



LEMON Leadership CHAPTER ONE  
FIVE TYPES OF LEADERS

{ How did you happen upon these five types of leaders? Was there some empirical research, or is this just intuition? Let me answer this question with a story. }

**A**n extraordinary set of events steered a group of leaders from four different organizations into a real estate venture. With some excitement mixed with soul searching they decided to team up on what could be a multi-million dollar venture. Excited about the synergies of the organizations, they suspected that the definite gifts of the leaders of the various organizations would be a great plus. Each leader had twenty to thirty years of experience under their belts. They were passionate and had a strong sense of purpose. Perhaps most importantly, they had common values that could pave the way for good relationships, communication and decision-making. Things should have gone smoothly, but they didn't. I was one of the leaders, and on more than one occasion I found myself nonplussed by the perspectives of people whom I considered to be good friends, gifted individuals, and all-around great people. I observed what I perceived to be an inconsistency between reality as I saw it and actions from other leaders. Did we not believe the same things, have similar values, and profess shared goals? Were we not passionate about the same things? Faced with the challenges of understanding how people who were committed to me, my family, my business—people who wanted the best for me—could conduct themselves in a way that was somewhat inconceivable to my way of thinking, I had to conclude that there was some understanding of leadership that broke my past molds.

In the business world I might have explained this situation away as “swimming with the sharks” or “just the way business is done” or “if you can't stand the heat, stay out of the kitchen.” But these trite sayings seemed less applicable because I knew the leaders involved to be people of integrity. We talked, we wrestled with concepts, we dreamed about accomplishments, we laughed, and we cried. In short, we invested in relationships so that we had a solid foundation for working together. So what could explain the degeneration? Over time I began to understand that all the pieces of paper, the contracts, the vision statements, the prospectuses, and the business plans paled in comparison to one bigger factor that lay in the shadows, threatening our joint venture. I began to poke at it, name it, define it: each of the many things that we thought we had going for us was subject to a greater reality. Slowly the notions of LEMON Leadership began to take shape like people emerging from a

morning mist. Initially they were just some ideas. Over the past seven years they have become clearer, sharper and more powerful. This month, this week—sometimes days in a row—I gain new insights. Reading this book will provide seed capital for your own journey of discovery. But I am getting ahead of the story.

Each of us leaders came from a corporate context that had its own influence on who we were as leaders. The values and operating principles of our corporations greatly influenced things. Some were for-profit corporations, and some were non-profit organizations. But this was not the key. Another influencing factor was the imperfections each of us brought to the table because we were not without our own blind spots. These two elements paled in comparison to the overriding reality of leadership DNA that affected the whole venture. Who we were as leaders colored more than we cared to know. Each of us was acting out of our identity as leaders more than out of anything to which we had agreed on paper or conceived of over many fine hours of dreaming.

Just how many types of leaders are there—not styles, not personality traits, not Myers-Briggs profiles, but categories of leaders? Much has been written on leadership, and the more serious writings focus on two types of leaders: Managers and Entrepreneurs. There are books on variations of managers, such as General Managers, but the field of leadership literature categorizes leaders into these two broad boxes—Managers and Entrepreneurs—and then adds stylistic variations to explain differences such as:

- Direct, indirect
- Random, sequential
- Concrete, abstract
- Intuitive, analytical, etc., etc.

Then to top it off, if someone is a little out of the box or creative or beyond the pale in some way, a catch-all that covers a plethora of quirks is added to this list: Visionary.

“She’s an entrepreneur... real intuitive.”

“He’s a manager... concrete, direct, analytical... a real manager.”

“She’s interesting... a real visionary,” which normally means she has some qualities that I cannot put my finger on, but she has energy, panache and some notions about the future that sound plausible.

As I looked at our joint venture group it was easy to see that there were one or two managers and entrepreneurs. But there were others who were neither, and when I knew that I could not explain all of our behavior as intentionally malicious or deceitful or obstructive, I had to find another explanation.

Backing away from the immediate story for a moment, my own experience in management consulting has created wonderful opportunities to work closely with senior executives from FORTUNE 500 companies and with entrepreneurs in smaller companies. My particular work in the 1980’s in a field called Executive Information Systems caused me to become a student of how individual executives were wired. This influenced the way they viewed and used corporate information. The notion was that information needed to be delivered to executives—who have the typical concentration span of a gnat—in a format that mirrored their view of the organization and the world in which it operated. In my first such venture we took the entire reporting package for a major international oil company and reduced it to one page. I knew that executives viewed the world through different lenses and that figuring out this lens was critical to being able to serve them the information they needed in a manner that made sense to their view of the world. What I had not figured out was that there were some predictable patterns for different types of leaders. Each executive information system we created had to be geared to a particular executive, and was therefore expensive and ultimately unsustainable.

In our own real estate story it was apparent as time went by that we had some disconnects between the leaders of the joint venture. We had a good division of responsibilities, but handoffs between executives were blocked. We had a detailed project plan, but no common glossary

on what “complete” or “I’ve done it” meant. We now had a staff in place, a monthly payroll that was creeping upwards, and we were starting to lose momentum. Still we made collective promises, nodded our heads as one, and stated truths in unison, but there was no shared reality.

In the face of this I began to formulate an understanding of the different types of leaders involved. Pretty soon I tested these concepts out with leadership teams in corporations of many types. Community leaders, government leaders, and children took LEMON Leadership tests. Business leaders through to marriage and family counselors affirmed and employed the LEMON Leadership truisms, and they have been shared with and verified by people in many different cultural settings.

## A definition of LEMONS

I have determined that there are in fact five types of leaders, not two, and not six.

