

The Hidden Side of Purpose

Leaders know it's important,
but they struggle to make it happen.



THE GOAL

Leaders would like to
lead with purpose

78% of the
time

THE REALITY

Leaders admit that they
abandon their purpose

31% of the
time

Source: Potential Project

Let's be honest about what's not working
and find a new path forward.

Leaders know that a sense of purpose is important, for themselves and those they lead. However, good intentions don't always translate into action.

85% of leaders



struggle to lead with purpose during turbulent times, amidst business change or transformation.

60% of leaders



struggle to lead with purpose during regular times, amidst the "business-as-usual" routines.

Source: Potential Project

What's getting in the way?
The answer lies in how leaders typically view purpose.

Leaders are thinking about purpose in the wrong way, or more specifically in only one way.

LEADING WITH PURPOSE HAPPENS IN THE BIG MOMENTS

At these times, leaders are forward-looking and inspiring, charismatic and catalyzing.

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LEADING WITH PURPOSE HAPPENS IN THE EVERYDAY MOMENTS

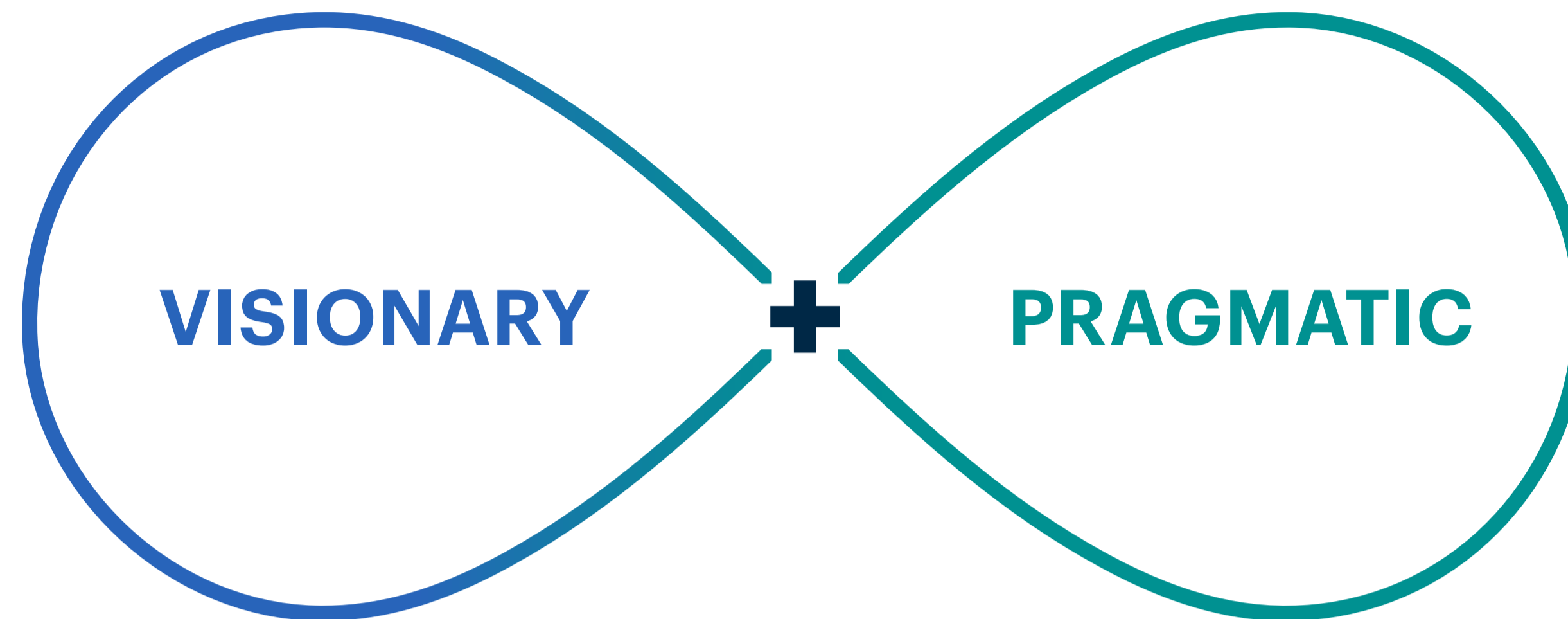
At these times, leaders are dialed into the realities of work life and are sensible and pragmatic.



