



In Search of Eagles Inc.

*All leadership is example.
Anything else is coercion.*

Consulting & Coaching

Leading From Resonance™

The Evolution of the Successful Executive

A Survival Response to the Reality of the 21st Century Economy

By Bill Shirley, BT, PCC

The current buzz-word in the executive suites throughout the business universe is “Authenticity.” (Authenticity is “the honest expression of feelings.”) The conventional wisdom nowadays is “we want our leaders to be real people, people with feelings and foibles.” “We want the intuitive and creative thinkers who focus on relationships as much as on tasks.” These leaders must still get results, as all business executives must do. However, their performance is also judged on *how* they got the results. What was the collateral cost of bringing the project in on time and within budget? These collateral costs are “off books”, that is, not measured by the official “bean counters.”

Only in recent years have these costs -- measured in the human terms of loyalty, dedication, morale, and turnover -- been considered. Until the research in on-the-job human behavior clearly showed that vast numbers of employees (over 70%) had long-ago “fired” their boss and are disengaged in their work, did anyone wonder “What is going on here?” and “Why?” It immediately became evident to any inquiring mind that the intense focus of the past 30 years, the short-term expectations of the business owners, is a tad myopic.

Business leaders are beginning to recognize that the 21st Century, uber-competitive, business environment is rapidly changing. It now requires leaders who can create loyal followers among employees, customers and suppliers if the organization is to survive! An organization whose culture focuses on profits to the exclusion of Resonant Relationships™ and other human values is no longer sustainable.

Changing environmental conditions drive evolution; naturally occurring mutants with superior survivability in the new environment begin to proliferate and soon, a new, recognizable species of executive emerges. In this instance, it is the Homo Empatheia who emerged. One of this species’ deepest beliefs is that “Not all that counts can be counted.” Until recently, all executives with this belief were eaten alive!

So now what has happened to the “Professional” Manager, the one with the methodical, analytical, buttoned-down, MBA mind? What has happened to the cool, calculating executive who was admired - and feared -- for her ability to mask her feelings so no one was ever sure what was on her mind? What has happened to that task-oriented high achiever who takes great pride in exceeding every quarterly earnings target regardless of the collateral cost? The deepest belief of the Homo Freonis is that “It *only* counts if it can be counted.”

The exploding need for loyal, fully engaged employees so that businesses can compete in “Econ 21” is destroying the old environment where the Homo Freonis ruled at an incomprehensible rate. Even though its environment will soon disappear, it is a long way from becoming extinct simply because its breeding ground -- the nation’s many university MBA programs - have not realized that their progeny do not possess the



Eagles don't flock. You find them one at a time.

325 A. Summerset Lane, Basalt, CO 81621
bill@insearchofeagles.com

• Ph: 970.927.9134 • Fax: 970.927.1846
• www.insearchofeagles.com

human and ethical values required of successful leaders in this century. They are still over focused on the scientific, the rational and easily measurable facts of business.

As the available environment for Homo Freonis declines and the numbers continue to increase because of the long established breeding habits, the competition for the available food will become intense. However, disaster will be avoided because not all Homo Freonis are created equal. Some are more adaptable than others. After all, Homo Empatheia mutated from Homo Freonis, probably some time ago, but it was only recently that environmental conditions became favorable for its survival.

While their behaviors, attitudes, and values appear to be very different, 99.44% of the DNA of the two species is identical. There is every indication from current experimental fieldwork that the more creative and adaptable of Homo Freonis can learn the new Homo Empatheia behaviors and attitudes and, with patience and perseverance, realign their behavior so that they can at least survive, if not thrive, in the evolving environment.

It is important to recognize the salient differences in the two species. The Homo Freonis is confident and competent. It has a quick, incisive mind; it cuts through the fuzz and fog to the quantifiable facts of the matter. Once the analysis is complete, it synthesizes a plan with quantifiable metrics so that progress can be easily measured. Plans that produce the intended results on time and within budget are successful. Objective, bottom-line results are *all* that really matter regardless of mission and values statements to the contrary. The working environment highly rewards this behavior.

The Homo Empatheia must also have a quick, incisive mind that cuts through the fuzz and fog in analyzing a situation. However, the analytical process considers a wide range of human and ethical factors not easily measured or explained in arriving at the plan of action. The Homo Empatheia involves her wise, intuitive heart in the process. Such a decision-making process is beyond the comprehension of the Homo Freonis for many reasons; not the least of them is that he does not know how to access his intuitive heart.

