

# **Triple Crown Leadership: How Ethical Organizations Can Take the Lead**

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# Central Premise

**Commit to Build an  
Excellent, Ethical, &  
Enduring Organization**

# 5 Practices of Triple Crown Leadership

- Head & Heart
  - The Colors
  - Steel & Velvet
  - Stewards
  - Alignment

# **Growing Database: Ethical Firms Outperform Financially**

## **Database:**

- **“Most ethical firms”**
- **“Most trusted” firms**
- **“Most admired” firms**
- **Firms of Endearment**
- **High integrity firms**
- **Sustainable firms**
- **and more**

# 1. Recruit, Develop, & Reward for Head and Heart

## Head

Education

Knowledge

Skills

Expertise

Technical competence

## Heart

Integrity

Emotional  
intelligence

Cultural fit

Passion

Authenticity

Courage

# Sample Heart Questions

- Tell me your story, starting where you were raised
- Tell me your two most formative life experiences
- Describe two humbling experiences you have had
- What are your personal values?
- Why do you want to lead?
- How do you fit into our culture?
- What is the single most important thing I should remember about you?

See: [triplecrownleadership.com/resources](http://triplecrownleadership.com/resources)

# Choose People for Head & Heart

- Heart trumps head in choosing
- Use H&H in job descriptions
- Use panels
- Use deep reference-check circles

## 2. Set Inspiring Colors

- **Purpose:** why we exist long term
- **Values:** how we should behave
- **Vision:** what it will be like for all stakeholders when we are achieving our goals



# Purpose versus Mission

## Purpose

“Why” we exist

Very long term

Short (6 word max)

Sticky

- Everybody knows
- Alliteration

## Mission

“What” we do or

“How” we do it

Business/Products/  
Customers

Longer: Paragraph

Shorter-term

Not memorable

# Set Shared Values

- Values guide behavior
- Behaviors determine culture

# Shared Values

- Core beliefs for how we want to *behave*
- Memorable by *everyone*
  - 4-7 words
  - Acronym if possible
- With explanatory phrases
  - Applicable to all stakeholders
  - For use in daily decision-making
  - Collaboratively elicited

# Set Shared Values

- Gather key staff
- Explain shared values
- Show good examples
- Start with personal values
- Breakout groups to brainstorm
- Synthesize
- Enlist a guiding coalition to synthesize stakeholder input
- Draft and redraft
- Synthesize
- Publicize
- Bake values into decision-making & performance reviews
- Reinforce with Codes of Conduct & systems

# Vision

- Inspiring description of what it will be like for all stakeholders when we are achieving our goals

### 3. Flex Between Steel and Velvet

- Steel – willingness to use title, position, authority, power on non-negotiables (e.g., achieve results ethically)
- Velvet = willingness to listen, ask questions, be quiet, let others lead
- Steel only fails
- Velvet only fails
- Flex depending on situation and people

# Protect and Coach Mavericks

- Mavericks are committed to shared purpose and values
- Coach the mavericks on how to fit in
- Defend the mavericks
- Give them visible assignments
- Celebrate their worth

# Fire the Toxic

- Examine their behavior
- If extreme, escort toxic to door
- If not, put toxic on a Values-Improvement Plan
- If they don't improve, terminate (see HR/Legal)
- Even the star performers



# **Flex Your Leadership Style Between Steel & Velvet**

- **Understand your personality profile**
- **Share profile**
- **Have team share their profiles**
- **Identify how you need to flex**
- **Enlist**
  - **Family**
  - **Boss**
  - **Peers**
  - **Subordinates**
  - **Trusted friends**
  - **Mentor/Coach**
- **Practice**

## 4. Empower Stewards of the Desired Culture

- Culture = how we do things here
- Give everyone an  
Irrevocable license to lead  
by the shared values
- Everyone has 2 jobs:  
regular + steward for desired culture

