

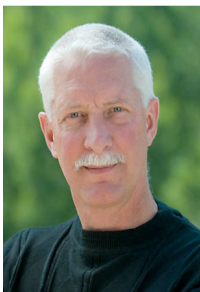
Integral Leadership Review

Volume X, No. 5
October 2010



Confessions of a Reluctant Businessman: In Over My Head?

Bob Anderson



I was recently asked to present to a group of Leadership and Organizational Development consulting colleagues. It was a group that consisted mostly of consultants who were very involved with the organization I founded—The Leadership Circle (TLC). Many of those in the audience that day think of me as a thought leader in the field. As I stood before the group, I realized that they might be expecting me to “do thought leadership,” to say something new, interesting, and maybe even profound. Instead of what they were expecting, I said, “I have learned more about leadership in the last five years than in the prior 25 years of my career. Mostly, I have learned what I don’t know about leadership.” This knocked the wind out of the group. I had their attention.

This is a story about what success feels like and the developmental challenges that come with it. It will sound like a story of struggle and confusion, and it is. But, it is not an uncommon struggle. A real-world example of the challenge of leadership happened for me as I was writing this paper. I was having a conversation with the CEO of a large insurance company. I asked him how he was doing and he said, “I am like a duck. At the surface, I am moving along smoothly. But, if you look below the surface, my little feet are paddling away as fast as they can go.” He then went on to explain the story of navigating his organization through the turbulent waters of the recent financial collapse. I have a lot of conversations with senior leaders like this. It is a common story. It is my story too. It is a story of managing and leading in a world of rapidly mounting complexity. It is a story of the personal leadership development that is required to meet that complexity. It is a story about adaptive challenge—challenge that requires the leader to evolve. It is my story, and it is the story of what is going on just below the surface with most, if not all, in senior leadership positions.

Just after the turn of the century, I completed a very large consulting project and moved on to the vision of launching The Leadership Circle. Having finished this all-consuming consulting project, I now had no clients in the pipeline. Furthermore, the market crash in the early part of the decade had substantially eroded my financial position. At that time, I was an independent, sole practitioner, whose organization consisted of two people—myself and a part-time Assistant. We had an annual budget of \$50,000. Today I am the CEO of a global leadership assessment company—The Leadership Circle. I am also a Managing Partner in an international consulting company—the Full Circle Group. The combined revenues of both organizations this year is 200 fold the budget I started with less than ten years ago. In a short span of years, I have gone from sole practitioner to CEO. I have become a manager, something I never really intended.

I left management for consulting 25 years ago and never looked back. Now, years later, two organizations have grown up around me. In Bob Kegan’s developmental language, I may well be “In Over My Head.” I am

challenged on all fronts (all quadrants, all levels, and all lines). The challenges are adaptive challenges. As a result, I find myself wondering if my “Operating System” (code for Stage of Development) is outmatched by the level of complexity I face every day.

Consequently, I have joined the Four In The Morning Club. This Club is made up of members who are awake at four in the morning worrying about our businesses, wondering how to navigate through the strategic complexity we face, and trying to sort out the next, optimal “chess move.” What I have learned from personal experience is that, like many of the clients with whom I consult, there is a secret we keep. It is a secret that few of us in the Club admit, and only then, to our most trusted advisors. What we may not be willing to tell you, unless you have earned considerable jurisdiction (respect and trust), is that sometimes we lay awake wondering if we have what it takes to lead—“if I am the right person for the job.”

I am learning that this quiet, internal struggle is far more common than I ever realized. I have learned that most entrepreneurs and many senior managers have similar doubts. The Four In The Morning Club, from my experience, has a large contingent who, like me, feel like we are In Over Our Heads, (Kegan)—and we may well be. To be “In Over Our Heads” means that we are likely facing complexity that is beyond our level of development on one, if not multiple, lines of development. We, and our organizations, are facing adaptive challenges. We are challenged to evolve personally and systemically if the organizations we lead are to thrive in the mist of current conditions. This is not an easy challenge. At least I have an Integral Development framework through which to understand what is going on for me. Most of my club members do not.

This article is a personal story. It is an exploration of how successfully growing a company leads to rapidly increasing business complexity, and how that business complexity then required a stretch in the complexity of my meaning-making system on one or more lines of development. It is a deliberately vulnerable story. I want the reader, especially my fellow Club members to know that they are not alone, that success does not always feel like success, that organizational growth is likely to create the conditions that require the evolution of our leadership, and that, when challenged to evolve personally, we often feel like we are hovering on the brink—wondering if we have what it takes.

