



THE 5 PARADOXES OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Phase II: -

FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

Human Capital Leadership Institute

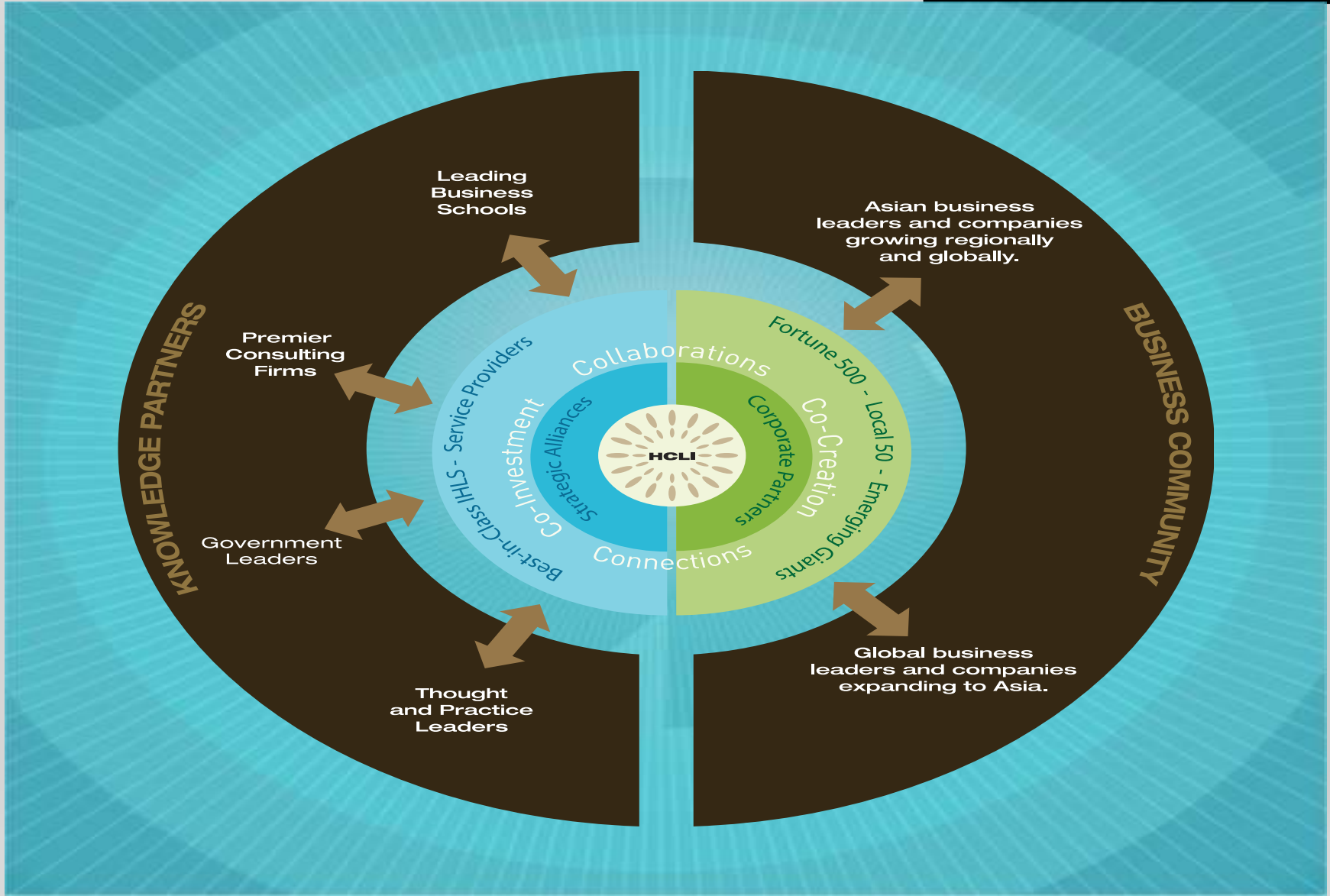
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OUR PURPOSE

