



LEADERSHIP COACHING
WISDOM OF THE FIVE BRAINS
CO-CREATING CONVERSATIONS[®]





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VITAL INSTINCTS AT WORK

Vital Instincts

Great leaders and great companies have seven things in common. They are aware of what it takes to create a great culture and a great workplace. They know that people working together can achieve great things, and so they monitor the workplace to minimize threats and maximize vitality.

Everything happens through conversation, and great leaders are masters of conversational moments. They are aware of the importance of every conversation. They are aware of the impact they have on others. They are particularly conscious of how each moment of contact, shapes the future.

Below are seven dimensions that successful leaders monitor to ensure that each moment of contact produces the greatest chances for success.

- **Building Community Through Inclusion ... (*Shift from Exclusion to Inclusion*)**
 - **Wisdom of the 5 Brains:** Our brain thrives on inclusion and closes down with exclusion. When leaders build communities where people feel included, they address the most fundamental needs we have to address the vital question: Am I loved? And Where do I belong?

Our brains do not like rejection. Being rejected – excluded – triggers our most fundamental and primal fear instincts. We move into fight, flight freeze or appease and we no longer tap our Neocortex for thinking or our Prefrontal Cortex for good judgment and stretching our sites to larger frameworks.

Being excluded – sends us back to the Reptilian Brain where our Amygdala hijacks us. It sends us into an emotional place where we may feel resentment, blame, and retribution, a place where we see the world through fears of being outside the team.



- **Promoting Appreciation through Dialogue ... (Shift from Judging to Appreciating)**

- **Wisdom of the 5 Brains:** Human beings thrive on appreciation. Through healthy dialogue we find where we belong in our organization, and we find what we are strong in – our strengths relative to others. Dialogue is our way of navigating the organizational terrain so we can mark our territory – in a good way – find our role – feel strong and contribute.

When we feel judged or wrong, or not valued, our brain responds by activating fear chemicals like cortisol, and triggers catecholamine's, which turn off the prefrontal cortex – our source of new thinking, judgment and empathy with others. Our brain thrives on more appreciation than judgment. When our conversations with others leave us with the feeling we are not appreciated, or are not good enough our brain turns to protect behavior, sending 1400 neurochemicals out to ensure we stop thinking of new things and we start protecting what is ours.

Our Heart Brain thrives on appreciation. When we are appreciated it sets into place a pattern of heartbeats that are positive and coherent and which enables us to open the door to the prefrontal cortex. Appreciation focused on our hearts – creates a change in heart, and sets into place new energetic rhythm that contains a more coherent beat.

Stress reduces, and our brain opens up to new thinking. Most importantly, when we connect with others through a coherent heartbeat we sync with others energetically in ways to enable growth for both parties. This positive and coherent heartbeat becomes contagious to teams and organizations, setting into place a rhythm for dynamic interactions that lead to evolution.

- **Developing Futuresite Through Challenge ... (Shift from Limiting to Expanding)**

- **Wisdom of the 5 Brains:** Our brains thrive on challenges. We thrive on learning new things. When we are able to stretch our minds, and focus on new possibilities, our brain releases endorphins that excite our brain patterns and open up opportunities for new neuronal networks to be created.

Our brain loves to aspire, to grow – to connect new dots - strive for to achieve goals – and use our imagination. However setting the bar too high can create fear signals to the brain – “I’m not good enough” or “I can’t succeed” which triggers our Amygdala and causes us to have brain confusion. We may recycle the same old pathways and get nowhere. We might start to punish ourselves for not knowing how. When we focus on our mistakes or what we don’t know, we become afraid and our brain turns to protective behavior again.

We may cover up our fears, and pretend we’re strong – that’s our Neocortex wanting to help out. Yet this only creates another problem cycle where we start to feel insecure, yet project confident and certainty. If left unchecked this leads to bullyism or the impostor syndrome. In most cases the gap between what is expected and what we can do causes us fear, and this fear fires up the Amygdala, sending messages to close down the Prefrontal Cortex – the part of the brain we need to succeed.



