

Leading from the Boardroom

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Write down some leaders you admire.

Reflect on what you admire about those leaders?

Share with a person sitting next to you.



A Definition of Leadership

“An individual (or rarely, a set of individuals) who significantly affects the thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors of a significant number of individuals”

Source: Gardner & Laskin, *Leading Minds*. 1995



Can a group be a leader?



“Leading from the Boardroom” defined

When the board, as a collective unit, acts in such a way that it enables the organization to confront and move forward on complex problems that do not have simple solutions.

The goal is thought partnership between the CEO and the board

Cf. Chait, Ryan, and Taylor, *Governance as Leadership*. 2005



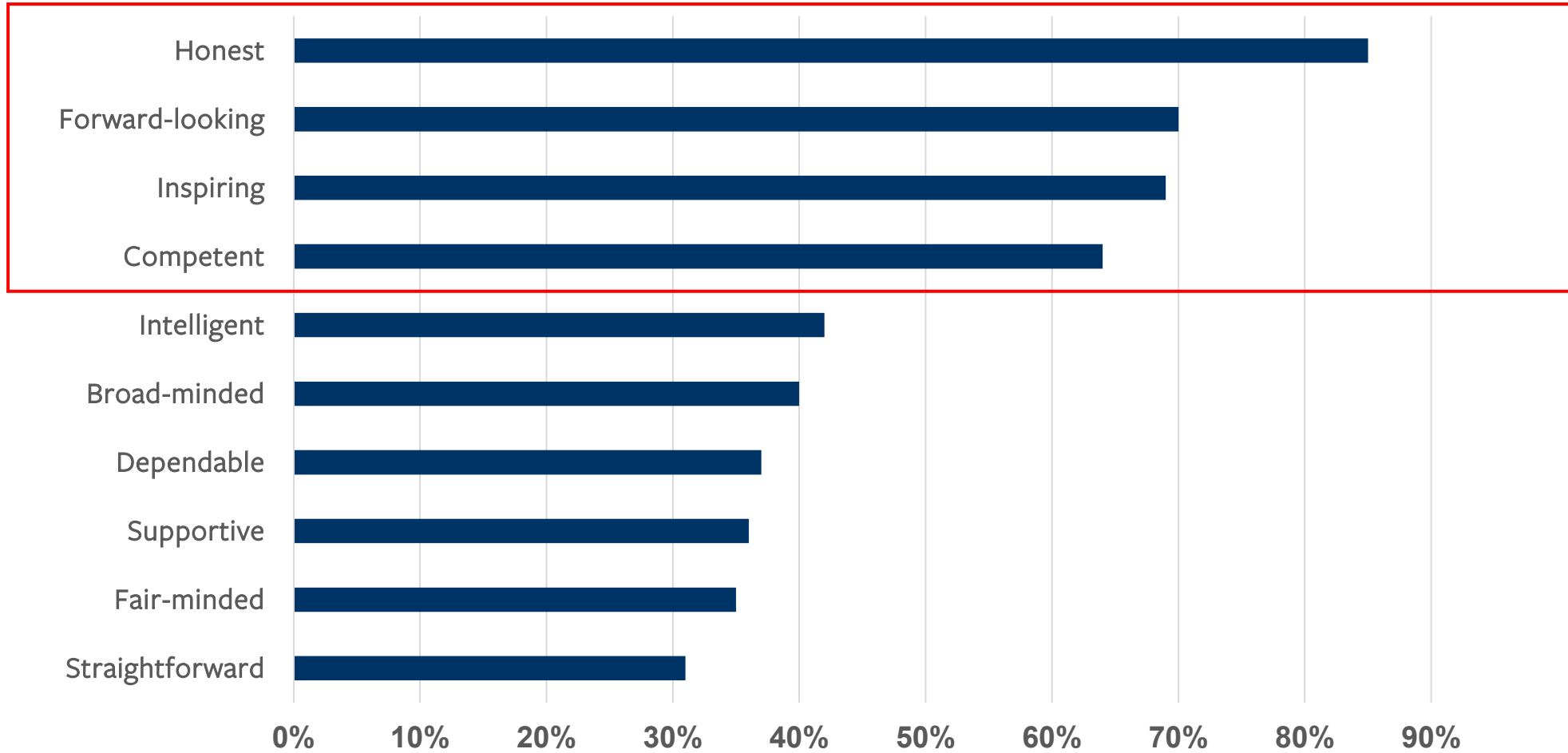
Characteristics of admired leaders

- Ambitious
- Broad-minded
- Caring
- Competent
- Cooperative
- Courageous
- Dependable
- Determined
- Fair-minded
- Forward-looking
- Honest
- Imaginative
- Independent
- Inspiring
- Intelligent
- Loyal
- Mature
- Self-Controlled
- Straightforward
- Supportive

Source: Kouzes & Posner, *Credibility*. 2011



Characteristics of admired leaders



Source: Kouzes & Posner, *Credibility*. 2011



What we expect of leaders

Scenario: The CNO has just resigned. What are some actions the CEO might take?

How does the CEO's approach to this situation vary if the CNO...

- ...was being investigated for misconduct?
- ...accepted a CEO position at another organization?
- ...was the third CNO to leave in less than two years?
- ...stepped down to focus on caring for an aging parent?
- ...had criticized the hospital in the local newspaper?

How does the CEO's communication approach vary when talking to...

- ...the Board?
- ...the senior leadership team?
- ...the CNO's direct reports?
- ...the Media?



What we expect of leaders

A leader “alters or guides the manner in which his or her followers ‘mind’ the world... The leader is a sense-giver.”

