Purpose-Driven Leaders
The Three Phases of Development

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“Efforts and courage are not enough without purpose and direction.”
- President John F Kennedy

“The secret of success is constancy to purpose.”
- Benjamin Disraeli
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Purpose-driven leaders tap into the deep well of intrinsic motivation inside themselves and those around them. They also inspire their teams to achieve extraordinary results.

We have found that employers need to provide a comprehensive journey to develop a pipeline of purpose-driven leaders.

This journey begins with cultivating the ground on which purpose is fertile. Not every employee is equally ready to embrace purpose. Many have fears or psychological barriers that need to be overcome to go from desire to self-awareness to holding a belief that work can be deeply meaningful.
To begin, employers should work with employees to build self awareness about what drives purpose for them in their current work. They should help them realize they don't have to be in a job like "social worker" to find work meaningful and that purpose comes from little daily moments. Having purpose in our careers requires acknowledging and then investing in the growth of these moments instead of taking them for granted.

Before becoming Purpose-driven leaders, employees need to actively look for opportunities to boost the relationships, impact and growth discussions around them. They need to continuously assess the purpose in their work and hack their approach to it to optimize for meaning.
This refocusing leads to a fundamental shift in mindset where purpose, not money and status, become their dominant orientation to their job. Once that shift has become ingrained in the way they think about their work, these employees out score their colleagues in every measure from leadership competencies to performance.

The result is that these purpose-oriented employees emerge as leaders. They are more comfortable standing out with strong convictions and values. They begin to rally and inspire teams through shared bold goals. Finally they begin to transform organizations and markets with visions that change our perspective on what is possible.
“Purpose is the reason we work beyond financial rewards and recognition.”

The 10 Attributes of a Purpose-Driven Leader:

1. Has a backbone and stands up for personal values
2. Is driven to make an impact - not just for money and status
3. Defines business outcomes through impact, not just economics
4. Recruits more intrinsically-motivated talent in hiring
5. Creates an environment of psychological safety for colleagues
6. Sets bold shared visions that inspires others
7. Aligns individual, team and organizational purpose
8. Owns biases and creates an environment for a diversity of purpose drivers
9. Serves as a powerful ambassador and evangelist for the organization
10. Supports colleagues in actively improving their work to derive meaning
Our Research

Imperative has studied the development of purpose-driven leaders extensively over the last three years.

- Identified and studied 300 purpose pioneers in the US, Europe and Asia
- Conducted a US and global survey of the emergence and characteristics of purpose in the workforce
- Collaborated on the implementation of purpose development programs for leading employers from LinkedIn and MetLife to Sony Music
- Developed in depth profiles of dozens of Purposeful CEOs for Fast Company
To develop a purpose leadership program, we recommend crafting the design based on a three phase journey: Discovery, Activation and Leadership. In this eBook we share the key milestones along the way, measures of development for each participant and a checklist of activities that we have found create breakthrough results.
Nearly all employees want to have their work be meaningful, but nearly half believe it is possible. At this stage, programs need to address two needs:

**Desire** - Motivation
*It is important to me that my work is meaningful.*

**Self-Awareness** - Knowing Your Purpose
*I know what brings meaning to my work.*

**Phase I: Discovery**
Work gives you meaning and purpose and life is empty without it.
- Stephen Hawking

Desire reflects our general motivation to find purpose in our work. Leaders that have mastered desire are able to authentically say:

It is important to me that my work is meaningful.
Self-Awareness

“The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.”
- Mark Twain.

Self Awareness reflects our deep understanding of what generates purpose for us as leaders in our work. Leaders with great self awareness can say:

I know what brings meaning to my work.
Phase I: Development Checklist

- Vocalization of desire to have strong relationships, make an impact and grow at work.
- Articulation of what work would look like if they have strong relationships, a meaningful impact and continuous growth in their work.
- Employee purpose statement drafted that defines their guiding principles.
- Identification of key moments in their work thus far that align with their purpose statement.
- Acceptance that their career goals and purpose are not at odds, but deeply connected.
Phase I: Development Resources

Leadership development programs use Imperative to quickly identify the purpose drivers of each employee and provide insights that increase self-awareness and belief in the potential for purpose in their current jobs. These include:

- **Personal Purpose Drivers** - insights on an individual’s three Purpose Drivers: who they want to impact, why they work and how they prefer to work to solve problems
- **Purpose Statement Builder** - an interactive tool to reflect critically and draft a personal Purpose Statement
Employees who embrace purpose are higher performers, have stronger work relationships and are 50% more likely to become leaders (Imperative Workforce Purpose Index, 2015)

**Ownership** - Capable of Acting by Oneself
*I am responsible for creating meaning in my work.*

**Alignment** - Fulfilled by One’s Work
*My work is personally meaningful for me.*
Ownership

“When you found your purpose it will discipline your behavior and choose your habits.” - Myles Munroe

A leader has a sense of personal ownership and capacity to be successful by driving small improvements to their job to make it more meaningful.

_I am responsible for making small changes to my job to make it more meaningful._
Alignment

“The purpose of life after all is to live it.”
- Eleanor Roosevelt

The final stage of activating purpose for leaders is to reach a state of alignment and thus ensure that the work is actually fulfilling. Through alignment leaders are able to genuinely say:

My work is personally meaningful for me.
Phase II: Development Checklist

- Purpose shared with their manager and integrated into their goals and development plan.
- Practice and habits set up to regularly check in with themselves to gauge quality of relationships, impact and growth.
- Express awareness and empathy for the purpose of their co-workers.
- Able to connect their purpose to the team’s and organization’s purpose.
- Ability to identify where the biases associated with their purpose show up.
- Community engagement efforts are aligned to their purpose and job.
Phase II: Development Resources

Imperative makes it easy for employees to begin to tailor their jobs to maximize meaning by taking ownership of their relationships, impact and growth. They begin to change their orientation to work to embrace purpose every day. These include:

- **Purpose Power Ups** - recommendations for growth in existing role
- **Volunteer Insights** - suggestions for how to engage in the community based on Purpose Drivers
- **Biases** - blind spots for leaders to consider in their approach to work and coworkers
- **Colleagues** - ability to view and connect with others in service of better collaboration around purpose
- **Hero Poster** - visual representation of Purpose Profile to express and share
A leader doesn't satisfy or engage teams, they inspire them. Inspired employees, according to Bain and Company, are 125% more productive.

**Courage** - Standing Alone
I do not compromise just for the sake of social cohesion.

**Vision** - Leading the Way
I can communicate a vivid and shared vision that yields breakthrough results.
Courage

“In matters of style swim with the current; in matters of principle stand like a rock.”
- Thomas Jefferson

The first aspect of truly leading with purpose is gaining the courage to stand alone on matters of value and principal. Leaders who gain the fortitude to stand alone can confidently say:

I do not compromise for the sake of social cohesion.
Vision

“The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.”
- Helen Keller

The pinnacle of purpose-driven leadership is being able to craft a strong vision for the work that will achieve high impact. Leaders that can harness vision are able to say:

*I can set a bold and shared vision that yields breakthrough results.*
Phase III: Development Checklist

- Able to set overall goals in alignment with their team and the organization’s business objectives.
- Able to set goals for members of their team that enable them to thrive in alignment with their purpose.
- Development of big and bold ideas that inspire and are shared by the organization and their teams.
- Capacity to stand alone with conviction when needed and not compromise for social cohesion.
- Competence in mentoring and sponsoring emerging leaders with related purpose drivers.
- Can recruit and hire top purpose-driven talent.
- Able to speak with command to groups about their purpose, career and the purpose of the organization.
- Creates transparency in their biases in decision making that creates space for diverse perspectives.
Phase III: Development Resources

Emerging Purpose-driven leaders come to embrace their authentic leadership style and lead teams using Imperative's Purpose Team Profile. They develop a keen ability to set bold visions that deeply resonate with their stakeholders. These include:

- **Purpose Leadership Style** - insights on a person’s natural leadership style based on Purpose Drivers
- **Team Report: Team Purpose Drivers** - overview of each team member’s Purpose Drivers
- **Team Purpose Orientation** - overarching dominant Purpose Drivers of the team
Profiles of Purpose Driven Leaders

Jostein Solheim  
CEO  

Denise Morrison  
CEO  

Doug Merritt  
CEO  

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Jostein Solheim immigrated to the United States when he was in high school. The experience gave him empathy for immigrants and eventually led him to champion Ben & Jerry's to have a courageous voice on social justice in the United States and Europe.