Luminaries	People who see the world through the lens of ideas, viewpoints, intellectual constructs, the “Why.”
Entrepreneurs	People who see the world through the lens of opportunity, immediate needs to be filled, the “When.”
Managers	People who see the world through systems, the practical workings, the “How.”
Organizers	People who see the world through the lens of tasks to be done, people to be served, the “What.”
Networkers	People who see the world through the lens of webs to weave, people to connect, elements to gather, the “Who.”

The DNA of the leader shapes the texture of organizations quite significantly. Put a little differently, the tone, organizational structure, communication patterns and entire *modus operandi* of a corporation—whether a business or non-profit entity—is very different depending on which of the LEMONS is at the helm. Boards and outgoing executives handling issues of succession intuitively know this to be the case. Most of them frame the issues in terms of corporate culture and what is needed at this time in the life of the corporation. I believe that what they are sensing is that when you change an M for an O or an L for

an E or an E for an N you effectively usher in a change to the entire operating model. The whole *modus operandi* shifts when a leader leads out of their identity, which a good leader will do, and that identity is different from a predecessor's. Many boards would rather substitute a B+ manager with a B+ manager than run the risk of changing the type of leader at the helm. This short book will not deal in depth with the dynamics of succession, but you should be alerted to the fact that the LEMON-type plays a significant role in change. If not recognized, one runs into the unseen corporate brick wall at high speed.

**LEMON TRUISM:** Unless the LEMON Leadership type and the fundamentals of the operating model are in sync, the leader or the organization will fail.



I alert you to this truism up front because when we discuss each type of leader I will try to give you a word-taste of what it is like to work in an organization led by each of the LEMONS. The dysfunction we see in some organizations stems from a failure to grasp this truth.

### What is work?

One of the fascinating things about LEMON Leadership is that there is a tendency for each of the leadership types to disregard what the others do as real work. I remember one of my annual appraisals at Price Waterhouse when a partner in the office said, "I cannot decide whether you are a talker or a doer." For a Luminary, the talking is the doing. As a child, my father told me he would sit in his chair at the office with his long legs stretched so he could view the passersby through the large V formed by his size 14 shoes. "What are you doing?" they would ask. "I am working," came his reply. He was an idea man, and as the Marketing Director for an apparel company in South Africa, his job was to come up with ideas that would sell products. It seems his best ideas came when his feet were on the desk. To the passerby, that was not work.

I am pro-work. Work is good. It is a wonderful way to give expression to who we are intended to be; it soaks up time that otherwise can be spent

on needless self-absorption. Work is a great vehicle whereby we can serve others. Organizations can change the world for the better when they value good work. Having said this, we have to understand that work comes in different packages. Innovative organizations realize that work is not one-dimensional; they craft a collaboration between a mosaic of different workers. This mosaic is colored by the fact that different types of leaders view work differently. As a leader, you will save yourself a lot of heartache if you fully grasp that LEMONS each have radically different definitions of what constitutes actual, real work. Beyond that, they have an innate suspicion (and sometimes a firm belief) that what the other LEMONS do is not really work in the true sense of the word.

Let's look at an example of what different people consider to be work.

Managers	Managers in accounting think that what salespeople do isn't real work; it's just schmoozing and taking orders. Budgets, plans, spreadsheets, accounting, annual reports—now that's real work.
Networkers	Salespeople (often Networkers) think that their craft of identifying real needs, fitting products or services to that need, winning over customers, and keeping customers happy in the face of competition is the real work. The rest is boring admin and number crunching (the stuff Managers do).
Entrepreneurs	Entrepreneurs think that seeing an opportunity, finding the resources to pursue it, managing risk and getting the company structured correctly to be a lead player is real work.
Organizers	Organizers think that opportunities come and go but the real work is finding office space, hiring people, setting up trade shows, and fighting fires that Entrepreneurs don't even know are aflame ... now that's real work.

If you want to be successful, don't just try to find your definition of work so that you can defend it: make the leap to understanding that it is all work, it is all needed, and it is all good. What's more, if you can get inside the head of your LEMON colleagues, especially the ones who are not wired like you, then you will understand how they see work. Then when they tell you, "I did the job! It is finished," you will know what that really means.

The flip side is also true: if you fail to appreciate the nature of work for the other LEMONS then you will inevitably build a team that is devoid of key leadership types, the team will have blind spots at best, prejudices at worst, and will fail to deliver sustainable impact. Take a look at the team around you: who is missing from the mix?

## Categorizing yourself too quickly

When I meet someone and we talk about LEMON Leadership or when I am working with a group of executives, they are quick to want to categorize themselves. I have found that we make some common mistakes when hastily pigeon-holing people:

- We confuse style with DNA. So I have said, “She is a quiet introvert, therefore she cannot be a Networker.” Wrong.
- We say, “He is a visionary therefore he is a Luminary.” Wrong again. Every leader has vision, it just looks very different for each type of leader, and the vision of a Luminary is easier to spot than the vision of an Organizer so we say, “She has vision, ergo she is a Luminary.”
- I’ve heard it said, “She is a teacher, therefore she is a Luminary.” Also wrong. I have met many gifted teachers who are able to communicate the ideas of others but do not generate fresh ideas in a way that the Luminary does.

Before exploring each type of leader—avoiding the temptation to declare who one is too early—I have to point out that each of us is obviously a composite of several leadership types. As we get into the heart of the book you will discover that your primary and secondary LEMON typing radically affects how you lead on a good day, and on a bad day. You will also discover that this is not a book that says, “I am an Entrepreneur so take it or leave it!” Having understood the different leadership types you will uncover keys to dealing with yourself and others in situations calling for different types of leaders. The art of leadership is to know what type of leader is needed in any situation, and then being free to adjust accordingly.

Let’s examine the characteristics of leadership for each type of leader.