This story is also written to my Leadership Consulting colleagues. It is a call (to those of us who are leadership, OD and HR practitioners) for a more practical understanding and compassionate application of Integral Theory. More than that, it calls for a significant reintegration of the Business Performance and Leadership Effectiveness conversation in the way leadership and OD consulting is practiced. What I am learning about leadership from the CEO chair is that Leadership Consulting, in a truly Integral way, requires more than deep Quadrant One capability (which was the primary focus of my practice), or depth in any one of the Quadrants. It requires mastery of the “I-We-It” of leadership and management. It also requires that the consultant is capable of working across levels, especially the earlier levels. In a different language, it requires that the consultant be fluent in three languages: the language of business, the language of systemic OD, and the language of deep personal transformation. More on this later.

The Organizations

Since this is a story about how rapidly emerging complexity is in a race with the development of my personal operating system, let me set the stage by briefly explaining a little about the organizations that have emerged around me. This stage setting will serve as a backdrop to the shape of complexity I face and what I am learning about integral leadership and organizational development.

The Leadership Circle is a company formed around The Leadership Circle Profile (TLCP) and its suite of assessments. TLCP is based on an Integral Model into which are plugged many of the best frameworks to

arise in the field of leadership, psychology, developmental psychology, the human potential movement, as well as the Wisdom Traditions. Many describe the assessments as the most powerful and effective leadership assessment available today. Furthermore, some have said that the underlying model on which the tools are based is the most fully integrated model of leadership development to arise in the field. Whether this is true or not is beside the point. I mention it, in this context, only to explain our rapid growth. TLC is now an international business having offices in Europe, Africa, Australia, and across Asia Pacific. The international nature and distribution structure of this business ushers in significant complexity.

The Full Circle Group (FCG) is an international consulting partnership that launched this year (2010). It arises out of the coming together of some very seasoned consultants, who recognize the uniqueness of the TLC tools and frameworks, have substantial consulting practices or firms, are thought leaders in their own right, practice in arenas of large scale, whole-systems change, and are willing to combine IP, drop their long-developed brand identities and form FCG. The regional partnership and global member structure of this organization also has enough complexity of its own.

Put the two organizations together and complexity grows exponentially. Each organization is separate and distinct, yet overlapping and strategically related. Furthermore, each organization is at very different stages of business development. TLC is an emerging organization. It is in the growth/expansion stage, where cash is tight and the infrastructure and talent needs are high. FCG, on the other hand, is in a mature start-up. These two organizations, by design, are strategic partner organizations, share overlapping stakeholders, and although completely separate organizations, need to think through their separate strategies, products, services, and distribution structures in a way that is mutually interdependent and symbiotic. This challenge on a global scale, with global partner organizations, diverse and overlapping stakeholder groups, ushers in a level of emotional, relational, strategic, and systemic complexity that is substantial, if not, at times, confounding.

Complexity: Redundant Polarities

Barry Johnson distinguishes between problems and polarities. Problems are solvable. There is usually one or a few optimal solutions and, although sometimes thorny, once arrived at, admit to a stable solution. Polarities are different. They are dilemmas. They are not solvable because a polarity is comprised of a tension between equally legitimate, but opposite, end points. A classic example in organizational life is, should the management of vital business functions be centralized or decentralized? The answer is yes. Too much centralization is problematic as is too much decentralization. This polarity, like all polarities, is not solvable, but it is manageable. Furthermore, the optimization point of this or any polarity is a moving target as an organization grows through its various stages of development, changes its strategy, or has business conditions change. Polarities are continually being managed and optimized in the midst of constant change.

Redundancy is a term borrowed from engineering. In designing a stable structure, like a building or an aircraft, engineers are designing for tension resolution, such that the resulting structure is strong and stable. Redundancy results when one tension resolution in the structure, depends on a second tension resolution in the structure and vice versa. In other words, part-one of the structure can not be stably resolved until part-two of the structure is resolved, and part-two of the structure depends on the successful resolution of part-one of the structure. In mathematics this is the equivalent of simultaneous equations—two equations with two unknowns (Remember those awful things?). One equation cannot be solved in isolation. The two must be solved simultaneously. So it is with redundancies. They are so interdependent that they are can only be solved simultaneously. The amazing thing about many of the more complex structures that we commonly use, marvel at, and take for granted, is that they could only be designed by resolving a long string of redundancies—many equations with many unknowns that can only be solved simultaneously. I have heard that

the 747 aircraft has up to 700 redundancies. Can you imagine designing something that has 700 parts of the structure all interdependently related such that the final stable structure can not be resolved unless all 700 parts of the structure are simultaneously resolved? Mind-bending!

