



PELIN KOHN & MICHAEL J. URICK

LEADERS *of the*
CARIBBEAN

Lead by the Code

EXPLORING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP
PRACTICES THROUGH POPULAR CULTURE

LEADERS OF THE CARIBBEAN

EXPLORING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES THROUGH POPULAR CULTURE

Series editor: Michael J. Urick

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LEADERS OF THE CARIBBEAN

Lead by the Code

By

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

I moved to the USA with my family seven years ago, and my journey of recreating my personal and professional life began as an explorer setting sail into uncharted waters, facing unknown challenges with courage and resilience. I dedicate this book to my children Alara and Arda, who have provided me with unwavering support and strength during this journey.

—Kohn

For the past 25 years, in addition to my day job, I have played music in bands semi-professionally and have had the opportunity to travel around the USA. At one point, I was struck that playing in and leading a band is very much like being a part of a crew of pirates. The crew members/players may come and go, but the music (i.e., the treasure) remains a constant quest. Sure, there are mutinies from time to time, but I have found that all of the concepts we address in this book apply to running a band (in addition to other types of organizations). I have found that the chapters on trust and communication especially apply. This book is dedicated to all of the musicians that I have played with over the years – you are like my crew of pirates.

—Urick

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Pelin Kohn is an elected City Councilor in Montpelier, Vermont, and a Leadership Educator. She intertwines 20+ years of executive coaching with competence-based leadership skills to make an impact on the community. She works for the Community College of Vermont (CCV). She orchestrated multidisciplinary partnerships as the Leadership Program Chair and Founding Director of the Center for Leadership in a senior military college, where she developed their Leadership Program, a nationally accredited Bachelor of Science in Leadership major with 12 new university courses where students gain a global leadership perspective. She is an inspiration for immigrant women in higher education. She is a distinguished fellow at the HERS Leadership Institute and a member of Vermont Women in Higher Education's executive board. She was selected as a fellow at The Snelling Center for Government's Vermont Leadership Institute to develop skills toward transformative change through collaborative leadership across sectors. She is always building a stronger toolkit to support her community.

She has a significant impact on civic issues. As an elected City Councilor, she works with fellow decision-makers to make a more diverse, sustainable, and efficient future for Montpelier, Vermont. She makes her constituents' voices heard more through public engagement projects such as community meetings. A strength of hers is solving local problems with a global mindset, a skill she developed through the Global Leadership Program for the Vermont Council on World Affairs. As an advocate for organizations such as the League of Women Voters of Vermont and non-profit ORCA Media, she shows her commitment to unity and diversity. Her new video program for ORCA, *Leading with Purpose*, explores the lives and leadership styles of Vermont's most impactful people. Through her EmergeVT fellowship, a program that fosters political leadership in women, she demonstrates her commitment to achieving a more inclusive political landscape.

Before moving to the USA, executive coach Pelin Kohn shaped leaders at global brands such as Bosch, British Petroleum, Ford, Hyundai, and

Turkish Airlines. Her leadership coaching transcends roles, resonating with the inner motivations of emerging and established leaders at all levels and backgrounds.

She is a sought-after keynote speaker who connects with people through storytelling. She offers a variety of leadership advancement programs that leave audiences inspired and better equipped to handle leadership challenges. Furthermore, she has written a book entitled “*Elevating Leadership: Innovative Teaching Methods to Develop Future Leaders.*”

She has a PhD in Educational Sciences, Administration, and Planning from Middle East Technical University in Turkey. She has a Master of Arts in Educational Sciences and History Teaching and a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from Bilkent University. She holds a Certificate in Strategic Foresight from the University of Houston, a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Certificate from Cornell University, and a Certification in Creative Drama from American Catholic University. She is currently completing her MBA at Norwich University.

Embark on a journey of leadership, inspiration, and boundless possibilities with her. Follow her @Pelinkohn and discover more at www.pelinkohn.com

Michael J. Urick is Dean of the Alex G. McKenna School of Business, Economics, and Government at Saint Vincent College in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, USA, as well as a Professor of Management and Operational Excellence.

