-makers**
- Look for **'something bigger'**. What is the **purpose** of what you and your organisation are doing?
- **Start with 'why?'** – Simon Sinek

TED Talk <http://www.startwithwhy.com/>

# See authenticity as a continuum, not black and white

Over-managed

Over-authentic



Managed Authenticity

# Exercise

- Think about leaders you know, personally or via the media.
- What do you know about them as people?
- Do you see them as over-managed or over-authentic or as appropriately authentic?
- For 5 minutes discuss your examples with a colleague and reflect on what you notice.

# Reflect on yourself

- Think about yourself are you over-managed or over-authentic?
- What is your own authentic story?

# Explore your own authenticity

*“When we know the facts about people, we know what they are.*

*When we know their stories, we know who they are.”*

(John Quincy Adams)

# Explore your own authenticity

- Think through your own biography, reflect on what stands out.
- What makes you different? Raise awareness of your self and your values.
- What weaknesses can you share?

(See Brene Brown and Patrick Lencioni on the power of vulnerability).

# Explore your own authenticity

- Develop your intuitions and use them more.
- Build your own style, rather than copying someone else's. Focus on your differences, but not too much.
- Talk and listen to others, to help shape your own authentic story.
- Remember authenticity is judged by others, not ourselves.

# Exercise 2

Spend 8 minutes on your own thinking about your own authentic self, and make a few notes for yourself –

- What makes you different?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- What is important in your biography?
- What feedback have you received about yourself as a leader?

# Exercise 3

- Choose a colleague you don't know so well in the room, and share with them what you would like to share with others as your authentic self, tell them your story.
- Give each other feedback as appropriate.

(15 minutes)

# My personal view

I think people can be authentically bad or evil, but it's very rare. Authentic doesn't equal 'good' or 'admirable'.

We need to separate the terms 'authentic' and 'good'.

I do think most people are good and cooperative, due to the effects of evolution (see Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation*) But authentic and good are not the same thing.

Many executives don't make enough of their own differences, and would benefit from sharing more of themselves at work.

# My personal view

In business we should be authentic because –

1. It's the right thing to do
2. We'll get found out if we are acting
3. It takes too much energy to keep up an act
4. We will only inspire others if we are authentic.

# Summary

Authenticity is the **one factor** that inspirational leaders have in common. It is something that can be developed. It's about finding your own style, not copying others.

We each need to find a place on the continuum between over-managed and over authentic, and become more aware of our differences.

Authentic Leadership is not an excuse for bad behaviour. It's not just about being spontaneous. It's be yourself, more, with skill.

# Thank You



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# Wall metaphor – what should others know about you?

- Imagine a wall covered with facts about you. Your past, present, strengths, weaknesses, passions, hobbies, phobias.
- As a leader, choose from that wall what you want to share with your colleagues.
- What you share is **authentic**, because it's genuine, and it's **managed** because you are selecting what to share and what not to share.
- Share more of your self and your biography, so that people have a clear sense of who you are. We don't need to like our leaders but we do need to know who they are.

# What should your organisation know about you as a person?

For you to be successful, your team should know –

- Some things about you as a person. (not 'a black box')
- True things
- Consistent things (i.e. you present in a similar way to all)
- They should include humanising weaknesses
- Things that support your business priorities
  
- This is particularly important for people starting in new leadership roles.