Now put the two concepts together—Redundant Polarities. These are polarities that are dependent upon each other for optimal resolution. One or two polarities are difficult enough to optimize separately, but when they each need to be resolved simultaneously, complexity increases dramatically. The emotional, relational, strategic and systemic complexity, mentioned above, results from the multiple redundant polarities that naturally arise at the intersection of the TLC and FCG. Let me describe a few.

My web of Redundant Polarities

In this section of the paper, I will briefly describe the redundant polarities that have emerged in the confluence between TLC and FCG as they grow. I will do this as a long list of questions that I face in my role as CEO of TLC and as a Managing Partner of FCG. These questions are outlined below. It is not important that you understand them all or that you even read all the way through. I want you to feel into the weightiness of each of them, the interrelated nature of all of them, and the redundant nature of most of them. Once you get the gist, you can go on to the next section. Let me start with a story, however, that gives a sense of the weight and emotional pressure inside just one polarity (and by inference each of them).

Cash management, especially in the start-up and in the early expansion/growth phase of business, is a polarity. I did not know this when I started the business. A number of years ago, I was struggling with this polarity not knowing then that it was a polarity. All I knew is that I could not see very far forward. I could not see how to invest in all the emerging priorities as well as the additional staffing that were required to support growth. We simply did not have enough cash even though the business was growing nicely.

Living in this dilemma for an extended period had me doubting my capability as a manager. At times, I felt like I knew what I was doing, and at other times, I felt like I didn't have a clue. Of course, there were very few I felt I could tell this to, because I was looked to for leadership. One day, when I was really down, I called (the late) Bob Gunn. Bob had considerable business experience developing his own large consulting firms (Gunn Associates and later Accompli). I called him expecting a gentle, supportive coaching that would allow me to explore my concern, fears and doubts. I expect him to provide me with encouragement to stay the course. I guess I was expecting a Quadrant One conversation. That is not what I got. The conversation was over in five minutes. As soon as he got wind of the issue, he asked me a question I did not expect, "What are your receivables?" I remember thinking, "Why is he asking me this? Here I am, hurting, and he is asking me about receivables?" He then asked me a rapid-fire series of questions. "How often do you turn them? What is your total revenue year-to-date?" Etc. After a couple of minutes he said, "Bob, this is where you are: You are at the phase of business development where the business is growing rapidly, and you need to invest in that growth now, but the business is not yet generating enough cash to support the growth you are in. It is an inevitable phase in the development of a business. It is not about you." Tears came to my eyes. I got off the phone and went to tell my wife about this extraordinarily helpful call. "Finally someone understands where I am in a way that could be helpful."

I knew all about the Quadrant One stages of internal personal development. I can track my own development through the progressions. I did not know then that businesses also develop through predictable phases and stages. What Bob did for me, was let me know that I was not lost, I was in the place on the business development map called Lost. Because of that call, I could instantly see the dilemma differently. I could hold it without being diminished by it. It was not, primarily, about my adequacy or inadequacy. It was simply a

business polarity, one that naturally heats up at this phase of business development.

Below is a list of redundant polarities in the intersection of TLC and FCG. Feel free to read all of them, or, once you get the gestalt of the complexity they collectively represent, move on to the *Personal Leadership Reflections* Section.

Cash Flow: *Cash management in a business is a constant polarity between meeting current expenses, growing retained earnings, and investing in future growth. To manage cash I needed to:*

- *Build an extensive financial model of the business.*
- *Project revenue and expenses out at least two years.*
- *Calculate taxes.*
- *Account for the rate of turnover in accounts receivables,*
- *Estimate the cash position of the business each month two years forward to see if there was enough cash to support a given investment long-term.*
- *Model the impact of those investments on our cash position each month into a two to three year future.*

In managing cash I am really managing other polarities as follows:

Investment in growth:

- *Should we develop an entirely new software platform that goes beyond survey management to the management of our global distribution system?*
- *Or, should we develop the software required to extend/enhance/diversify our current products and to create a portfolio of new products?*
- *Or, should we invest the development of an enhanced global brand for TLC and/or FCG?*
- *Or, should we... (and the list goes on and on)?*
- *Or should we grow retained earnings to weather impending and increasing volatility in global markets?*
- *Should we make these investments in each of the two organizations separately or as a shared service between the two?*
- *Should we fund the investment from profits or look for outside capital?*

The answer to most of the questions (and more) is an urgent yes; however, all this adds up to millions in competing priorities and we have far less than that to allocate. Yet, we have to grow to fund the strategic priorities on our plate and we need to put those same strategic priorities in place in order to grow.

Global Distribution:

- *What should be our global distribution structure for both TLC and FCG?*
- *How do we develop both simultaneously in a way that is strategic and synergistic?*
- *How do we find Licensees and Distributors for TLC around the world who are capable of high-volume product distribution, and who have the willingness/capability to become or create FCG.*
- *What is the optimal design for our global sales organization regionally and globally?*
- *Which comes first, translating our surveys and materials into new languages or putting in place the distribution structure necessary to support the business in that part of the world as it develops?*

Multiple Overlapping Stakeholders:

- *How to forward strategic business development and creative product/service development with multiple overlapping stakeholders?*
 - ◆ *TLC and FCG*
 - ◆ *Our growing network of Associates*
 - ◆ *TLC Licensees and Distributors around the world*
 - ◆ *Global FCG Member Organizations*
 - ◆ *Customers*
 - ◆ *Partners*
 - ◆ *Employees*
- *Which investments in new infrastructure, products and services come first, given that each stakeholder group has its own unique set of opportunities, business development needs and competitive pressures?*

Management Process:

- *How do we navigate the business rhythm required to do all the above,*
 - ◆ *Across world-wide time zones,*
 - ◆ *With the pressure of constant travel and delivery — required to finance the business launch in one business and growth in the other,*
 - ◆ *When different stages of business development exist among businesses, therefore,*
 - ◆ *Stakeholders put different rankings and urgency on key priorities because,*
 - ◆ *The various business entities are intimately interdependent and the timetable and priorities in one organization do not match the development needs of another?*
- *What is the optimal balance between centralized decision making in the hands of a few and a collaborative co-creative process of Partners and stakeholders?*
- *How do we build effective relationships among so many partners, having such different energies, personalities, egoic patterns, and deep passionate convictions (myself included)?*
- *How do we integrate the work of our group of thought leaders and do that in a co-creative way—with each other and with our key stakeholders regionally and globally—*
 - ◆ *And sort out the IP ownership issues,*
 - ◆ *While making rapid progress on our strategic priorities and*
 - ◆ *While meeting our high delivery requirements?*

Succession: *In all of the above, how do I/we plan for all of the above with an eye toward succession so that the organization will survive to serve generations forward?*

Personal Leadership

- *How do I manage my own reactivity in the midst of all this so that I can maintain relationships (full of inherent, natural conflict) that are clean, clear, authentic and loving?*
- *How do I balance the constant pressure of business priorities with my growing contemplative spiritual leanings?*
- *How do I hold what I know in contemplation, that no amount of ego is capable of transforming the world, in the midst of the press of these redundant polarities, and not get caught in my own egoic illusion.*
- *How do I balance the demands of Senior Management with the love of being a consulting practitioner? How do I do more of what I love to do? What was that again?*

I think I am not alone when I stand in the midst of this much complexity. I think many entrepreneurs and senior leaders stand in this much complexity most of the time—likely more.

Personal Leadership Reflections

I am now apart of the 4 AM club. I do not attend every night, but some nights I find myself there. I will speak personally, but I think I speak for many of us about what makes us members. The great secret that makes me a member is that, every now and then, I lay awake, not only trying to resolve the web of redundant polarities, but wondering if I have what it takes, if I am outmatched by the strategic complexity that has grown up around me, if I have overreached strategically or if I have been too cautious/careful, if I am over my head, and if I am still having fun at this.

One night in the club, I realized that I am the kind of manager who needs the very kind of consulting that I am in business to provide!