He received his PhD in Management (Organizational Behavior focus) from the University of Cincinnati. His MBA (focused in Human Resources Management) and MS (in Leadership and Business Ethics) are both from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh and his Bachelor’s degree in Accounting with Management and English minors is from Saint Vincent College. He has taught undergraduate and graduate courses related to organizational behavior, human resources, communication, conflict, organizational culture, operations, and research methods. His research has been widely cited in academic publications as well as in news media outlets such as the Wall Street Journal and the BBC.

The Master of Science in Management: Operational Excellence program at Saint Vincent, which he directed for nearly 10 years prior to his role as Dean, focuses on providing aspiring leaders with cutting edge management techniques to effectively solve the problem, minimize waste, and continuously improve their organizations. Under his directorship, the program was

consistently ranked as a “Top 50 Best Value Master’s in Management” program by Value Colleges and as a “Top Online Non-MBA Business Graduate Degree” by US News and World Report.

He is Six Sigma Green Belt Certified, Diversity Management Certified, a Certified Conflict Manager, Project Management Essentials Certified, and MBTI Certified and is also certified through the Society for Human Resource Management as well as the True Lean program at the University of Kentucky. He is the recipient of an “Excellence in Teaching” award from the Lindner College of Business at the University of Cincinnati, the “Quentin Schaut Faculty Award” from Saint Vincent College, and a “Teaching Excellence” award from the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs among other pedagogical honors. Internationally, he was also recognized by the Institute for Supply Management as a “Person of the Year” in the learning and education category.

He is an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Leadership and Management* based in Poland, the North American Associate Editor of the *Measuring Business Excellence* journal, and on the editorial board of *Management Teaching Review*. He is also the Editor for the “Exploring Effective Leadership Practices through Popular Culture” book series from Emerald Publishing.

His research interests include leadership, conflict, and identity in the workplace. Much of his work focuses on issues related to intergenerational phenomena within organizations. He also often examines how popular culture can be used to advance organizational behavior theory. In addition to authoring or co-authoring over 50 publications including multiple books and peer-reviewed articles, he has regularly presented at academic and practitioner international meetings such as the Academy of Management, Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, and Institute for Supply Management conferences. He is a regular speaker on age-related issues in the workplace throughout the USA and internationally (having presented on four continents including presentations at the University of Oxford in the UK) and served as a consultant on issues related to workplace interactions, organizational culture, and ethics for various organizations. He has served as a reviewer for a variety of academic publications including the *Journal of Intergenerational Relationships*, *Journal of Social Psychology*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, and *Journal of Family Issues* as well as the *Organizational Behavior and Human Resources* divisions of the Academy of Management Annual Meeting in addition to other conferences.

Professionally, he has served on the boards of ISM-Pittsburgh (in various roles including President) and the Westmoreland Arts and Heritage Festival (a top-rated community event). He has also served on the Westmoreland Human Resources Association (a regional SHRM chapter) board in various positions including Vice President. Prior to academia, he worked in a variety of roles related to auditing, utilities, environmental issues, and training and development. Through these experiences, he became fascinated with interactions in the workplace and how they might be improved which has influenced his academic career.

For fun, he enjoys music and, since 1998, has been a semi-professional jazz musician and toured through over a dozen US states while releasing multiple recordings with various ensembles.

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Writing this book has been a remarkable journey, much like the adventurous tales of the pirates that inspired it. I am deeply grateful to those who have supported and guided me along the way.

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I would like to thank all the people who created the Pirates of the Caribbean movie series for inspiring the heart and soul of this book with their stories of bravery, resilience, and daring leadership. Their stories remind us that true leadership is about embracing the unknown with courage and creativity.

A special thanks to the Emerald team, Lydia Cutmore, Daniel Ridge, and especially our editor Fiona Allison for their support and dedication throughout the publication process.

Lastly, to the readers, thank you for embarking on this journey with us. I hope these leadership lessons inspire you to chart your own course and lead with the same adventurous spirit as the legendary pirates of the Caribbean.

—Kohn

I would first like to thank my family, especially Lucy, Janet, and my parents Mickie and Rick. Each of you has been so supportive in the process of not just writing this book but all of the books that I have written over the years. Thank you. And thank you, each of you, for watching various movies

in the “Pirates of the Caribbean” series with me. Especially, thanks to my parents for introducing me to the original “Pirates of the Caribbean” ride during our trips to Disney World when I was a kid and for watching the first film in the series with me while we were on vacation at the beach 20 years ago.

I would also like to thank Lana Dillon, who works as an assistant to me at Saint Vincent College. I appreciate our conversations and your help in managing my schedule so that I can squeeze in working on fun passion projects such as this book.

I, of course, want to thank my co-author, Dr. Pelin Kohn, who made working on this book enjoyable and almost effortless. I enjoyed learning from you and engaging in the process of putting this book together with you.

Walt Disney was the original creative mind behind the “Pirates of the Caribbean” ride and I thank you and your team of Imagineers who worked on this attraction that sparked my imagination and the imagination of countless other visitors to the Disney parks. I should also thank the creative teams, including the writers, directors, producers, actors, and others that worked on the “Pirates of the Caribbean” film series and brought these memorable characters to life.

The exceptional team at Emerald must be thanked. Lydia Cutmore, Daniel Ridge, and especially Fiona Allison, the best Books Commissioning Editor in the world!

Lastly, thank you, the readers! We hope that you enjoy this book and might even take away a few nuggets of inspiration to help you on your leadership journey.

—Urick

INTRODUCTION

CHARTING THE COURSE OF LEADERSHIP THROUGH THE HIGH SEAS

The concept of effective leadership has changed dramatically in the 21st century due to technological advancements, cultural diversity, and economic shifts. In the same way, pirate captains in “Pirates of the Caribbean” navigated dangerous seas, today’s leaders, must have the ability to guide their organizations through these complexities with competence and vision. Modern leadership challenges can be compared to the high-stakes world of piracy to gain profound insights into the qualities that define effective leadership today.

Today’s leaders are expected to possess a dynamic skill set that enables them to navigate through these complexities with competence and vision. Hence, effective leadership characteristics are constantly evolving, and continuous learning is critical to enhancing leadership capabilities in the modern era.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Effective leadership in the contemporary world requires adaptability and flexibility. In response to changing market conditions, technological innovations, and global trends, leaders must be agile. Much like the legendary Captain Jack Sparrow from “Pirates of the Caribbean,” who navigates treacherous seas and unpredictable allies with an intelligent mind, modern

leaders must be agile. This adaptability allows them to steer their organizations through shifting market conditions, technological innovations, and global trends with confidence.

Just as Jack Sparrow leverages every tool at his disposal to outwit his enemies, contemporary leaders must be technologically savvy. Leaders need to stay informed about new developments and understand how to leverage these technologies to improve organizational efficiency, productivity, and communication.

Modern leadership also requires emotional intelligence (EI) similar to how Sparrow reads and influences the emotions of his crew to maintain loyalty and morale. Those with high EI are adept at managing their own emotions and understand and influence the emotions of others within their organizations. This skill is invaluable for building strong teams, resolving conflicts, and maintaining high levels of employee engagement and morale.

In today's organizations, cultural competence is more important than ever because of the globalized business environment. Just as the crew of the *Black Pearl* comprises a diverse group with varied backgrounds, effective leaders must navigate cultural differences to create an inclusive environment where all team members can thrive. By embracing diversity, leaders can harness the unique strengths of each individual, much like Sparrow does with his eclectic crew.

Visionary thinking is essential for leaders who need to look beyond daily operations and envision what their organizations can achieve in the future. Like Jack Sparrow's unyielding pursuit of the horizon, visionary leaders think innovatively and strategically, guiding their organizations toward long-term success despite the uncertainties ahead.

