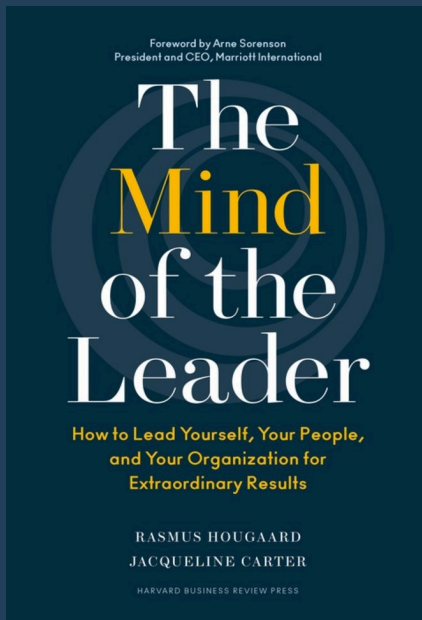


The Mind of the Leader

Year of publication: 2018

Authors: Rasmus Hougaard and Jacqueline Carter

368 pages



Do you, as a leader, consider yourself an inspiration and a good example? According to a 2016 study, 86% of more than 52,000 managers answered yes. If you are in the majority, perhaps you should also think about another question in this study.

Do you believe that your employees have the same thoughts about you? In fact, according to surveys, 82% of them saw their leaders as discouraging. Curious how the minds of two people, or two groups of people, can work so differently on the same subject, isn't it?

This is because the mind is much more than the 85 billion neurons located in the head and the hundreds of millions throughout the rest of the body. The mind is the cognitive, emotional, physical, and spiritual experience of being you.

Continue reading this book summary "The Mind of the Extraordinary Leader" by Rasmus Hougaard and Jacqueline Carter to learn how to shift and reconcile all of these perspectives and provide clear guidance for improving your self-control and control over those you lead.

What are the key points of "The Mind of the Extraordinary Leader"?

- Compassion is concrete and pragmatic, not ethereal and sentimental;
- Mindfulness refers to paying attention to the present moment, with concentration, calm, and unobstructed;
- The educational process for leaders is usually conducted like starting to build a house from the roof. Strategy, people management, and finance should be the final part of the approach;
- "Do less, be more";
- The reading introduces unconventional altruistic practices: "Compassion is a wise selfishness because when we are kind to others we are happier".

Why should I read "The Mind of the Extraordinary Leader"?

Following its title, the work is certainly best suited for leaders, regardless of field. People who want to develop the so-called soft skills bring more humanity, attention, altruism, and compassion to their work environment.

The book "The Mind of the Extraordinary Leader" teaches the leader how to lead himself, his team, and his organization to a renewing effect that is lasting, through the creation of an internal culture that shows itself in the results.

The authors offer a radical but practical solution that turns the thinking that leaders can only get engagement, buy-in, and passion for leading if they are authoritative.

Overview of the book

How to understand and lead yourself?

The authors claim to have discovered that the foundation for today's leaders lies in the acronym "**MSC Leadership**". letter M stands for **mindfulness**; the S for **selflessness**, or altruism, and C for **compassion**, which is compassion.

Starting with the first point, then, mindfulness is both a practice and a state of mind, one strengthened by the other.

This practice makes the leader or anyone else who experiences it, extraordinary starting from the very functioning of the organism. It strengthens the immune system, lowers blood pressure and heart rate, improves sleep, and reduces stress.

We said at the beginning of this summary that the mind and the brain are very different things. But, of course, one is closely related to the other. Training mindfulness increases **gray cells**, improving cognitive function, memory, concentration, and reaction times.

At work, which is the focus of the book, the list of benefits is also extensive: it improves creativity and innovation, improves the relationship between employer and employee, reduces absenteeism, and improves the decision-making process.

To develop this trait it is necessary to train concentration, which is sticking to a specific task for a while, and **perceptiveness**, which is the ability to make good choices on that task you are focused on.

For concentration, there are six aspects: control, ability, speed, agility, clarity, and durability. Improving any of these, the set is already strengthened.

If you dedicate just **10 minutes a day to it**, you can already feel the results after **nine weeks**.

worth noting that, according to the book, coffee is not useful for concentration, because, at the same time that caffeine awakens, it also increases dispersion.

Altruism, in leadership, is present through humility and willingness to serve.

Compassion is a concept that can cause some confusion, as, while 92% of more than a thousand leaders surveyed say it is an important or extremely important trait to lead, 80% say that improving this part would be valuable or important. extremely valuable, but they don't know how to do it.

A common mistake is to confuse compassion with empathy. LinkedIn CEO says that "*Empathy occurs when you take on the suffering of others and both lose out. With compassion, you gain strength to act masterfully.*"

And, according to Hougaard and Carter, "compassion means making difficult decisions for the good of the organization, even when it affects individuals negatively."

The same pillars apply throughout MSC leadership, but in this section, the focus is first on "self".

Exercise your **leadership**, manage your thoughts, behaviors, and actions, and internalize ideas and concepts, first of all.

Make good use of self, to transform the information you obtained in the self into actions, maintaining your values.

Finally, remember that **quality sleep, minimizing potentially compulsive technological habits, and having moments of rest** is also crucial for mental health.

How to understand and lead your employees?