# Unleash Culture Stewards

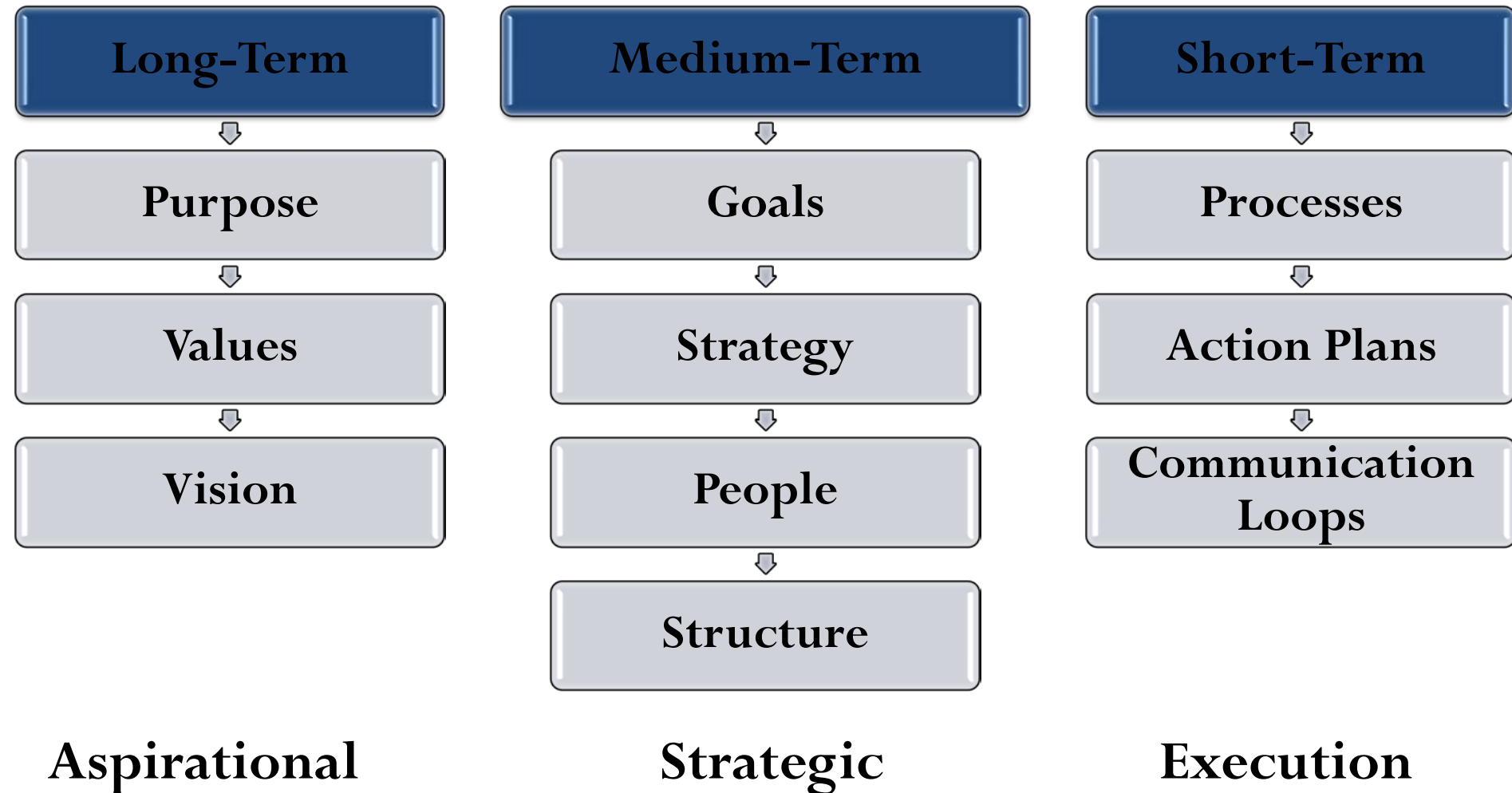
- Put culture & values on the agenda
- Tell people:
  - “I believe in you”
  - “I trust you”
  - “I’ve got your back”
- