The Importance and Development of a Humanistic & Long-Term Mindset in Business Leaders

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Short-term profit-making goals and neoclassical understandings of historic and current economics encourage a particular friction between business leaders and their human and ecological resources, a friction which has historically resulted in business leaders being incentivized or influenced towards the exploitation of those resources. However, some of today's business leaders have discovered that this issue is reduced when business goals are oriented toward long-term performance, such as is deemed necessary for commercial success in twenty-first century markets. Ethical, sustainable, and values-based leadership practices are essential for such long-term performance. These frameworks are more closely aligned to the law and political economy view than to neoclassical economics frameworks. Additionally, leadership styles that demonstrate ethical, sustainable, and values-based practices are strongly associated with development of emotional-social intelligence (ESI), a body of skills that can be intentionally developed through mindfulness practices.

During fifteen years in the industry, the author has observed a variety of for-profit leaders as they explored decision-making approaches, dealt with volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) challenges, and managed the influences of profit-drivers on their actions. These include the best kinds of leaders—ostensibly good-hearted people who desired to make smart, fair choices for their employees, customers, and investors. Yet even for the most well-intentioned, cross-roads emerged that caused conflict between their values and their business sense, eroding the ability to align their actions to their values.

As this paper is being written, the world is navigating a phenomenon that may be a defining event of the decade, the COVID-19 pandemic. As the economic impact of the pandemic

mounts, business leaders have encountered humanistic questions of ethics, sustainability, and personal values.[1] For example, American businesses have terminated a swath of employees as a result of the pandemic such that from March 25, 2020 to April 25, 2020, 22 million workers filed for unemployment.[2] The Department of Labor report on the week ending April 25, 2020, reports "the highest level of the seasonally adjusted insured unemployment in the history of the seasonally adjusted series."[3] Questions of ethics, sustainability, and humanistic values in business decisions regarding terminations, furloughs, layoffs, reductions of hours, sick pay, leave time, working conditions, workplace safety, and benefits such as health insurance have been raised by the pandemic. Social media reflects a wide range of public concerns, from the efficacy and use of the $2 trillion bailout;[4] to working conditions believed to be responsible for outbreaks;[5] to asking why frontline workers are not provided healthcare benefits through employment, lacking coverage while they put themselves in harm's way.[6]

The pandemic has also called into question the supremacy of the world's most powerful nations.[7] Some researchers are calling for increased conservation regulations worldwide against wildlife consumption as a vital measure against future epidemics as well as protection to our ecosystem.[8] As nations grapple with these humanistic and ecological issues, the time is ripe for further evaluation of how business leaders can prepare themselves to approach decisions impacting their stakeholders, including workers, in ways that will result in better outcomes for those businesses and their communities.

This paper seeks to answer the following: What impacts have sustainable, ethical and values-based leadership practices, or their lack, demonstrated in the for-profit sector? What influences leaders in the for-profit sector towards or away from sustainable, ethical, and values-based practices? How are sustainable, ethical, and values-based leadership skills actively

developed in a leader? This paper is a literature review for which research was selected with the goal of establishing a holistic understanding of historical business leadership experiences and contextual pressures, beginning with early American economic development. The second section of this paper focuses on how research has developed to describe business leadership and align those frameworks to the context of twenty-first century markets.

This paper contends that leaders can intentionally develop sustainable, ethical, and values-based leadership skills by fostering emotional-social intelligence, particularly through mindfulness practices. Lacking such development, business leaders may be doomed to repeat mistakes of the past, with communities and habitats bearing the consequences. The author is a professional in HR and OD in the for-profit sector and believes analyses of business leader behaviors are essential for businesses to prioritize how to invest in leadership and executive development programs to improve business performance and communities. The inspiration of this paper is the executive teams the author has worked with, particularly from witnessing the challenge of adhering to their values in complex business decisions.

American Business Leadership in Emerging Capitalism

American economic systems have been rooted in and defined by pursuit of the creation of surplus, or, in the for-profit sector, specifically profit.[9] At the direction of business leaders who direct the use of resources and inputs, including people, production of goods, and services for public consumption commences devotedly towards this goal.[10] This paper analyzes how profit-drivers have influenced decisions by business leaders which have had global and long-term impacts on habitats and populations.

Many of history's conflicts have been fought over surplus, and many companies have engaged in wrongdoings that have caused large-scale irreversible harm to individuals and

communities.[11] In a system where some individuals control and benefit from others' labor, there exists incentive for those in control of labor to reduce the latter's standard of living. The result of this friction has historically been these detrimental acts by businesses against human and ecological resources in service of surplus creation, or for those specifically in the for-profit sector, in service of profit creation.[12] As an example, emerging capitalism is ultimately the economic context in which business leaders rationalized the enslavement of 13 million people, possibly many times more, for hundreds of years (the world's largest forced migration) and created a "towering mountain of cadavers" by means of the genocide of indigenous and Native American people.[13] This paper agrees firmly with arguments that slavery, far from being routed by capitalism or separate from it, was the very foundation upon which capitalism was built and supported in order to grow into its successful modern iteration.[14] Dr. Robin Einhorn observes that it is now recognized by historians that, far from being an unfortunate sidenote in the history of the United States, enslavement was a critical underpinning of the nation's economic and political development. Dr. Gerald Horne argues that slavery, colonialism, and white supremacy in emerging capitalism formed the source of global dominance of eighteenth-century England and its child nation, the United States of America. And while some historians attribute the vast loss of indigenous flora and fauna during western expansion to the spread of foreign disease, it is now recognized that these tragedies were principally caused by willful acts of violence against indigenous Americans and forcibly migrated African people.[15]

Profit was the driving force behind the early American business leader Christopher Columbus.[16] Backed by Spanish royalty, Columbus contracted his journey at 10 percent of the profits plus governorship on lands.[17] Columbus and his teams methodically tortured, kidnapped, starved, killed, terrorized, and enslaved the reportedly peaceful, intelligent, and generous men,

women and children of the land in service to his quest for gold.[18] These acts, in the interest of seeking profit, are the foundation of our initial business leadership in the New World. Such choices appear to be rooted in what is described by Daniel Kahneman and his predecessors as System I thinking, in which the subject operates largely on reflex and automation, and incidentally is associated with racially-based prejudice (as opposed to System II thinking, where the subject reflects more deeply and thoughtfully.)[19] Indigenous Americans had shown themselves to be welcoming and intelligent.[20] We will never know what synergies may have developed from egalitarian cultural exchange.

Bartholomé de Las Casas reported Columbus's statements that the population should make for very satisfactory slave labor.[21] Las Casas was a colonist, a leader of his community, and an advisor to the crown in matters including business. It is notable that De Las Casas, a man heralded for advocacy of indigenous Americans and clearly disquieted by their treatment, had participated at all in Columbus's violence.[22] While the complexities of his reasoning and his influence may forever be debated, we know it was after participation that he experienced misgivings and suggested the use of African slaves as an alternative before finally determining that both enslavements were equally wrong and advocating against them.[23]

Las Casas not only witnessed acts of violence that disturbed him in life but which caused him to fear eternal damnation after death.[24] His interest in supporting the profit quest of commercial aims under his king was so at odds with his values that he believed ignorance was not sufficient to excuse him before his God.[25] It is difficult to imagine a position more at odds with a business leader's values. Las Casas was made to endure enormous cognitive dissonance from lack of alignment between his values and the profit drivers. It is this crisis of conscience which this paper seeks to address.

Labor as a tool for the economic power holders (landholders and those with authority over labor) and as a means for business leaders to enrich themselves is found in other critical moments of emerging capitalism in the U.S. As a class disinclined towards manual labor, many British settlers in Jamestown were quite averse to work.[26] It thus became necessary to repeatedly return representatives to the settlement to admonish the colonists, forcibly build labor into their schedules, and construct regulations to enforce their work, all of which were neglected as soon as such oversight was called away.[27]

At the heart of our nation's birth was thus the concept that the toil necessary to prosper and even survive was to be extracted from others. Leaders of early expeditions, colonists in Jamestown, and subsequent westerly expanding businesses obtained such effort via other people by purchase, subjugation, or both. This friction between profit power and labor power is at the heart of the labor problem of capitalism and its theories of classical and neoclassical economics.[28] The primarily economic venture of Jamestown remained a financial failure, however. Sunk cost investments ended with the revocation of the Jamestown charter in 1624. By then the landscape had been rendered unrecognizable due to exhaustion from cash crops and the introduction of foreign plants and animals.[29]

As the U.S. grew, the legacy of slavery and ninety-nine years of Jim Crow laws built the institutionalized inequity of financial, physical, and mental well-being of Blacks and minorities to which is attributed their shorter and less prosperous lives relative to other racial populations.[30] The rhetoric of business leaders in favor of slavery was the rationale of property rights. The doctrine of substantive due process was invoked to prohibit what was believed to be a white man's inalienable right to not be deprived of property without due process of law, thus prohibiting anti-slavery regulations.[31] Property rights being constitutive of markets,[32] Einhorn

argues that this outcome was not an expression of economic ideas gone astray and was truly about the institutionalized power of all varieties of economic elites in industrial capitalism.[33]

This concept is connected to the neoclassical economics view that the healthiest and most optimized market is the free market, one left pure and uninhibited by government interference, which models the effects of perfect competition. Setting aside the ethical reasons against humans owning humans, cogent arguments have emerged which discredit most assumptions of free market economic theory, including perfect competition, *homo economicus* and its maximization imperative, the supposedly finite production possibility frontier, non-increasing returns to scale, and assumed operations of supply and demand curves - foundational constructs girding the business decisions described above.[34] For example, if we are to consider arguments that ecological destruction by corporations is not the result of lack of regulation or another constitutive adjustment, but instead arises from imperfect markets, one must also believe that the free market and perfect markets could exist in the first place, which appear by every measure to be fantasy, as noted in the law and political economy (LPE) view.[35] LPE recognizes the fundamental impossibility in real-world economics of basic *laissez-faire* principles, rendering meaningless discussions of regulation versus deregulation, and setting economic frameworks which recognize the constitutive nature of governments to markets as well as the indivisible interaction of political, legal, and economic institutions upon each other. A business leader's view on these issues contextualizes their activities and influences the ethics of their approach.

Consider the relationships amongst a capitalist or leaders' profit goals and labor. Profit rate is dependent upon effort extraction from workers, government services, and inputs.

$$r = (y - w) / k$$

r = profit rate; y =value of net output per hour of labor; w = wage rate per hour of labor;

k = value of capital goods per hour of labor

The above profit rate per worker per hour, a common metric of neoclassical economics and frequent calculation of today's business leaders, shows how paying laborers the full value of their net output would necessitate wages equal to net revenues such that profit to capitalists would be zero. This establishes in arithmetic detail a key point which pressures business leaders towards reducing the living standard of their workers: The closer the labor is to being free, the more the output of the equation is improved in favor of profits going to the capitalist. A leader's economic belief is thus particularly linked to their decisions about managing labor production.

Further, the defense of anti-regulation policies derived from neoclassical ideas, such as those cited to uphold slavery, have been used since to defend a variety of unethical or unsustainable practices by business leaders.[36] Ecologically, the deleterious toll of the capitalist world-economy is recognized to have impacted our planet now for centuries. In sixteenth-century England, pursuit of short-run profit was effectuated through the planting of particularly harsh and devastating crops such as sugar (which depletes the land rapidly, requiring frequent new expansions) combined with deforestation on a massive scale for obtaining timber and pasture.[37] This was replicated in the New World, as manifest destiny and the need for fresh, nutrient-rich soil for cash crops pushed colonists westward, resulting in clashes with indigenous populations and lands that caused the decimation of countless Native American peoples and their environments.[38] Today, the same property rights doctrine once applied to uphold slavery is being

leveraged by some business leaders to argue against baseline protections of land and labor, such as the Clean Water Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act.[39]

Twentieth & Twenty-First Century American Business Leadership

U.S. labor history is one of the most violent of any industrialized nation, even by the most conservative estimates.[40] A laborer's act of disrupting their labor for wage exchange (striking) so centrally impacts capitalist production that it can and has inspired much violence by business leaders.[41] This is demonstrated by the 270 fatal strikes occurring in the United States between 1877 and 1947.[42] In the Ludlow Massacre of 1914, thousands of coal miners protested working conditions and lack of legally required pay.[43] Strikers were fired upon by the Colorado National Guard without provocation, and their tent town was set ablaze, sending peaceful protesters to their death.[44]

The mid-1930s was a turning point for labor policy. With the advent of National Recovery Administration (NRA), the Wagner Labor Act, and the Committee for Industrial Organization within the American Federation of Labor (AFL-CIO), striking and sit-downs took off in the United States.[45] Workers were enabled to achieve long-awaited increases in pay and an end to reductions in pay that had been the whim of disinclined business leaders until that time.[46] As labor flexed, business leaders threatened.[47] GM and Ford hired criminals to cow employees. The head of GM called sit-down efforts a Communist insurrection.[48] Governors of New Jersey and of Michigan threatened laborers with military, police and vigilantes.[49] We may never know the cost of this unrest, but four years later, the wage increases which resulted from the resistance had increased the national purchasing power of workers by $5,000,000,000 annually. Moreover, the eight-hour workday, which had been "fought and died for since 1866," had finally become a reality.[50]

Thus, a picture is painted of the context and logic in which business leaders in capitalist expansion found themselves: incentivized to pursue profit regardless of, often enhanced by, exploitation of human and ecological resources. Yet, other approaches have gained traction in our modern era. Business leaders and economists have grappled with the implications of laborer-leadership frictions and sought more progressive interpretations of success.[51] Industries have noticed that economic systems and strategies which empower labor, strive towards equity, and adopt thoughtful ecological processes present a rising tide that lifts all boats. For example, the annual growth of labor productivity in countries with relative greater income equality has been shown to be higher than those of countries with relative lower income equality, even in some of the richest countries, disproving the classic "trade-off" between income inequality and economic efficiency that was supposedly required for a healthy rate of economic growth.[52] Simultaneously, the world is awakening to the ecological destruction wreaked by unchecked industry and how such destruction damages long-term profitability prospects.[53]

In the wake of the global financial crisis (GFC) of 2007-2009, the push towards sustainable and ethical leadership in the world of finance has influenced this trend.[54] Current leaders are realizing that continued performance and economic growth are not only improved by sustainable and ethical strategies and leadership practices but reliant on them.[55] After all, the economy will cease to exist if there is no one left to purchase goods and services and no usable materials left to create them. Importantly, disingenuous pandering for social compliance is as harmful to business sustainability as it is to by-standing agents and consumers.[56]

In the U.S., economics are tied to leadership decisions, as profit is a primary driver for most business leaders. Short-term profit-grabbing in emerging capitalism resulted in loss of life and of potential growth we may never fully grasp, but now we have new frameworks that

provide more holistic views of the relationship between business, consumers and our planet, including impacts to human and ecological resources. This is fueled by business leaders who themselves feel that their values are undermined by short-term interests, by consumers pressuring businesses for ethical practices, and by new generation employees seeking humanistic work cultures. This paper next reviews leadership styles emerging from these changes.

Defining and Developing Business Leadership

Leadership has been defined so many times in scholarship that it continues to be a common point of inconsistency in the literature.[57] Recent developments on the understanding of emotional- and social-intelligence aspects of leadership have further developed definitions, superseding prior versions.[58] For the purpose of this paper, management and leadership is distinguished by the synthesis that "leaders influence commitment, whereas managers merely carry out position responsibilities and exercise authority."[59] This said, many managers engage in leader behavior and vice versa. Based on this, however, we will not be reviewing management specific theories. This paper also subscribes to Yukl's assertion that with such a plethora of leadership definitions, a broad definition is best and can be put as, "influencing task objectives and strategies, influencing commitment and compliance in task behavior to achieve these objectives, influencing group maintenance and identification, and influencing the culture of an organization."[60] Notably, a summarized version of this definition as "the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of goals."[61] Influencing others is consistently found as a primary directive in leadership definitions.

Early legitimate study of leadership focused on analysis of observable behaviors and situational contexts.[62] Command-and-control, in which structured chains of hierarchy are leveraged, is criticized in modern literature for its lack of innovative freedom but maintains a

stronghold in military infrastructures and some companies. This leadership style is commonly attributed to Sun Tzu's military command techniques from over 2,000 years ago.[63] It has been shown to have counterproductive effects as a method of creating ethical values in organizations,[64] while values-based strategies and behaviors typically show positive impacts.[65]

The plethora of leadership styles recognized today parallels the early research of personality traits, where non-mutually exclusive types were articulated and somewhat confused scholarly pursuits.[66] This paper considers a meta-analysis identifying thirty-nine styles of leadership most relevant to current scholarly discussion and aligning those leadership styles to the five big personality dimensions.[67] The Big Five model of personality dimensions forming the basis for this model includes the following five constructs: surgency, conscientiousness, agreeableness, neuroticism, and culture.[68] This study by arranges leadership styles into five non-mutually exclusive groups (LS1, LS2, et cetera), accounting for the leader's role, level of concern for others, distance from followers, decision making collaboration level, follower motivation derivation, and leader focus on follower growth, and assigns the thirty-nine leadership styles to groups based on quantitative analyses.

Based on this, the following categories appear likely to represent humanistic, ethical, or sustainable leadership styles: LS2, LS3, LS4. Styles included within groups LS2, LS3 and LS4 include transformational, humane-oriented, supportive, visionary, servant, authentic, and affiliative.[69] Authentic leadership, a subcategory of transformational leadership, has risen in popularity over the past decade and a half to become one of "the most influential constructs in leadership research," authentic leaders being distinguished by the personality aspects described in the above analysis.[70] The categories of L1 and L5, including styles such as autocratic,

authoritarian, and laissez-faire, do not fall under these ideals, as they are low in the area of concern for others, a key element of humanistic, ethical, or sustainable leadership practices.[71]

This paper contends that leaders are evolving towards more ethical, sustainable, and values-based leadership styles through a grounding in increased emotional-social intelligence and may proactively pursue such development. Emotional intelligence (EI) has for some time been "broadly assumed as a crucial attribute of effective leaders."[72] Importantly, the definition of EI has also been broadened to include social interaction (cumulatively referred to as "ESI") as, "a cross-section of interrelated emotional and social competencies, skills and facilitators that determine how effectively we understand and express ourselves, understand others and related with them, and cope with daily demands."[73]

Mindfulness development has been determined a key practice for the development of EI and a variety of other cognitive skills that are connected to ethical and humanistic practices.[74] Mindfulness is "a state of being openly attentive to and aware of what is taking place in the present moment, internally and externally."[75] Development of mindful awareness is shown to lead to a variety of personal development aspects and executive functions of the brain that appear key for humanistic, ethical and sustainable leadership approaches. These aspects are the development of cognitive flexibility, increased self-awareness, increased emotional regulation, the receiving of stimuli without judgment, and development of ethical compassion for others.[76]

The latter in an advanced state may be termed Ubuntic understanding; "Ubuntu" references the African nation of Xhosa's humanistic philosophy of relational pluralism in which "a person is a person through other persons."[77] In this perspective, a being and its condition is inseparable from its community, and the community thus "takes precedence over individuals' self-interests."[78] In this addition to the growing departure of literature from Western-centric

thought, it is suggested that it is through Ubuntu that leaders may develop and activate the crucial leadership ability of strategic foresight, through nurturing themselves and others.[79]

Another practical and necessary tool of the leader's mind developed through mindfulness is the removal of positive or negative distinctions on incoming data or to "treat all incoming stimuli with impartiality and equipoise."[80] Put another way, mindfulness develops the ability to attend to incoming information nonjudgmentally such that opportunity is available to shift perspective and make space for new ways of looking at the world.[81] This concept relates directly to the cognitive flexibility similarly developed and which together enable a leader to think more openly and creatively in presented situations. Such cognitive flexibility supports the evolution of a leader's thinking about business decision that greatly impact our world out of primarily Systems 1, or emotionally-centric decision-making based on bias and impulse, and into System II, a more effortful and measured decision process that can reduce errors in judgment and reliance on the short cuts of bias.[82] Systems 1 thinking is characterized chiefly by reduction of cognitive effort through decision automation. In contrast, System II thinking can result in more accurate judgments and long-term planning. The latter supports the process of discovering and exploring creative new solutions from a variety of sources collaboratively.[83]

A leader with strong ESI skill is more enabled to envision possibilities with ethical, humanistic, sustainable profit-making outcomes, and sit comfortably in the vulnerability needed for sharing and hearing others' ideas and visions. What can we make of these ESI-supported leadership styles, and how have they been exhibited in real world companies? Two case studies are noted below regarding the impacts of such leadership activities: BMW[84] and Herman Miller.[85]

For post-GFC BMW, sustainable leadership practices were pursued towards long-term value.[86] Ethical behavior and practices became a priority of BMW, demonstrated by its engagement of both internal and external resources to monitor and promote ethical business practices. While impacted heavily by the GFC, BMW enjoyed a surprising resilience and historical best performance in 2010 as a result of three key factors, one being its sustainable leadership approach.[87] As a part of its sustainable leadership practices, BMW worked to consider customers, suppliers, employees, and other stakeholders as foundational elements of operation.[88] This is consistent with strategic foresight through Ubuntic philosophy.[89] It can often be short-term thinking that inhibits other firms from engaging sustainable leadership practices, typically to their long-term detriment.[90] Meanwhile, changing a system is very difficult, here in particular the need for sensitivity was cited as requisite.[91] Sensitivity of leadership is also directly developed through ESI growth.[92]

In the case of Herman Miller, an organization with a strong track-record of long-term success, a version of ethical and values-based business leadership through shared leadership activities was also found to be exceptionally successful and responsible for excellent business performance.[93] In this case, the firm was particularly invested in recognizing each employee as a whole person, encouraging employees to bring their whole selves to work and valuing every person as an important resource regardless of their stage with the company.[94]
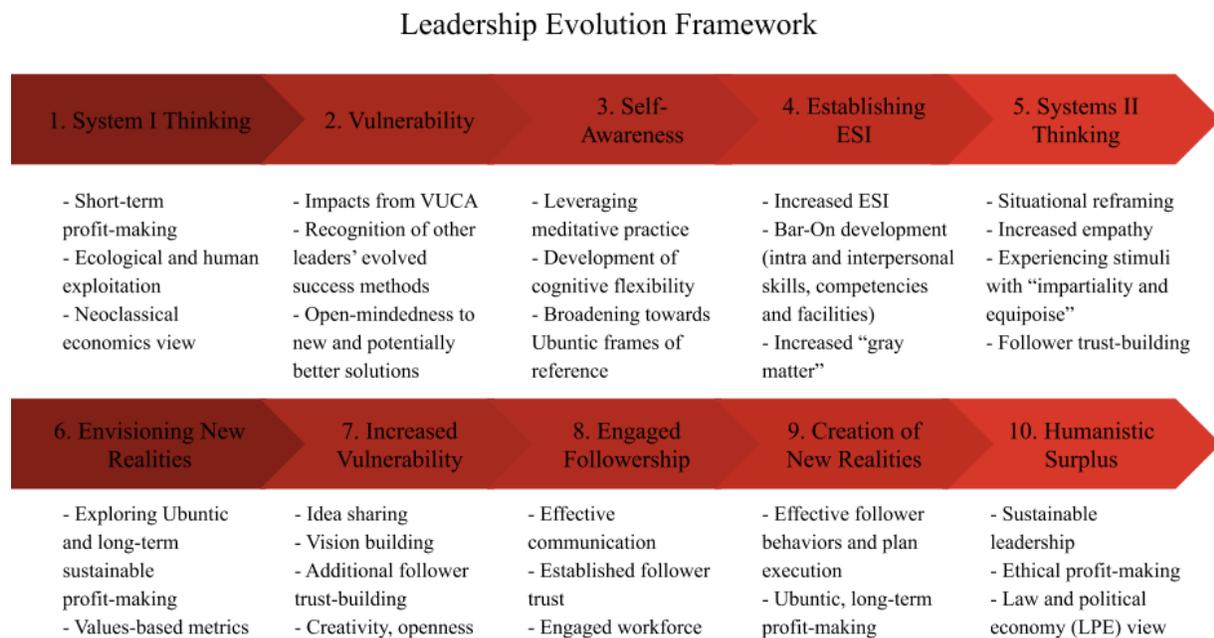
Discussion

This paper seeks to explore how a business leader's profit-based context combined with short-term profit-making goals can, and has, led to hugely detrimental decisions by business against humanity, ecology, and the businesses themselves. This paper also seeks to demonstrate that developing ESI in business leaders can transcend this history and build ethical, sustainable

and values-based practices that improve a leader's ability to avoid societally detrimental decisions, to achieve stronger and longer-term business performance, to prevent commercial extinction, and to align their personal values to business decisions. The influence of a leader's economic context, and their beliefs about that context, are an important piece of this discussion. With less ethical, sustainable, and values-based leadership practices, a focus on short-term profit-making and approaches emerges that is not so different from those once used to support slavery.

The literature suggests that some leaders are creating new paradigms through sustainable, ethical, and values-based leadership skills which are not only learnable but which have been shown to benefit all stakeholders—customers, investors, employees, the planet, and the businesses and leaders themselves. Given this, a framework is suggested (Figure 2) to illustrate the path of developing this evolution of leadership.