Like parenting (and other roles we take on in adulthood), leading and managing are far more challenging than I ever realized they could be. They demand more than I ever gave my clients credit for as I consulted to them in the earlier years of my career. In fact, from where I sit now, Bob Anderson the CEO would not hire the consultant that Bob Anderson was 10 years ago. That consultant was not practical enough. As a consultant, I focused on very deep and powerful Quadrant 1&2 work with leaders. I could also create enough of a context around that work so that it tied to business relevant issues. But, I was not an Integral Practitioner in the fullest sense of what I now need as a businessman.

As a businessman I need to know, if I am going to allow a consultant to work with my organization, the ROI on the engagement. I need to know if, in the end, I will be any further along in managing my set of polarities. I need to know, especially when strategic priorities outstrip the cash available, if the consulting engagement will actually generate more cash than it consumes—and if that break-even point will be met on pace with the growth needs of the business.

As a businessman, I need help. It is not enough for a leadership consultant to see me only/primarily through the lens of personal consciousness development—even though I need that. I also need help with being more managerially effective. I need help with forwarding the business agenda, advancing strategic priorities and optimizing my web of redundant priorities. If you are a consultant, when you sit and consult with me, I will know in a minute if you can help me hold the business realities or if you focus the conversation on one of the Quadrants—the Quadrant of your particular expertise. This ability to engage credibly, and in an “all quadrants way,” is the door to getting a very high level of jurisdiction with me.

By the same token, while I want help with the performance of the business, I want you to be able to meet me in the difficult emotional realities of all this. I want you to get the pressures that complexity brings. I want you hold the un-resolvability of it all as well as the urgency to find resolution. I want you to help me explore the reactivity that often emerges in me. I want you to fiercely, yet, compassionately challenge me about the way I sometimes reactively show up to my partners, Licensees, and to my management team members. I want you to help me with the struggle to practice what I preach. If you have jurisdiction, I am willing to explore this terrain very deeply. I want you to know the territory.

The Mission and deep ground of TLC and FCG is spiritual. Both organizations arise out of, and in response to, profound spiritual experience. I want those consulting with me to get what I am about at this deep level. I

want to be met there. I want the conversation we evolve together and in the organizations to contain the depth and sacredness that is at the core of what we are about together.

Yes, I need help, but I need that help to be in the form of a mature Integral Practitioner—someone who is versed in the language and practice of all four quadrants (not just theoretically) as well as someone who has enough requisite complexity to hold the strategic, emotional, and spiritual complexity of all this. Every one of the above areas in which I need help is important, and any one of them is not sufficient, in and of itself, to be optimally helpful. It is the combination of them that makes for the fully mature Integral Practitioner. It is the mature integration of them in an Integral Practitioner that makes for breakthroughs in personal and business performance. This is the kind of help I need. I am not alone.

One more thing, despite the struggle with complexity (which is the primary focus of this article) I am having a great ride. The creation of these two organizations—TLC and FCG, while demanding, is deeply meaningful and gratifying. I love the people with whom I get to play. I am moved daily as reports come in from all over the world about profoundly impactful experience. I cannot imagine a more richly textured life than the one I am in. And, the 4AM Club is part of that texture.

Implications for the Field

Imagine you are gathering on the first morning of a workshop. In the workshop there are 10 HR/OD consultants and 10 CEOs. Within the first ten minutes, as people gather for coffee before session, you will notice that the consultants are huddled together having an animated conversation and the CEOs are also huddled, having their own equally interesting conversation. This may seem simply like birds of a feather flocking together, but this phenomenon also represents a huge split between fields of HR, OD and Leadership Consulting and the world of business. Practitioners and business people are in very different conversations. In most organizations, HR and OD practitioners are not invited to sit at the table that sets direction for the business. Practitioners, whether internal or external, usually have little jurisdiction at the top.

This was also true of me years ago as a practitioner. I would have called myself an Integral Practitioner because I was well versed in Integral Theory, deeply involved in personal developmental practice, and had a thriving consulting practice. However, my personal passion was, and still is, the deep artful work of inside-out development with leaders. I worked to make connections between this work and the dilemmas that arise for leaders in the midst of organizational realities, but, in truth, I was only marginally interested in business realities. I was not in the business conversation, nor was I really in the OD conversation. My work was decidedly Quadrant One bridging to Quadrant Two. This is where my personal passion lies and, frankly, I think I made a valuable contribution practicing this way, but it was not a fully Integral Practice. Because it was not, I lacked the jurisdiction to work at the top and to sponsor large-scale change. I would have been one of the consultants huddled with my consulting colleagues having a great conversation in the language of our theory and practice while secretly wondering how to get connected to the other group in the room.