Starting with a common mistake in many companies these days, however well-intentioned it may be, is how to motivate employees.

The authors indicate that it is more productive to offer internal motivators, such as meaningful engagement, interconnectedness, and self-worth, than external satisfactions, such as bonuses, salary increases, a “cool” work environment, free food, or flexible hours.

It is essential to **take care of the human side**, in relationships. The book reports that leaders are three times more likely to interrupt colleagues, perform other activities during a meeting, raise their voices and say offensive things, compared to someone lower in the company hierarchy.

They are also more likely to behave in a rude, selfish, or unethical way. All this, as you can deduce, greatly impairs the motivation of the followers.

The leader's inappropriate behavior can come, yes, unconsciously. In any case, it is recommended that you make use of the improvements you have made with yourself to consider what behavior you need to overcome and strive to do so, one at a time.

Put your experience aside for a few moments, and face the daily life of work with a **beginner's mind**, so you can perceive new possibilities and perspectives.

Along with this curiosity can also come the **presence** necessary for the leader to gain the trust of team members. Establish true connections and make moments in the presence of those connections important.

This also takes into account the **embodied presence**: how is your posture, the space you occupy, the position you adopt, physically speaking, all influence in being better received.

And the first part is about looking within, no wonder. Have you noticed how you are sometimes affected by the other's emotion, whether positive or negative? The same is true when you are “the other”, so take care to control your difficult emotions and resolve the discomfort in the best way without affecting your colleagues.

Note the **empathy**, which often confuses. Be aware of the pitfalls it can offer the company when it passes through the place of **compassion**.

Compassion, including, which, in this part, we put even more into practice. Four characteristics make up the meaning of this word, and which, here, can be better explained and applied:

1. Desiring others to be happy;
2. Desire to alleviate the suffering of others;
3. Take joy in seeing others achieving success;
4. See everyone else equally.

The well-being of the people you live with at work can be cultivated with somewhat difficult attitudes, such as getting rid of your ego to resolve conflicts, to other very simple ones, such as helping someone with a difficult activity or sending a note of gratitude to someone who has done it for you.

A good way to sum up the leader's role as a team guide is to be “invisible”, in the words of the Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu:

“A leader is at his best when people barely know he exists; when their work is done, their goal accomplished, they will say, ‘We did it on our own.’”

An extraordinary leader provides guidance that is empowering for those he leads.

How to understand and lead your organization?

How the role of the leader, as well as that of the led, fits in the way of managing the organization as a whole.

The so-called **attention economy** that we live in, in which knowing how to manage the values involved in the following equation is as valuable as any other competence:

$$\text{Concentration} \times \text{Time} \times \text{Competence} = \text{Productivity}$$

All values, whether in “mathematical” or “conceptual” form, are related to each other all the time, just as the organization is made up of the leader's best practices with himself and with his team.

In all these relationships, the **organizational culture** is created, developed, and followed - or not. Therefore, always reflect on the values that make up this culture, and check the needed opportunity to reaffirm them before the team, or even reassess if they still fit in the current context of the company.

If you notice that any of the principles worked out so far have dropped performance, invest in training for the entire team. One of the examples brought is from the company Accenture, which offers collective and individual mindfulness training programs.

In 20 countries, the results were 30% more concentration, 25% more priority-setting, 34% more mental clarity, and 23% less multitasking. The numbers don't lie.

And, of course, we have to talk about the same old complaints, about the same reasons that bother (almost) everyone, in any company that leaves.

Unnecessary and non-engaging meetings affect even managers. Two thousand claimed that at least 30% of the meeting time was wasted in an Industry Week.

For 3M, this figure ranged from 25% to 50%. The culture of mindfulness influences even that, enhancing all the effort and time applied.

E-mails are another simple issue that contributes to the productivity and well-being of the organization. A 2012 survey brought to the work showed, on average, 28% of employees' time was spent only on this form of communication.

The solution? Social interaction and collaboration tools such as Trello, Basecamp, Teamwork Projects, and Google Docs have managed to increase the productivity of intellectual workers by 20-25% by replacing 60% of outgoing emails.

Don't underestimate that the knock-on impact, like everything else worked out so far, resulted in a 3% drop in total administrative costs, with earnings per share increasing by more than half.

Books on the influence of mindset on leadership

In the suggestive title "**Mindset**", business and personal development mentor Pablo Paucar teaches how to train the mind and behavior so that entrepreneurs, especially beginners, can achieve their goals.

In "**The Founder's Mindset**", the authors show that thinking like the creator of the company is useful not only for the CEO but for anyone who wants to motivate their people and overcome crises.

In the book "**Klopp**", leadership is perhaps not in the context we are most used to. The name is the same as the multi-champion football coach, who knew how to work the flaws and successes of his mentality as a player to achieve success, now in the position of leader.

How can I improve my mindset?

- Focus all your concentration, attention, and energy on the mission to become a fully extraordinary leader;
- Take the Harvard Business Review test to find out your level of concentration and perceptiveness;
- Try to use a more inclusive term whenever using the first person singular;
- Avoid multitasking behavior, things may not work out if you don't give all your concentration to the task that needs to be done;
- Train and develop the skills needed for leadership with the app developed especially for this book, available on the Google Play Store and the App Store.



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