Working with a skilled Executive Coach, either an Executive Leadership Coach or an Executive Relationship Coach, is now widely recognized as the method of choice for the distressed and confused Homo Freonis executive to evolve into a successful Home Empatheia executive. The success rate of this transformative process is proportional to the combined persistence and self-acceptance of the client. Neither persistence nor self-acceptance alone will work, both are necessary in abundant, equal quantities.

The coaching process is very straightforward. First, the Homo Freonis executive must warm to the point that feelings are thawed and freely flow so that they become recognizable, available, and expressible. Communications can shift from solely a mind-to-mind exchange to a heart-to-heart connection combined with a mind-to-mind exchange.

Next, the Homo Freonis must remove the many years accumulation of caked wax from his ears so that he can hear. He must learn to frequently clean out the ear wax or he will quickly return to being hearing-impaired. While being able to hear is necessary, it is not sufficient; the Homo Freonis must also learn to listen well. This is not a normal or natural behavior for most specimens, so the more astute and adaptable ones enlist trusted associates to make them aware when they show symptoms of listening failure.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of the Homo Empatheia is both the natural ability to hear and to listen. This species has no difficulty with either ear wax accumulating or listening failures. They are naturally equipped to listen with understanding and empathy (thus their name “Empatheia”) at several levels. They pick up on the others’ tone, inflection, body language, energy, and aura as well as what is said.

The warm, relaxed manner of this newly evolving species enables many specimens to express intuitive wisdom, which is, “quiet knowing without conscious thought.” While knowledge resides in the mind, wisdom

resides in the heart, and is only accessible from the intuitive ebb and flow of feelings and a feeling of connection with others.

The persistent and self-accepting Homo Freonis, with the guidance from a skilled Executive Coach, can acquire adequate multi-level listening skills and, as the feelings thaw, develop a reasonable level of intuitive insight. One of the salient characteristics of the genus Homo, across the entire range of its species, is its infinite ability to learn new skills and behaviors when motivated to do so. So, even though individual specimens may not have the DNA of a Homo Empathea, if motivated to work closely with a skilled Executive Coach, the great majority of these individuals can become very successful in an environment that naturally favors the Homo Empathea.

Once the feelings are well thawed, Homo Freonis must get to know herself at a depth never before possible (before the thaw). This is an adventurous and, at times, frightening, journey into inner space; a journey often “where no man has gone before.” The Executive Coach is there to support and ask tough, uncomfortable questions that lead Homo Freonis to greater and deeper insights and understanding of who she is, what her role in life is, and who she wants to become. Most coaching sessions are conversations the executive could never have with a peer, boss, subordinate or family member. The coaching relationship is unique, non-judgmental, and non-critical; it is best described as “a peer relationship with an edge.”

In the course of this adventurous journey, the Homo Freonis discovers that he didn't know himself as well as he thought he did, and now that he does know himself so much more deeply and completely, he likes himself ever so much more! He also realizes that he needs to better understand how others perceive him if he is to be an effective leader. The failure to understand how others perceive the Homo Freonis is a career-limiting choice! Leading From Resonance™ requires a leader to be fully aware of the impact his behavior has on others.

With this thawed self-awareness comes the realization that in any given moment, in every encounter, the Homo Freonis makes a choice to create either Resonance or Dissonance. If he chooses Resonance, he immediately discovers the power and productivity of leading authentic, loyal Resonant Relationships™ and the low stress, highly productive culture - a “Resonant Culture” -- this choice creates.

It is this natural ability to build high performance teams around Resonant Relationships™ that has created the demand that the Homo Empathea executive replace the typical Homo Freonis executive. A skilled Executive Coach can enhance the career of all Homo Freonis executives who have the persistence and self-acceptance to master new skills in thinking about results and new behaviors in relating to people.

This discussion focused only on the questionable survivability of the Homo Freonis. However, there are several other species of executives whose futures are similarly threatened by the rapidly changing 21st Century, uber competitive, business environment, and therefore would benefit from a relationship with a skilled Executive Coach. And four of these executive species are Homo Rageous, Homo Negativus, Homo Wimpus and Homo Indecisivis. With just a little thought, you can identify several more endangered executive species.

www.insearchofeagles.com