

Total Leadership

Your success as a leader isn't just about being a great business person. Stewart Friedman tells **YANKY FACHLER** that you've got to be a great person, performing well in all domains of your life

Leadership and management professor Stewart Friedman is the director of the leadership programme at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. Friedman developed his Total Leadership ideas during a two-year spell as a senior executive at Ford, where he ran a leadership development centre. In his new book, 'Total Leadership: Be a Better Leader, Have a Richer Life', Friedman helps readers identify their core values, and express ways in which they feel out of sync with those values. The programme is based on what Friedman calls four-way wins: our life at work, our life at home, our life in the community, and our personal development.

Friedman emphasises three core aspects of leadership. Authenticity - being real - arises when leaders behave in ways that are consistent with their core values. Integrity - being whole - arises when the different aspects of life fit together coherently and consistently. Creativity - being innovative - arises when leaders question traditional assumptions.

Business Plus: All leadership philosophies claim that they help leaders

stay ahead of the competition. How does Total Leadership differ from other leadership concepts?

Stewart Friedman: Total Leadership is a combination of two different streams: growing leadership talent, and integrating the different parts of life. We need to see leadership and life as pieces of the same puzzle. Total leadership is similar to traditional leadership models in its focus on concepts and tools for increasing performance. Where it differs is on the emphasis on the whole process.

Traditionally, the different domains of a business leader's life are seen as being in conflict. What convinced you that these conflicting domains can become allies in producing better business performance?

When we think of a balance, we have a visual image of scales, now tipping one way, now tipping another. The term work/life balance implies an inherent conflict between two mutually destructive forces. Balance, by definition, implies a trade off, a sacrifice that has to be made. But it is also possible to find harmony if you look for it. The goal of Total

Leadership is to leverage synergies across those domains of life that are traditionally seen as conflicting, and to synchronise them to produce results that matter. I know that pursuing the opportunities for four-way win is possible, because I've coached thousands of people through this. People can achieve more than they currently believe. It's not magic. It's not a panacea. It's a method that requires commitment, effort and investment.

Is business leadership limited to top executives, or can it take place at all levels?

Leadership means creating sustainable change, which certainly does not mean only top executives. Leadership must exist in every person, whether at the top, middle or bottom of any group. Leadership is not confined to work, but extends to one's personal life, community involvement and family life. I have discovered that leadership is a subject that cannot be taught - but it can be learned. Many executives are not leaders, and many leaders are not executives. The more leaders there are in an organisation, the greater the capacity for sustainable change.

What Is Total Leadership?

Total Leadership is a method for producing sustainable change in all parts of life that can be learned and practiced by individuals, groups, or organisations.

What You Do

You examine what and who matter most to you. Then you design and implement experiments to produce 'four-way wins' - results that are meaningful not only for your work, or family, or community, or self (mind, body, and spirit), but for all these seemingly disparate domains.

Who's It For?

Total Leadership can work for people at any

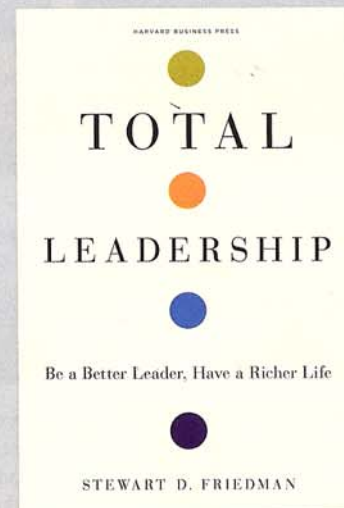
organisational level, in any career stage.

If you are succeeding in one aspect of life while underperforming in others, or failing to capture value from one part of life and bring it to bear in others, or living with too much conflict among different roles in life, then TL can be of benefit.

What You Gain

Friedman claims that Total Leadership will help you perform better because you will have more resources at your disposal to fit the parts of your life together. You'll achieve more four-way wins because you'll be a more inspired, effective leader.

www.totalleadership.org





Stewart Friedman: "Each of us creates our own story"

What about owner-managers of small-medium businesses? Is there anything in your programme for them?

Total Leadership is ideal for SMEs because it can be tailored to fit everyone's world. You build trust, a sense of community. The most frequent feedback we get from participants in our programmes is "I feel closer to the people I work with now". This works equally for someone running a small enterprise as for someone running a major corporation. Through Total leadership, you get to know people at a deeper level. You help them – and yourself. In fact, this can often work better in smaller companies because it's easier to be more flexible.

You say that the discipline of Total Leadership de-emphasises face time and focuses instead on initiating innovation both within and across life domains. Could you explain?

We have more means at our disposal to connect to people who matter most to us than we had ten years ago. New media are transforming virtually every aspect of human action. We struggle to find the best means of determining when, where, and how to meet the demands of stakeholders in all domains of our lives. How do we manage these technologies? How do we define the boundaries? How do we capture the power of these digital communication tools, without a sense of being overwhelmed by the data? The solution lies in the way we manage this process. What percentage of my time should I be with the people most important to me? In other words, where do I need more face time, and where do I need less?

You refer to leaders losing authenticity by behaving in ways that are not consistent with their core values. Can you give an example?

Each of us creates our own story. We all ask the same question: what impact do I intend to have on the world? Look what happened during the US presidential campaign. Each candidate identified three or four critical incidents that represented their story. Here's the story of Obama. Here's where he came from. Here's what he has done. Here's his vision. If you stay true to your story, you remain authentic. If you stray – and I believe that McCain

lost ground because he strayed from his story – you lose authenticity. The sad thing about McCain is that he pandered to constituencies that were not part of his authentic story, and he paid the price.

Like Bookbuzz, the company I co-founded that facilitates executives discussing an assigned book as a launch pad for fresh thinking, your programme suggests shared reading and discussion. Why?

As part of creating coaching networks, we encourage participants to form their own club where they can discuss a book, an idea, or a specific issue. In my workshops, I also assign people into randomly selected groups of three who meet periodically and coach one another through the exercises in my book. Joining a club with co-workers helps people forge closer friendships with them. These discussion groups are the secret sauce, the magic, that bring out the best that peer-to-peer coaching has to offer. By sharing their stories, participants can mutually enrich, expand and support their thinking.

You claim that integrity - being whole - arises when the different aspects of life fit together coherently and consistently. How do leaders achieve this?

Very few people manage to achieve this coherence fully, to ensure that who they are in one part of their life is completely congruent with all other parts. The first step to enhancing the sense of integrity is

to identify who are the most important people in your life. What do they expect of you? How do these expectations impact on one another? How does our performance as a father affect our performance as a citizen, as a friend? We advise participants to conduct reality check conversations with these significant others. Using the four-way win, we help people grasp the realpolitik of their most important relationships. By dialoguing in this way, most people discover that what others expect of them is less than was expected. This allows them to reallocate time and effort to other areas that are more useful.

Finally, I am intrigued about the transition you made from being a leadership professor to becoming a senior executive at Ford. What was that like?

In a word - challenging! Obviously, I had never managed anything of such a scale before, and at first I felt quite at sea. Hierarchical relationships took on a totally different quality. It took months to unravel the complexity of the job, but I was lucky to benefit from terrific mentoring and support from the guy who hired me. Actually, the reverse transition was even more mind-blowing than the original move. At Ford, I had been involved in very significant and powerful decision. Suddenly, I was back in the very different atmosphere of academia. It was culture shock all over again.