Source: Potential Project

Leading with purpose is not just about the big moments, but also about the everyday moments.

Leading with purpose is a Both/And.



THE VISIONARY LEADER

STRENGTHS OF THIS LEADERSHIP BIAS

This leader inspires and motivates others through a future-oriented worldview that feels worthwhile and meaningful.

CHALLENGES OF THIS LEADERSHIP BIAS

This type of leader can find it hard to appreciate the day-to-day realities necessary to achieve a vision. They can be charismatic but not always patient with and practical about the everyday or mundane.

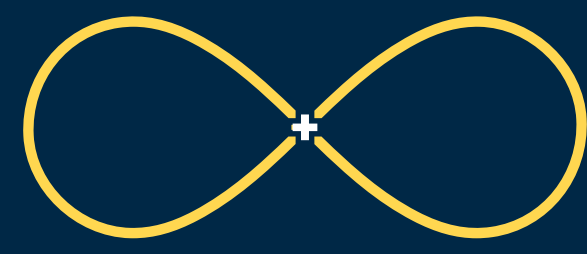
THE PRAGMATIC LEADER

STRENGTHS OF THIS LEADERSHIP BIAS

This leader inspires and motivates others by being realistic and grounded and finding ways to infuse meaning into small, even mundane, moments.

CHALLENGES OF THIS LEADERSHIP BIAS

This type of leader can find it hard to drive team cohesion and to inspire commitment to the organization through a shared, bold goal.






THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN LEADER

This leader can galvanize a team and organization, providing the spark for change and the reason to keep persevering. S/he also remains practical and present in the moment, recognizing that a vision is achieved through small steps and course corrections.

Purpose-Driven Leaders who embrace a Both/And approach drive the best outcomes for their followers and themselves.

FOLLOWER OUTCOMES (RELATIVE TO AVERAGE LEADER)

	 THE VISIONARY LEADER	 THE PRAGMATIC LEADER	 THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN LEADER
Burnout – Emotional Exhaustion	+7%	+1%	-5%
Burnout – Cynicism	+2%	+5%	-14%
Organizational Commitment	-2%	-9%	+7%
Team Cohesion	+5%	-2%	+8%
Well-being	+9%	-2%	+12%




Source: Potential Project

When employees work for a **Visionary Leader**, they have a higher chance of emotional exhaustion at work.

When employees work for a **Pragmatic Leader**, they have lower commitment to the organization.

Across all metrics, **Purpose-Driven Leaders** drive better outcomes relative to an average leader.

LEADER OUTCOMES (RELATIVE TO AVERAGE LEADER)

	 THE VISIONARY LEADER	 THE PRAGMATIC LEADER	 THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN LEADER
Burnout – Emotional Exhaustion	+4%	+4%	-5%
Burnout – Cynicism	+2%	+11%	-4%
Organizational Commitment	+12%	+1%	+14%
Team Cohesion	+1%	-3%	+4%
Well-being	-8%	-6%	+10%

Source: Potential Project

Visionary Leaders feel a strong commitment to their organization but their well-being is at risk.

Pragmatic Leaders are at a higher risk of burnout due to cynicism and have low levels of organizational commitment.

Purpose-Driven Leaders experience the best outcomes relative to burnout, commitment and personal well-being.

HOW TO LEAD WITH PURPOSE IN ALL TIMES



INSPIRATION FOR MORE VISION

Find ways to remind yourself why you work and what you find meaningful about work. During your day, notice when you feel a sense of resonance with your work or excitement about making something better or achieving something bold.

Having the ability to notice when you feel most alive at work is key to motivating yourself and others with an inspiring view of the future.

INSPIRATION FOR MORE PRAGMATISM

Find ways to connect more with your team in the day-to-day, to see and understand their reality as it is. At the heart of this is the ability to be mindfully present, to quiet your inner voice and the distractions pulling on your attention, and to see the person or teams in front of you.

Having the ability to be fully present and to listen with an open mind is often the most powerful way to have teams feel heard and motivated.

Source: Potential Project

The Human Leader is Potential Project's bi-annual study of the critical attributes that constitute a new model of leadership. Based on data from 5,000 companies across 100 countries, The Human Leader provides ground-breaking insights into how leaders can unlearn management and relearn how to be human. The research was done in partnership with academic experts at Harvard Business School, Columbia Business School, Haas School of Business, Rotman School of Management at the University of Toronto, and the University of Amsterdam School of Business.



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