Integrity and ethical leadership are the foundation of trust within and outside of an organization. As Sparrow sometimes faces moral dilemmas, leaders must model ethical behavior and decision-making, establishing a standard that builds trust among stakeholders and ensures the organization's reputation remains intact.

Collaborative skills are crucial as organizational structures become less hierarchical and more project-based. Just as Captain Sparrow must collaborate with others, even rivals, to achieve his goals, effective leaders need to work across boundaries, fostering team cohesion and cooperation. By being continuous learners and embracing collaboration, leaders can ensure their

teams work together smoothly to achieve common objectives, no matter how challenging the journey may be.

Effective leaders must be able to collaborate across boundaries by being continuous learners and ensure team cohesion and cooperation to achieve common goals.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUOUS LEARNING IN LEADERSHIP

Leadership requires continuous learning to keep up with the fast-changing business landscape. As a result, leaders should remain up-to-date with new trends, technologies, and methodologies, enabling them to make more informed decisions and to address complex problems strategically.

The continuous learning process also enables leaders to gain a deeper understanding of diverse ideas and experiences, which can lead to creative solutions and encourage a culture of innovation.

Another benefit of ongoing learning is confidence. In addition to learning new skills, leaders refine their existing ones, which leads to improved leadership effectiveness.

Leaders who promote a culture of professional and personal development within their organizations also set a positive example for their teams. This modeling behavior encourages employees to pursue their own learning, leading to a more knowledgeable and versatile workforce.

Additionally, as the workforce becomes more diverse, understanding generational shifts is essential. Continuous learning helps leaders grasp the values, communication styles, and work preferences of different generations, enhancing team dynamics and effectiveness.

In a global and technologically advanced market, effective leadership requires a blend of traditional and new-age skills. Continuous learning stands out as a fundamental element for leaders aiming to enhance their skills and lead their organizations successfully. Leadership is not only about keeping up with change but also about thriving, enabling organizations to innovate, adapt, and succeed in the long run. Leaders can learn new skills from various resources and movies are one of them.

But how can leaders learn? The “Exploring Effective Leadership Practices through Popular Culture” book series (Edited by Mike Urick and of which

this book is a part) suggests that leaders can learn from just about anything – including fictional movies such as “Pirates of the Caribbean” (POTC). Thus, using the tumultuous and thrilling adventures of the “Pirates of the Caribbean” movie series, this book aims to impart lessons to its readers. With its unique view of leadership dynamics under extreme conditions, this book and series not only entertain but hopefully also suggest profound insights into leadership resilience, adaptability, and the nuance of human traits and behaviors in commanding positions.

From the depicted narratives and character dynamics of the “Pirates of the Caribbean,” this book offers valuable lessons for modern leadership. Piracy’s unpredictable, high-stakes world in the films serves as a powerful metaphor for the complexities and challenges faced by today’s leaders.

Like pirate captains in movies, today’s leaders must manage uncertainty effectively. Modern leadership environments, such as rapid market dynamics, technological advancements, and cultural shifts, symbolize uncharted waters. Leaders must be able to adapt quickly and effectively to these changes to ensure their organizations remain competitive and resilient.

Characters such as Hector Barbossa demonstrate the importance of strategic flexibility in leadership. As his relationship evolved from foe to ally, he illustrates the need for leaders to consider new alliances and emerging threats when planning tactics and strategies. Leaders must navigate complex situations with foresight and agility, making far-reaching and impactful decisions.

Elizabeth Swann’s transformation from a passive to a proactive character illustrates the transformative power of leadership. Her journey illustrates how leadership skills can emerge from within, reshaping one’s identity and influencing others in powerful ways. It also highlights the empowerment that comes with embracing leadership roles, especially in communities or fields where representation has traditionally been limited, such as those involving underrepresented groups.

As exemplified by Will Turner’s moral dilemmas, ethical integrity is a recurring theme in the series. Leaders often have to make tough decisions that test their values. By reinforcing that ethical leadership is crucial to securing trust and respect, both of which are foundational to effective leadership, the POTC series highlights the importance of maintaining a moral compass.