- **Harvesting Collaboration Through Sharing ... (*Shift from Withholding to Sharing*)**

- **Wisdom of the 5 Brains:** Our brains thrive on sharing and collaboration. We are social beings and when people collaborate, we are shaping each other's brains for growth and success. Collaboration is what enables us to lift each other up from what we know to what we don't know but want to know to be successful. Our brain's Neocortex is asking: "what do I need to know to be successful and collaboration is a way for people to share and develop each other. Our brains thrive on sharing.

Sharing is brain candy. Withholding triggers the reptilian brain. It sends signals to the brain that "I'm not a friend I'm a foe." It sends signals to the brain that 'I want to hold onto what I own because it's my power.' When we withhold, we send signals to the brain to protect our knowledge, to protect our intellectual property and to fight for our rights and our power. Our Reptilian brain steps in again to protect us from loss, but when it does it hijacks us by stimulating the neurochemicals that trigger fear, close down the Prefrontal Cortex, and ensure we don't share anything important to our future success.

- **Igniting Innovation Through Experimentation ... (*Shift from Knowing to Discovering*)**

- **Wisdom of the 5 Brains:** Our brains thrive on innovation. We need to try new things, to experiment and explore. From the time we are children, exploring and having fun dominate our lives, and exploring stimulates the brain to think and grow. Our brains react negatively to loss of autonomy, and it frustrates us when we lose the ability to explore the environment.

When our environment becomes so dominated by rules and disciplines and structures, we check out and give up. We lose passion for work, the inspiration to try new things, and we become automatons. This neurochemistry cascades a whole array of fear based chemicals that slow us down, confuse our brain's thinking abilities, closes the Prefrontal Cortex and weakens' our immune system.

When we innovate with others, on the other hand, we stimulate our bonding instincts – which are hormones like Oxytocin and Vasopressin. We feel good and we want to be with and work with others. Bonding neurochemicals is a facilitator to driving new energy into our brain systems. Our Limbic brain captures new memories that feel good, which stimulate more 'feel good chemicals' creating a sense that our workplace is a great place to be.

- **Cultivating Leadership Through Influence ... (*Shift from Dictating to Developing*)**

- **Wisdom of the 5 Brains:** Our brain thrives on Influence and having our voice. Our Limbic Brain has hardwiring that lets us know that 'fitting in' and 'playing an important role' is critical for our sense of well-being. When we are not able to speak up, to have a voice, to push back on conventional wisdom, we start to think of ourselves as followers not as leaders. We assume a submissive role and we take less accountability for important jobs at work.

When we are not able to push back and speak up, we also give up, and our brain



chemistry shows it. We will accept mundane routines as set lower sites. We will not put out the extra effort to work. We will not check the extra time to make sure our work is good. Having influence activates many of the most important parts of the brains symphony of positive chemicals. We feel good, our fears are low, and so we will take more risks and be bold and courageous.

Our Heart Brain takes a big role in influence because it is one of the primary influences in our body to build new pathways for success. Our heart sends more signals to the rest of the brain than the reverse. If we are feeling confident and secure in having influence, our Heart Brain will be opening up the parasympathetic pathways, which dampen fear and amplify connectivity and confidence. When we have a voice, and it's appreciated, our whole brain symphony goes into a state of positive excitation. When our voice is minimized, our brain closes down.

- **Inspiring Excellence Through Celebrating Success ... (*Shift from Punishing to Celebrating*)**

- **Wisdom of the 5 Brains:** Our brain thrives on reinvention, on achieving and celebrating success, and on using our built in feedback system to close loops and then move forward. Our Prefrontal Cortex is the “executive brain” whose job it is to ensure we close the loops. It, along with the Reptilian Brain, read and responds to gaps: gaps in data, gaps in expectation vs. what we get.

