

UNLOCK YOUR FABs LEADERSHIP STYLE

Your leadership style is unique, singular in the world. The four leadership styles we call Fixer, Artist, Builder, and Strategist, typify every leader, but to infinite degree of variation.

Learning to recognize what plays to your best leadership style and increasingly *rejecting* what is not for your highest and best use, will help you build stronger teams.

That's where the magic happens. And that's how you unlock greater success as a leader.

Explore your dominant and secondary mode to more fully understand your unique wiring, while discovering how you can strengthen your team with complementary styles.



THE **F**IXER

Fixers have an innate ability to see what's broken, and one or more ways to fix it.



THE **A**RTIST

Artists see the world as their canvas and are wired to create a work of art.



THE **B**UILDER

Builders excel at making the foundation and structure for an organization to enter new markets.



THE **S**TRATEGIST

Strategists operate at scale, navigating the complexity of a large organization or division.



You have an innate ability to see what's broken, and one or more ways to fix it. Fixer leaders are drawn to the most dysfunctional, even toxic organizations and situations. You bring order out of chaos.

YOU KNOW YOU ARE A FIXER IF:

- ◆ You are drawn to helping troubled, dysfunctional, and even toxic organizations or situations.
- ◆ You see what's broken, and you know how to turn it around.
- ◆ You can't help yourself. Chaos must turn to order.
- ◆ Velocity is your middle name.
- ◆ You drive for measurable improvement.
- ◆ You explore triggers that will have the best ROI.
- ◆ You implement controls.
- ◆ You make decisions quickly.
- ◆ Your mindset is financial and analytical.
- ◆ You are candid and direct.
- ◆ You have a knack for helping people see why change must happen and the important role they play.
- ◆ You might be questioned as being the enemy, but could leave as the hero.
- ◆ Your superpower is: calm in the face of chaos.
- ◆ You are energized by intensity and urgency.
- ◆ You look for your next challenge once a situation is back to health.

PROCESS

Turnaround What is Broken or Bleeding. Laser focus 24/7 on reviving the most damaged companies, divisions, products, services. What happens when the fix is complete? You move on to the next challenge. You love the intensity, the urgency, meeting the needs of the moment. You succeed by working yourself out of a job. When the drama is gone, so are you.

APPROACH

Lone Ranger. You rally the core team, and do what is necessary to turn things around even if isolating and isolated. Your job is to run to the burning building and while you start solo, eventually you convince the go-forward team to follow you in. That means bold and sometimes drastic moves, but for the accomplished Fixer, the first rule is humility. John Short says: "Don't have the habit of coming into a business with the savior syndrome, as in 'I know everything, I'm going to solve all your problems.' I try to talk less, listen more, learn, ask a lot of questions, and understand the industry."

SYSTEM

Controls. The Fixer deals with mess by putting controls in place. That means evaluating the most critical items such as cash burn, declining morale, while stabilizing critical needs immediately. Michelle Barnes says: "You're looking for themes and threads. I don't have time to do a hundred things. I've got to pick three to five things to do really well. Picking those three or five things is everything. If you pick the wrong ones, the organization's not going to get healthier."

STYLE

Velocity. Speed is life; stagnation is death. Everyone claims they want to be nimble, but Fixers really mean it. In a crisis, the fires are real. Cash is evaporating, people are leaving, customers have fled, the sheriff is at the door. Peter Murphy says: "Time is always the enemy. Time is always working against us because the longer it takes us to address issues, the more opportunity is lost."



You see the world as your canvas and are wired to create a work of art, whether company, service, technology, product, message, brand positioning, operational strategy, campaign, algorithm, community, or movement. Artist leaders envision the finished work and are able to enlist, enroll, sell, and revolutionize.