**TO HELP ORGANISATIONS
BUILD GLOBAL LEADERS
FROM ASIA, FOR ASIA**

Pan-Asian Focus | Practice Bias | Collectivistic Learning

A CATALYST FOR THE COLLECTIVE

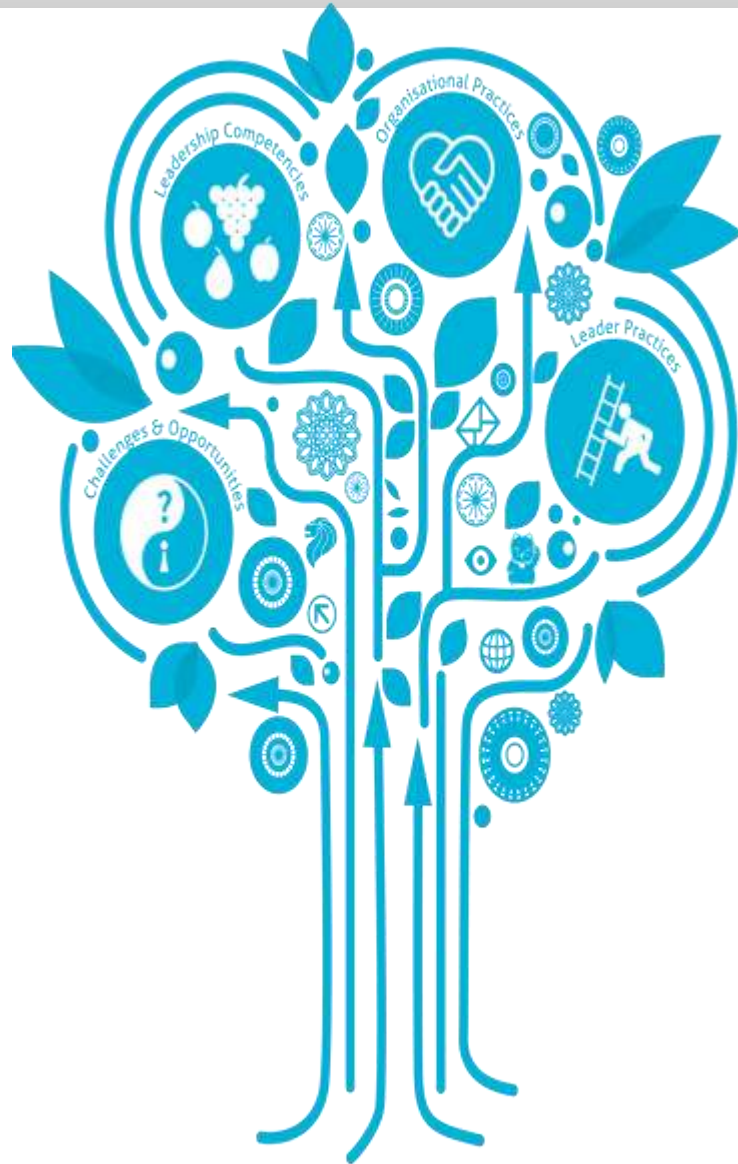


RESEARCH GOALS

- 1) How can we accelerate the development of business leaders in Asia?
- 2) What can individual leaders, their line managers, and HR professionals do?
- 3) What best practices are especially critical in Asia?



THE 5 PARADOXES – PHASE 1



Accelerating Leadership Development in Asia

Lessons from best-practice organisations in Singapore



CONVENTIONAL THINKING



1

We should allocate the majority of our resources to formal education



4

The best leaders are those who have never failed



2

The most effective leaders are also the busiest



5

People respect confident – not humble- leaders



3

Most leaders are either task-focused or relationship focused

REFLECTION



Looking back on your career, what **SINGLE EXPERIENCE** most accelerated your development as a leader?”

THE 5 PARADOXES



1 To foster learning,
EMPHASISE DOING



4 To achieve success,
LEARN FROM FAILURE



2 To accelerate development,
SLOW DOWN



5 To develop greatness,
PRACTISE HUMILITY



3 To excel at task,
HARNESS RELATIONSHIPS



1

PARADOX 1:
**TO FOSTER LEARNING,
EMPHASISE DOING**

TO FOSTER LEARNING, EMPHASISE DOING

Key Insight:

- Leaders learn most not from classroom programmes, *but from challenging, real-life experiences*

Challenges:

- vested interests of supervisors, lack of self-awareness

Tips:

1. Be firm in your career destination, be flexible in your route
2. Encourage tough/empathetic managers
3. Recognise & reward “talent exporters”





2

PARADOX 2: TO ACCELERATE DEVELOPMENT, SLOW DOWN



TO ACCELERATE DEVELOPMENT, SLOW DOWN

Key Insight:

- Leaders develop faster when they take time to reflect deeply and plan for their long-term development

Challenges:

- Omni-present Technology, Asian work culture

Tips:

1. Equip managers to be coaches (who can provide questions, not just answers)
2. Create triggers for reflection (e.g. 360 degree feedback)
3. Find your optimum times & places for reflection





3

PARADOX 3:
**TO EXCEL AT THE TASK,
HARNESS RELATIONSHIP**



TO EXCEL AT THE TASK, HARNESS RELATIONSHIPS

Key Insight:

- The most effective leaders focus on developing their people skills and on achieving impact through others

Challenges:

- Poor time-management, Short-term orientation

Tips:

1. To harness relationships, excel at the task
2. Emphasize Organization-wide interests
3. The best time to build relationships is before you need them





4

PARADOX 4:
**TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS,
LEARN FROM FAILURE**



TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS, LEARN FROM FAILURES

Key Insight:

- Successful leaders learn and grow from their failures, and share these learnings

Challenges:

- Pain of failure, intolerance from top management

Tips:

1. Reward praiseworthy failures (e.g. Tata's dare to try award)
2. Take ownership of failures of your team (provide aircover)
3. Share (and embrace) the pain of failure



Learning From Failure: Why matters?

In the 21st century of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (also termed "VUCA"), it is not realistic to expect that leaders succeed at meeting demands all the time. But it is imperative that leaders learn every time they fail.

What success can't teach?

- **Success raises confidence while failure cultivates perseverance**
- **Success reinforces growth strategies while failure imparts risk management skills**
- **Success fosters pride while failure instils humility**

Why it is so difficult?

- **Failing is Painful**
- **The ‘Failure is not an option” Syndrome**
- **Failing to ‘Walk the Talk’**

What individuals can do?

- **Share with trusted others**
- **Go Slow, Reflect**
- **Create safe opportunities to apply your learning**

What managers can do?

- **Take ownership of the failures of your team**
- **Lead by example**
- **Corrective Feedback in Private, Praise in Public**

What organisations can do?

- **Reward Praiseworthy Failures**
- **Institutionalise Learning from Failures**



TIME FOR ACTION

- Craft a failure story
- Ensure this story conveys
 - The pain of failure
 - What you have learnt
 - How you have applied what you have learnt (and recovered)
- Share this story with someone you trust



5

PARADOX 5:
**TO DEVELOP GREATNESS,
PRACTISE HUMILITY**



TO DEVELOP GREATNESS, PRACTISE HUMILITY

Key Insight:

- The best leaders role-model humility and constantly learn from others

Challenges:

- Avoiding self-promotion, and staying grounded in spite of success

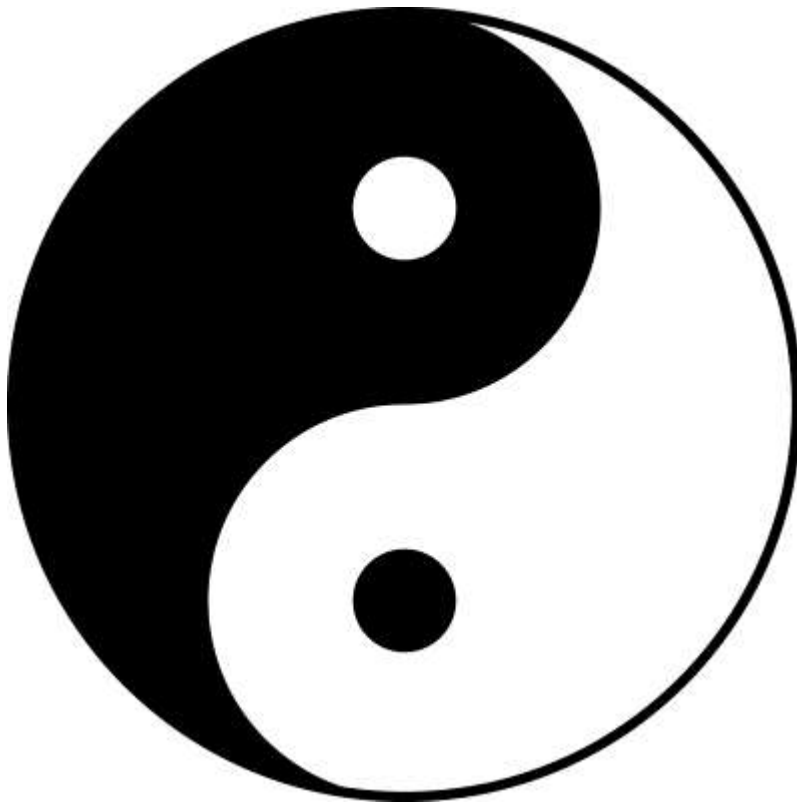
Tips:

1. Stretch Assignments/Letting people fail
2. Reward long-term results
3. Greet everyone by name



IN SUMMARY

Harmonizing Paradoxes



*“The Tao that can be spoken of ...
is not the genuine Tao” Lao-Tzu*

QUESTIONS?

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