Our Prefrontal Cortex works to grasp the truth and help us determine how to respond. This part of our brain is the center for empathy because of the Mirror Neurons resident there. When we are all working together to achieve success, when we know our targets and agree on them, when we celebrate our achievements we send an incredible signal in the brain that enables us to rise up and go to the next level of greatness.

Failing to measure and celebrate success interrupts our feedback systems of the brain and causes fear and protection to return as our baseline. Closing our feedback loops, enables us to validate our realities with others, to ensure we agree on success and to move on to new things.

The 7 dimensions are what leaders and employees need to focus on to optimize their culture for success – and to create healthy thriving.

When cortisol and catecholamine's are at low levels, our brain opens up like a flower enabling us to completely rethink new strategies, redesign our approaches, rewire our relationships and reframe our business for greater success.

This article was written by Judith E. Glaser and will appear in her new book - TRUST - At the Moment of Contact



About Benchmark Communications, Inc.

Judith E. Glaser founded Benchmark Communications, Inc. in 1980 as a firm that works with CEOs and their teams helping them focus on competitive challenges in a world of moving targets – with a direct line of sight to the customer.

Judith is the world's leading authority on WE-centric Leadership and the Neuroscience of WE. In 2007 Judith launched the Creating WE Institute to expand the reach of WE-centric thinking globally. The Creating WE Institute offers thought leadership, and new partnering and research opportunities to clients seeking to expand WE-centric engagement and innovation in their organizations.

Benchmark works with clients at the intersection of culture, leadership and brand, and designs and delivers dynamic, interactive and provocative keynotes, as well as coaching for executives, teams and organizations. Benchmark also works with client to design and implement customized leadership workshops and summits, which contain a suite of powerful Assessments for individuals teams and organizations including Forte, and the DNA Assessment which strengthen their originations' platform for transformation, change and growth.

Through Benchmark's innovative Creating WE technologies, leaders are helped to address challenges and learn to set and achieve new benchmarks for success resulting in higher levels of profitability, expanded market share, and a renewed vision for the future. Judith draws upon her deep expertise in neuroscience, human behavior and development, psychology, anthropology, linguistics and transformational social sciences, to help clients "graft" new practices into their culture, enabling them to discover and create new leaderships DNA, and reshape their company's 'genetic code' for expanded business success.

Judith E. Glaser

Judith E. Glaser is one of the most innovative and pioneering change agents and executive coaches in the consulting industry. She is referred to as an Organizational Anthropologist. Her clients span a wide range of industries and include Fortune 100-500 companies such as American Express, KKR, Burberry, AXA Equitable, Siemens, Time Inc., Ferragamo, News Corp, Barclays, Pfizer, Donna Karan International, Coach, Citigroup, GlaxoSmithKline, Verizon, JP Morgan Chase, Cisco, PepsiCo, Revlon, Lockheed Martin and Fidelity.

In 2011 Judith was named the Epstein Rankin Distinguished Alumni of the year award, and on 2007 she inducted into the Temple University Gallery of Success. She is a founding member of the Harvard Coaching Institute. Judith's first two books: **Creating WE** and **The DNA of Leadership** were Amazon Best Sellers, selected by Forbes as two of the top business books; in 2008 **Creating WE** won a top AXIOM business book award for breakthrough Leadership. In 2009 **42 Rules for Creating WE** was Amazon Best Seller, #1 in Leadership and #2 in fastest selling book in all categories. **42 Rules for Creating WE** contains groundbreaking practices for all organizations moving towards "WE-centric" leadership.

Judith and her pioneering work have been featured across all major media including NBC, ABC and FOX, CNN, the NY Times, WSJ, Crain's, Newsday and Harvard Management Review. She taught at Wharton, and has presented at Harvard, Kellogg, University of Chicago and University of Stellenbosch in South Africa. In addition to founding The Creating WE Institute, Judith currently sits on the boards of The We Are Family Foundation and Expeditionary Learning – and the Executive Woman's Business Forum.