YOU KNOW YOU ARE AN ARTIST IF:

- ◆ You are driven to create
- ◆ You envision, re-envision, or reinvent, whether its ideas, products, services, brands, messages.
- ◆ You view anything traditional or a norm as having a target on its back.
- ◆ You bring others along by tapping into and mobilizing deeper values, motivations, and shared purpose.
- ◆ You can be seen as or may feel like an outsider.
- ◆ You appreciate the bureaucrats, as long as they leave you alone.
- ◆ You have multiple initiatives going on simultaneously
- ◆ You challenge the status quo.
- ◆ Your superpower is turning your evergreen curiosity into innovation.
- ◆ You value fresh thinking, especially your own take.
- ◆ You know the creative wellspring never runs dry.
- ◆ You view everything as an experiment.
- ◆ You are in heaven when they are paying attention, relieved when product ships.
- ◆ You draw inspiration from, well, everything and anything.
- ◆ You see failure as a stepping-stone to discovery and breakthrough.

PROCESS

Infuse New Thinking. You deliver the creative spark. You make dazzling leaps in product and service offerings. Your instinct is to challenge and test the limits, then paint a picture – a vision – of what could be, inspiring others to come along. Artist leader Dave Friedman's way of thinking is: "Let's not just be like everybody else. Let's find out where the white space is, what are people not doing, what's the different unique combination of creative and data and business technology that will actually create a different kind of company."

APPROACH

Outsider Perspective. You bring the renegade, unique, outsider, unseen, and overlooked perspective needed to advance, jump, pivot, reverse, and double back. So much of what comes from the Artist leader is a result of tapping into what's going on around them and applying rigorous process, experience, trial and error, collaboration, and trust in oneself. The Artist seeks change, not for change's sake but because they see something better.

SYSTEM

Production. The Artist leader is not just creative: success demands you produce and test in the marketplace. Jeff Leitner says: "There are people who work in the lab and there are empiricists like me who just build stuff, put it out there and see how it interacts with the real world. That's how innovation works, right? When the world tells everyone that they should learn to prototype, Artists say sure, call it what you want. I've got stuff to construct."

STYLE

Creation. Your insatiable ability to invent and envision means that you need multiple, parallel creative outlets. All that experimentation means you are no stranger to failure. When someone told Dean Samuels that he needed to be solely dedicated to one company his take was "more the mercenary who has fought many wars and is still alive, still winning. You want to be in the foxhole with that guy."



You eat, sleep, breathe market domination for your product, service, team. Builders love growth mode and whether organically or by acquisition, by carving out what exists or making an entirely new market or industry, the Builder will grow or be damned.

YOU KNOW YOU ARE A BUILDER IF:

- ◆ You seize new or existing markets.
- ◆ You are tuned into customer needs and problems to be solved.
- ◆ You focus intensely on the quality and strength of your product or service.
- ◆ You weave concepts into improving and adding value.
- ◆ You are transaction oriented, focusing on the end game of growing, acquiring, IPO or other validation of market value.
- ◆ You always have a product road map to improve or add new product or services offerings.
- ◆ You are skilled at building out and strengthening the team.
- ◆ You view a ceiling as something to be broken through.
- ◆ You multiply people and processes to create greater efficiency and do more with less.
- ◆ You have an eye toward expansion whether product, category, customer base, geography, or need fulfillment.
- ◆ You set and reset best practices.
- ◆ Your superpower is continual forward movement.
- ◆ You love the melody of market feedback.
- ◆ You may lose interest and seek to move to new markets, new products, new needs when market domination is achieved

PROCESS

Achieve Explosive Growth. You have a relentless focus on capturing new markets, products, and taking companies to dominant market share. Builders are addicted to fast growth. But when growth slows or the team becomes so large it exceeds the leader's personal span of control, it's time to move on and climb the next mountain—the next market or product or industry.

APPROACH

Team Leader. You are skilled at identifying great talent for the specific needs and stage of your product and company, multiplying yourself and your team's abilities in the process. You find and recruit excellent people, empowering them to get the job done. "I find that if I give the team the tools that they need to do their job, and leave them alone, they do their job better," says Cleve Adams.