As a leader, Jack Sparrow epitomizes ingenuity and resourcefulness. His character teaches the value of unconventional thinking and creative

problem-solving through his ability to navigate out of seemingly impossible situations. It is important for leaders to learn from Sparrow's approach to leverage their unique strengths and adapt their strategies in order to meet and overcome challenges.

Leadership actions and decisions can be significantly influenced by an understanding and integration of personal and collective histories, as shown in the motivations behind the characters' quests.

Different leadership styles are depicted in the films to explore the nuances of power and authority. There are several complexities involved in wielding authority to command loyalty and respect while also managing fear and admiration dynamics.

EI is demonstrated by the characters, particularly in their interactions and relationships aboard the pirate ships. Leadership requires the ability to understand and manage not only one's own feelings but also those of team members to maintain harmony and influence.

From these leadership themes, this book draws lessons from the high seas that can be applied to contemporary leadership challenges. Whether navigating a political landscape, spearheading innovative projects, or leading a corporate team through economic turbulence, the principles distilled from the cinematic pirate adventures provide a robust framework for effective leadership. Through this book, current and aspiring leaders can cultivate resilience, strategic thinking, ethical judgment, and innovative problem-solving skills, inspiring them to lead with courage, intelligence, and adventure.

As we have explored the foundational leadership qualities, it is time to look at leadership through the lens of popular culture. An in-depth examination of the adventurous and unconventional leadership practices employed by the characters of "Pirates of the Caribbean" is provided in Chapter 2, "The Captain's Code Leadership Strategies from The Caribbean."

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2

THE CAPTAIN'S CODE

LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES FROM THE CARIBBEAN

Every leader has their own style of leading others, making decisions, dealing with change, influencing others, and accomplishing personal and organizational goals. Leadership theories explain the processes, traits, behaviors, and contexts that contribute to effective leadership by identifying the differences between leaders. The theories provide frameworks for understanding how leaders influence others, make decisions, and achieve organizational objectives (Kets de Vries & Cheak, 2015). These theories explore various aspects of leadership to identify what makes a leader effective (Penney et al., 2015), how leaders develop, and how leadership can be improved. Throughout this book, leadership theories, such as trait, behavioral, transformational, transactional, servant, and ethical, will be used to analyze the leaders in the “Pirates of the Caribbean” series.

THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP IN A NUTSHELL

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leaders inspire and elevate those around them by creating a compelling vision for the future. This type of leadership is characterized by four key components: intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence.

Intellectual stimulation implies encouraging innovation and creativity within an organization. Transformational leaders challenge their team

members to think critically and solve problems in new ways. In order to ensure continuous growth and learning, they foster an environment where assumptions are questioned and new possibilities are explored.

Individualized consideration refers to the leader's ability to attend to each follower's unique needs and aspirations. Transformational leaders act as mentors, offering personalized support and encouragement. Team leaders help their team members reach their full potential by understanding their strengths, weaknesses, and motivations.

Idealized influence is the degree to which leaders serve as role models for their followers. Transformational leaders demonstrate high standards of ethical behavior and integrity, earning the respect and trust of those they lead. Through their actions, they inspire others to emulate their commitment and values, thus fostering an organization-wide culture of excellence.

Situational Leadership Theories

According to situational leadership theories, leaders must adapt their leadership style depending on the maturity and competence of their followers and the demands of the situation. To provide the appropriate direction and support, these theories emphasize the importance of flexibility and the ability to diagnose followers' needs.

Servant Leadership Theory

According to servant leadership theory, leaders prioritize their followers and the organization's needs over their own. The theory focuses on empathy, listening, stewardship, and the development and well-being of followers.

Authentic Leadership Theory

In authentic leadership theory, leaders are emphasized as being genuine, transparent, and true to their values. When leaders consistently align their actions with their beliefs and values, they build trust and credibility with their followers.