“I anchor everything in the big picture,” Solheim says, as a way of explaining this move and his leadership style in general. “We’re a social justice company that happens to sell ice cream. Not the other way around. Our whole motto is how we can positively impact society.” This is why Ben and Jerry’s decided to toss themselves into the middle of the “culture war” in the United States and Europe.

He is constantly asking himself and his team these kind of societal questions. “How do we have impact on large-scale communities? What are the structural parameters that we can drive? What are the sustainable and self-evolving systems that we can drive?”
From early on in his career, Solheim began to really understand his purpose. “I’m sort of extreme on vision, on change, on ambiguity of paradox.” Solheim learned to express his purpose by constantly asking himself and his team large societal questions. “How do we have impact on large-scale communities? What are the structural parameters that we can drive? What are the sustainable and self-evolving systems that we can drive?”

Today, he leads Ben & Jerry’s with his purpose front and center. “We’re a social justice company that happens to sell ice cream. Not the other way around. Our whole motto is how we can positively impact society.”
For Doug Merritt, the CEO of the $8 billion big-data analytics platform Splunk, “the dark periods (in history) are tightly correlated with restriction of knowledge, including physically taking away books and opportunities for learning. And our enlightened periods tend to be highly associated with the free flow of information.” This is at the core of his company’s purpose, but also his belief in free markets and individual accountability that impacts how he leads as well as how he parents.

Doug believes that people make their greatest impact when they connect with their intrinsic motivations and achieve the goals that matter to them. “I’ve run experiments where I put down what I think the goal should be and then ask someone to write their own goals. And 9 times out of 10, they’re going to come back with more aggressive and possible and appropriate goals than I have.”
Merritt came to understand early in his career that intrinsic motivation is the key to his success and that of his colleagues. “I’ve run experiments where I put down what I think the goal should be and then ask someone to write their own goals. And 9 times out of 10, they’re going to come back with more aggressive and possible and appropriate goals than I have.”

Merritt is driven by a philosophy of personal responsibility that defines his leadership and approach to his career to this day, “I still believe you’re given that set of tools, and now it’s still 100% in your hands as to what are you going to do. How are you going to use that? Everything that looks like a potential limitation can be your strength. Everything that someone looks at as a strength can be your weakness and your Achilles heel. It comes down to: What are you going to do with what you’re given?”

Today, Merritt is working to transition from a company driven by a technical purpose into one that makes big data for social purpose. He has seen the impact of his platform on their 13,000 customers, such as Domino’s Pizza and Adobe, and now he wants to enable big data to support academic research and generate social impact.

Doug Merritt
CEO
splunk®
For decades, Campbell Soup Company talked primarily about “shipping cases” as a business goal, and treated their products as a commodity. When Morrison took over as CEO six years ago, her goal was to change the conversation to focus on food served at family tables. “Now as a company we’re talking more about what’s in our food and how it’s made,” Morrison says. “And we have a philosophy that our brand should be something we’re proud to serve at our own tables.”

“For me, leadership is service and there’s power in giving and giving back . . . whether it is working in communities that are less fortunate or working with the next generation of women leaders to mentor them and make sure I’m sharing stories with them to help them be successful.”
Morrison recalls that her dinner table growing up with her sister was “like a focus group.” Her father, an executive at AT&T, would bring home products to get his daughters’ input and ideas, constantly encouraging them to be curious and voracious learners.

Morrison’s key to success is that she is constantly digging deeper to gain insights about her customers and uncover trends that can fuel her company. “I purposely put myself in new, stressful situations so that I can continuously learn,” she says.

When Morrison took the helm, Campbell’s stock was trading at $33. Six years later it has nearly doubled. You can’t attribute that success to any one thing, but for Morrison, it has been about the company defining and living its purpose. “I have to say that we are not all the way there yet. I clearly see this as a transition journey driven by our purpose that has changed my company.”
Imperative is the global leader in the science of purpose at work. We partner with forward-thinking employers to equip them with the tools, resources and training to build purpose-driven leaders. To learn more about Imperative and our solutions for employers, contact:

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