The Leadership Circle chapter of my life has brought me into close touch with many of the most serious practitioners in our field. Over the years, I was drawn to a few who are now my partners in the Full Circle Group. I now know that the reason I was drawn to them is that they represented the other half of what I needed to have a fully Integral consulting practice.

When I first met one of my Partners, Bill Adams, I was conducting a certification training for the members of his consulting firm. At first, I experienced Bill as a fairly disruptive participant because he kept taking the

conversation off in what seemed like tangential directions. Eventually, I realized that he already understood the content and the value of it. He had moved on to the value proposition. He was playing with how to language the value of what he was learning to CEOs. Bill is a master in crafting the promise of our profession into language that is business relevant and that can be heard at the tops of organizations.

Effective leadership consultants (as Integral Practitioners) need to be fluent in the following three languages:

The first is the language of deep personal transformation. This language evolves from our own internal developmental work. It is the language of purpose and passion, doubt and fear, caution and courage, consciousness and competency. This language allows us to meet our clients where they are (at whatever Stage of Development) and support them in gaining a helpful, if not transformative, perspective that enhances their capacity to create the lives and leadership to which they aspire. This language of deep transformation is essential for helping leaders and leadership teams develop the requisite depth and complexity they need to meet the adaptive challenges that they, and their organizations, are facing every day.

The second language is the language of business. Frankly, I do not know how to help those who do not have this language develop it. I have learned it in my CEO role. It is a language all its own. It is a very precise language. It is a language that develops from actually knowing business. Proficiency in this language is required to get a seat at the senior table. This language ushers in much needed jurisdiction.

The third language is the language of OD, specifically, whole system design and change. This is the language that helps the leader (as well as the leadership team) to evolve their role toward becoming more of a practitioner—the developer of the organization's capacity to create its intended future. This is the language that translates the deep leadership transformation conversation into systemic change and business performance.

When practitioners are fluent in these three languages they become capable of guiding significant transformation efforts. This is the promise of Leadership Consulting as a fully mature Integral Practice.

TLC assessments and FCG consulting integrate these three languages or conversations into one conversation. We are doing so under the banner of Effective Leadership and Business Performance. We work with senior teams in a way that directly engages the business performance conversation as well as the deep, inside-out work of how team members show-up individually as well as collectively. What happens when these conversations come together in one conversation? In this seamless business-personal-individual-collective conversation, the results are extraordinary. This Integral conversation is transformative individually. It links individual patterns to team dynamics, links team effectiveness to business performance, and finally, it bridges to the key leadership processes in the organization that need to be more effectively managed or redesigned for the organization to fulfill its mission. This is the promise of a fully mature Integral Practice.

This integrated conversation is more than having a leadership development conversation while making connections to business dilemmas; it is more than having that leadership development conversation within the context of a business relevant conversation. It is having the business conversation and the personal/collective leadership conversation as one conversation. There is a fine art to this conversation.

There is one more thing I am learning about Integral business leadership and the practice of consulting to business leaders. I am learning this, again, by sitting in the CEO chair. It has to do with the importance of

Second Tier thinking. In the leadership development field it is common to distinguish between leadership and management. I do it all the time. It is a useful distinction, but all too often, the distinction is made from the perspective that leadership is senior to management. The distinction is often made with a post-conventional bias.

Robert Kegan, in his book, *In Over Our Heads*, draws the conclusion that most of the literature written to adults (parenting, couples, self-help, work, leadership, etc.) makes a 4th order demand on consciousness. In other words, most of these literatures are writing to Level 4 of Kegan's model (Level 4 being the first post-conventional level). This is true of the work and leadership literature as well. Since most managers are solidly Level 3, much of the focus of leadership development is decidedly on the side of developing post-conventional leaders. Now, back to the leadership-management distinction. When we talk leadership, we are describing Level 4 primarily—a post-conventional, self-authoring meaning-making system. When we talk management, we are describing capability that develops primarily at Level 3. When practitioners make this leadership-management distinction, I think we often do so with some judgment that management is inferior to leadership because it is mostly a Level 3 focus. I submit that, to the extent that this is true, we are in First Tier thinking.