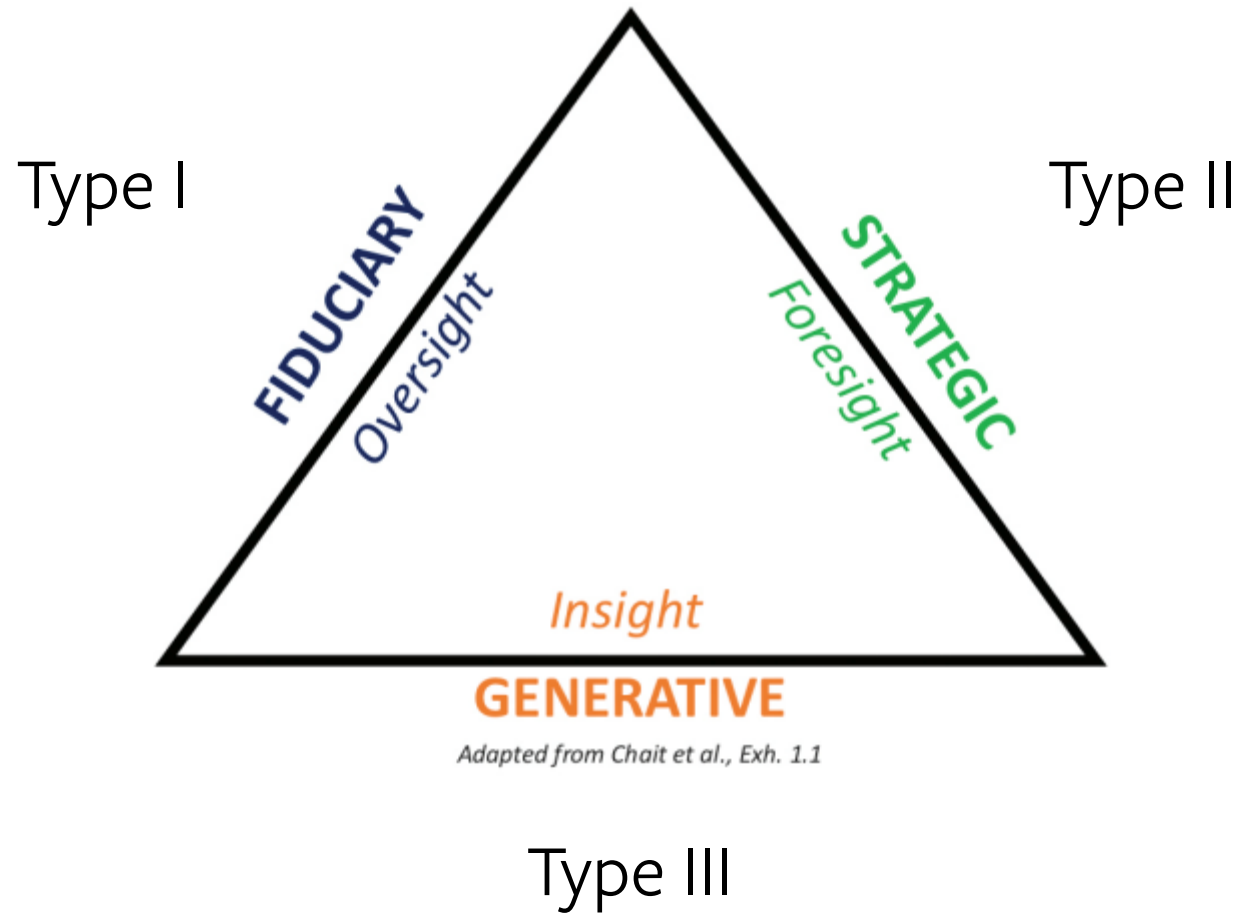
Effective Leaders...

- Frame issues for people
- Facilitate consensus on contested issues
- Work in many different modes

Source: Thayer, quoted in Weick, *Sensemaking in Organizations*.1995



Three Modes of Governing



Three Modes of Governing

Mode of Governing	Mindset/Approach	Example Action Step
Fiduciary	Oversight <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adherence to the mission• Compliance with the law• Stewardship <i>Asks: What's wrong?</i>	Compare actual expenses against the budget
Strategic	Foresight <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setting and resetting direction• Deploying resources based on priorities <i>Asks: What's the plan?</i>	Provide feedback on the CEO's recommended adjustments to the budget
Generative	Insight <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making sense of how we got here• Framing problems and challenges <i>Asks: What's the question?</i>	Discuss assumptions the budget was based on (reimbursement rates, utilization, existing technology) and how the organization would pivot if those factors change



Technical vs. Adaptive Challenges

Technical challenges are solved by applying **current knowledge**

Adaptive challenges are solved by **learning new ways**

Source: Heifetz & Linsky, *Leadership on the Line*. 2017



Technical vs. Adaptive Challenges

	Technical Challenges	Adaptive Challenges
What's the work?	Apply current knowledge	Learn new ways
Who does the work?	Authorities	The people with the problem
Direction of influence?	Downward	Multi-directional

Source: Heifetz & Linsky, *Leadership on the Line*. 2017



Understanding your window

Age
Gender
Race
Education
Profession
Location/Neighborhood



Background/upbringing
Personal experiences
Community activities
Interests/Hobbies
Proximity to the situation
Experiences with the organization
Other?



Boards that lead...

- Demonstrate integrity, competence, and vision
- Function in different modes
- Address adaptive challenges
- Frame the issues for the organization
- Leverage the collective wisdom of their members
- Do all these things in collaboration with management



Next Steps

- Ensure widespread agreement on Board roles
- Use the Governance Committee to drive improvement
- Consider multiple modes of board assessment
- Engage in generative dialogue

Possible prompts:

- The organization would not have _____ if the Board had not _____.
- What was the most important problem we tackled in the last year? What was the most important lesson we learned in the process?



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