SYSTEM

Structure. Builders put structure and process in place, setting the stage for and in anticipation of rapid growth. When Steve Raack jumps into a leadership role, he immediately gloms onto three elements, no matter what product or widget they are selling: order, ship, pay. "If you can't get order, ship, and pay right, your business will implode."

STYLE

The Market. You put people, product, and process in place so that your team can best satisfy customer needs, driving ever upward to achieve #1 status on the market share hit parade. When assessing whether to invest time launching or joining a company, Jaime Ellertson first asks, "Are the markets large enough to sustain a real viable leader—and continue to grow?" Answering that question with a resounding yes is key for all successful Builders.



STRATEGIST

You navigate and align a complex and large organization, quickening the cadence of the team, whether hundreds or thousands or tens of thousands strong. The Strategist leader sees the entire field, teams, stakeholders, and resources and activates a battle plan that gets everyone moving according to a clear mission and common goals.

YOU KNOW YOU ARE A STRATEGIST IF:

- ◆ You operate at global scale, leading a complex or large organization.
- ◆ You sense and set the rhythm, the heartbeat of the organization across teams, divisions, functions, and board.
- ◆ You enjoy and excel at synthesizing various points of view.
- ◆ You coordinate and marshal people and resources.
- ◆ You are tuned into long-term vision.
- ◆ You know culture is critical and can be shaped.
- ◆ You turn structure into repeatable, defensible systems.
- ◆ You are passionate about developing and mentoring people.
- ◆ You have been functionally cross-trained over a span of years and through various roles.
- ◆ Your superpower is in setting vision and mission to drive a bigger strategy.
- ◆ You are wired to serve people and the organization.
- ◆ You are articulate, strong in communicating ideas and motivating others.
- ◆ You excel at managing teams, investors, boards, stakeholders, often with diverse agendas.
- ◆ You are adaptable to many different types of situations.
- ◆ You were mentored by inspiring predecessors.

PROCESS

Move through a Complex Organization. In a large, complex organization you have a unique ability to tackle incessant demands night and day while moving between teams, divisions, stakeholders, communities. "I love complex problem solving. I enjoy being able to think at a high level, but across multiple areas of the business," says Sue Sentell. Strategist leaders have a keen sense of trust and delegation. "It's important to have that good balance of strategy, but also the ability to marshal your resources, coordinate the organization toward achieving those goal."

APPROACH

Quarterback. You are first among equals but really the ultimate team player. You live for the team. You see the entire field and how all elements align and combine for success. You set the tone for the organization, and if mission and vision is of the first order, its foundation is built on culture, a culture you can influence and nurture.

SYSTEM

Systems. You hone consistent and repeatable systems so that everyone within an organization knows what to expect and how to move together to ever greater heights. The Strategist enhances the vast middle of the organization, knowing the different trajectories of top, bottom and center to effectively compete at vast and complex scale.

STYLE

Cadence. You are exquisitely attuned to the pulse and beat of the organization and its parts, setting the direction and coordinating the pace and syncopation to achieve ambitious or even extraordinary goals. "A business needs to have a cadence. It needs to have a rhythm," says Strategist Mike Zawalski. "There is a cadence around strategy. There is a cadence around operational excellence, culture, and how people are treated."

EMBRACE YOUR HIGHEST AND BEST USE

The FABS Leadership Assessment came about as a result of our work at InterimExecs matching companies with top on-demand talent. We see clear themes among the best: all leaders exemplify each of the four FABS leadership styles to some extent, but the most effective leaders have a dominant mode that shines bright.

FURTHERING YOUR CAREER: YOUR HIGHEST AND BEST USE

By taking the FABS Leadership Assessment, you have now taken an important step in advancing your career by discovering more about your unique wiring.

Let your leadership style serve as a guide to seek out bigger and better opportunities. With increasing confidence in your own process, approach, and system, it becomes easier to reject what is not for your highest and best use, easier to collaborate by bringing in complementary skill sets around you, and easier to move to better fit projects, teams, clients and ventures. Our bet is that you will find more success, more fulfillment, more love of the game.



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