As the leader of a growing business, I have a new found respect for management. I spend many of my days working on Level 3 structures. As I have I personally evolved through the stages, I did so primarily on the Cognitive, Emotional, Self and Spiritual lines. So, I have thought of myself as a mature post-conventional, Second Tier person. What I have learned over the last decade is that I had to go back and grow up the pragmatic line of managerial effectiveness. I did not learn this along the way. There is much to learn. I have gained a deep respect for the craft of management. In doing so, I am learning more about what it really means to transcend and include as a leader.

Most organizations function on a good, healthy foundation of Level 3 structures. Budgets, operational processes, strategy execution process, project management disciplines, key metrics, policies, procedures, distribution structures, infrastructure etc., are all good solid Level 3 structures. Without them the business does not run. Much of what it takes to evolve a business is a daily focus on this level of structure. It is a decidedly management focus. Therefore, integral business leadership is truly a “transcend and include” operation. It continues to use and develop its Level 3 operational structures and may do so from a later Stage of Development (if that has evolved). Integral Leadership and Integral Consulting values and is fluent in the worlds of management and leadership.

Second Tier leadership is Integral leadership. Integral Leadership can translate what is immediately known in higher (if not non-dual) states or stages into organizational mission and vision. It can hold the complexity and uncertainty of redundant polarities. In the midst of that complexity it can find systemic leverage—the trim tab on the rudder—where a focus in one or two areas is the key to unraveling the knot of complexity into coherent vision and strategy. It is emotionally mature enough to hold the inherent conflict and pressure of complexity, without becoming overly reactive, and thereby continuing to lead in emotionally and relationally intelligent ways. As such, it is capable of, in the midst of the inherent conflict that comes with complexity, building alignment across key stakeholder groups. It is also fully capable of attending to the Level 3 infrastructure required to execute day-in and day-out on the organization's strategy. This kind of leadership represents the full bandwidth of the Integral Business Leader. It also represents the full bandwidth required of the Integral Leadership Consultant. Effective leadership, as well as effective leadership consulting is a multi-level, two-tiered, transcend and include operation. In other words, AQAL.

Why I Care

Most of my career I was content to specialize in the area of my practice passion. In doing so, I have been able to bring into being The Leadership Circle, its integrated model, associated assessment tools, and powerful processes for using these tools with leaders and teams. As people of amazing dedication, vision and talent were drawn to TLC, a vision of global impact began to emerge. How could we mobilize this group of extraordinary practitioners into a force for global impact? At the same time, I was coming to the conclusion that the future of the planet lies in collective leadership. Business leadership holds a vital key to our future. Leadership that transcends gender, ethnicity, political, and national boundaries and evolves structures that make for a sustainable planetary future is required more now than ever. Only fully mature Integral Leaders in business and in the practitioner fields that consult to leaders, is up to this challenge. At TLC and FCG, “We exist to evolve the conscious practice of leadership, to steward the planet, and to awaken us all to our inherent unity.” Executing on this mission is worth the few nights I end up in the 4AM Club.

About the Author

Bob Anderson is the founder and CEO of The Leadership Circle, LLC. Bob is the creator and author of The Leadership Circle Profile an integrated and innovative leadership development tool being used by companies worldwide. The Leadership Circle Profile is being heralded as a genuine breakthrough in the field of leadership development and Bob’s leading-edge research has put him at the forefront of the leadership development conversation worldwide.

In 2009 Bob Anderson became one of the founders of The Full Circle Group; a premier leadership and organizational development consulting company. The Full Circle Group will offer organizational consulting services rooted in TLC frameworks, philosophy, and a holistic approach to furthering leadership development.

As a consultant, Bob has personally worked with some of leading companies in the United States. His clients include: Ashland Chemical Company, AT&T, Banc One Corporation, Dana Corporation, Dexter Corporation, First Energy Corporation, Good Samaritan Health Center, Hackley Hospital, Hartford Graduate Center, Hartford Steam Boiler, Health Care Forum, Hoosier Magnetics Corporation, Hospice, IBM, Kraft Foods, McDonalds Corporation, Navistar International, Steelcase, Notre Dame University, Riverside Methodist Hospital, St. Vincent Hospital, St. Mary’s Hospital and the United Way.

His work has been recognized by The University of Notre Dame’s Partner in Innovation Award, and is required study in the New York University’s highly acclaimed “Leadership Confronted and Encountered” syllabus. He is an Extended Faculty member at The University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana. Bob is an ongoing faculty member of the Health Care Forum’s Executive Fellows Program.

Integral Leadership Review

<http://www.integralleadershipreview.com>