Figure 2.[95]

Leadership Evolution Framework

1. System I Thinking	2. Vulnerability	3. Self-Awareness	4. Establishing ESI	5. Systems II Thinking
- Short-term profit-making - Ecological and human exploitation - Neoclassical economics view	- Impacts from VUCA - Recognition of other leaders' evolved success methods - Open-mindedness to new and potentially better solutions	- Leveraging meditative practice - Development of cognitive flexibility - Broadening towards Ubuntic frames of reference	- Increased ESI - Bar-On development (intra and interpersonal skills, competencies and facilities) - Increased "gray matter"	- Situational reframing - Increased empathy - Experiencing stimuli with "impartiality and equipoise" - Follower trust-building
6. Envisioning New Realities	7. Increased Vulnerability	8. Engaged Followership	9. Creation of New Realities	10. Humanistic Surplus
- Exploring Ubuntic and long-term sustainable profit-making - Values-based metrics	- Idea sharing - Vision building - Additional follower trust-building - Creativity, openness	- Effective communication - Established follower trust - Engaged workforce	- Effective follower behaviors and plan execution - Ubuntic, long-term profit-making	- Sustainable leadership - Ethical profit-making - Law and political economy (LPE) view

The early stage is based on neoclassical understanding of a leader's economic context. As the leader experiences VUCA conditions, they become open to educating themselves to new

skills and perspectives through mindfulness. This enables a leader to increase their ESI, improving Systems II thinking. If a leader can broaden their definitions of the self to become inclusive and Ubuntic, they are enabled to explore sustainable, ethical, and values-based business performance goals. As the leader develops increased ESI through mindfulness practices, their collaborative vision-building broadens, improving trust-building with followers. This may coincide with improved innovation through enhanced creativity, openness, and increased followership effectiveness.[96] As perspective continues to build, the leader may find that an LPE view more fully aligns to their business context. This can further evolve long-term sustainability and profit-making towards a humanistic (Ubuntic) viewpoint. Thus, a leader transcends from bounded perspectives and options to a fuller understanding of how their business can thrive, who its stakeholders are, and the potential to define business success more ambitiously than ever by expanding it beyond short-term, volatile gains.

This paper contends that leaders seeking to evolve towards ethical, sustainable, and values-based leadership styles should be encouraged to develop of ESI through mindfulness practices. This can expand cognitive processes from Systems I thinking to Systems II thinking in daily leadership activities of strategic management and planning.[97] Sustainable leadership practices are broadly believed to be a necessity for success in the twenty-first century. These practices require "the adoption of environmental, economic, and equity principles" regardless of whether they are fueled by personal ethics or desire for long-term business survival.[98] Such skills position leaders to develop strategies based in progressive groundings in which the leader can envision and subsequently create surplus through more humanistic, ecologically sensitive, and egalitarian means.[99]

Implications for Research & Practice

This project hopes to offer a practical framework and holistic understanding of leadership style evolution towards effective development of humanistic behaviors in leadership. However, this framework has not been applied to a case study. This presents opportunities for further research and inquiry, including studies on the effects and impacts of mindfulness development in business leaders to the areas of the brain which control empathy and cognitive flexibility, followership and follower behaviors, trust-building in teams, interpersonal skills and competencies, creativity, employee engagement, and, of course, profit. Additionally, a full analysis of all leadership styles has not yet been attempted. This is in part due to disagreements in the literature about what leadership styles truly exist and how to more precisely categorize leaders. Much could be refined in this area and applied to this framework in turn.

Practically, this paper clarifies how ESI behaviors can be developed in business leaders towards ethical, sustainable and values-based practices. Specifically, mindfulness practices such as meditation show promising ability to develop necessary cognitive elements. Embracing and prioritizing mindfulness practices in executive training programs could be a critical step for companies seeking to develop advanced leadership that will positively impact both their bottom line and their communities.

A business leader may have no other driver besides profit-making to give attention to this framework. Based on the author's experience, however, there are many business leaders who have strong inherent values and personal desires to align these values to their work, but lack the tools navigate the friction they experience in that space. It is the author's ardent hope that this framework can provide a path towards enriching and profound personal development and peace of mind, and a better future for businesses and communities around the world.

ENDNOTES

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