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# The ConantLeadership Flywheel Explained

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The key to **Leadership That Works** is found in the 7 connected practice areas of the **ConantLeadership Flywheel**. We champion this high-impact model, based on 40 years of leadership experience and study, as a highly effective way for 21st century leaders to deliver enduring value to all stakeholders. Each pillar in the flywheel is anchored in trust, which is the foundational element of elite performance; when they are developed in harmony — they are a powerful, self-reinforcing tool for **transforming individuals and organizations** with everlasting momentum.

As you become more proficient in the practice areas of the flywheel, we encourage you to explore your unique leadership perspective. Use this resource as a starting point that sparks a journey of self-discovery. Ultimately, you can use these principles to inspire the creation of your own robust leadership model that is rooted in your personal experience and point of view.

# Inspire Trust

Earn the confidence of all stakeholders.

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*"Trust is the one thing that changes everything."*

Stephen M.R. Covey

Trust is the axis upon which our entire suite of leadership behaviors depends. Your actions must be anchored in trust or the flywheel ceases to function properly and the momentum comes to a halt. As you work to develop your craft -- you must continually inspire trust at every step along the way. You really have no choice.

## To Inspire Trust

- Honor *all* stakeholders.
  - Declare yourself and do what you say you are going to do.
  - Develop and display character and competence – consistently.
  - Uphold high ethical standards.
  - Model the behavior you expect from others.
  - Acknowledge mistakes.
  - Consistently meet performance expectations.
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*"People buy into the leader before they buy into the vision."*

John C. Maxwell

# 1. Clarify Higher Purpose

Craft an inspiring ‘calling’ that resonates with all stakeholders and delivers economic and social value.

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“When you're surrounded by people who share a passionate commitment around a common purpose, anything is possible.”

Howard Schultz

A higher purpose guides your work and provides a reservoir of vitality that invigorates the effort. This practice area must be attended to first – both at the individual and organizational level. An inspiring calling will govern your leadership, tether the work to shared meaning, and ensure you continue on the right path in the face of adversity.

## To Clarify Higher Purpose

- Craft an aspirational calling that resonates with all stakeholders and delivers economic and social value.
- Champion the higher purpose with intentionality, passion, persistence, and humility.
- Ensure the higher purpose governs the direction of the organization.

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“Efforts and courage are not enough without purpose and direction.”

John F. Kennedy

# 2. Create Direction

Develop a competitively advantaged direction for advancing the agenda.

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*"Plans are nothing; planning is everything."*

Dwight D. Eisenhower

To advance the agenda and realize the Higher Purpose – you must collaboratively develop a clear and compelling plan for achieving agreed upon goals. This practice area is essential for building a clear-eyed approach that unmistakably points you in the right direction.

## To Create Direction

- Confront the brutal facts facing you or your organization, question assumptions, challenge paradigms.
  - Build an aspirational but achievable plan for advancing the agenda while honoring all stakeholders.
  - Dispel ambiguity – make sure the expectations of the plan are clear to all.
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*"Productivity is never an accident. It is always the result of a commitment to excellence, intelligent planning, and focused effort."*

Paul J. Meyer

# 3. Drive Alignment

Organize and leverage all resources to advance the agenda in a quality way.

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*"An organization is perfectly aligned to get the results it is getting."*

Stephen Covey

Once you have clarity of Purpose and Direction you must organize all the resources at your disposal to bring the planned agenda to fruition. This practice area is crucial in developing a system that enables the right work to be done with speed and focus – and ensures you are properly positioned for success.

## To Drive Alignment

- Organize resources (people, finances, time) to deliver the plan, task, or goal.
  - Establish a self-sustaining process that enables everybody to work towards the plan with agility.
  - Confirm all stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities.
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*"Without alignment, the best strategic plan will never be fully achieved."*

Torben Rick

# 4. Build Vitality

Motivate all to be fully engaged in advancing the direction in a way that honors all stakeholders.

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*"Our chief want is someone who will inspire us to be what we know we could be."*

Ralph Waldo Emerson

It is unrealistic to expect extraordinary effort and performance without creating an environment in which people feel extraordinarily valued. This practice area requires you to give people the energy to do their best work while also challenging them to do better. Leaders must work to engage all stakeholders and to create a high-energy culture.

## To Build Vitality

- Energize all to be actively engaged in delivering the desired performance.
  - Celebrate achievements and acknowledge shortcomings.
  - Challenge all to do better through swift and constructive feedback.
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*"The best way to inspire people to superior performance is to convince them by everything you do and by your everyday attitude that you are wholeheartedly supporting them."*

Harold S. Geneen

# 5. Execute with Excellence

Assure the direction is executed with excellence — course-correcting as needed.

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*"A good plan well executed beats a brilliant plan poorly executed every time."*

Unknown

All the strategic planning and good intentions you can muster do not amount to **leadership that works**. In the real world, strong execution is foundational and mandatory to leadership success. This practice area demands that plans are vigorously attended to, that results are tracked and measured, and that progress is not waylaid by obstacles.

## To Execute with Excellence

- Implement plans with disciplined task management.
  - Act decisively.
  - Measure progress and adapt as needed.
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*"The method of the enterprising is to plan with audacity and execute with vigor."*

Christian Nestell Bovee

# 6. Produce Extraordinary Results

Meet or exceed performance expectations.

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"The true measure of the value of any business leader and manager is performance."

Brian Tracy

A plan can be executed to the letter and still not produce the agreed upon outcome. But leadership is about getting things done. You must be unmistakably focused on delivering the desired results in a quality way. This practice area pushes leaders to be ever-mindful of their commitment to performance -- and to evaluate every effort with a view towards meeting or exceeding expectations.

## To Produce Extraordinary Results

- Deliver.
  - Embrace a results-oriented mindset
  - Attend wisely to the near-term and the long-term.
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"Don't lower your expectations to meet your performance. Raise your level of performance to meet your expectations."

Ralph Marston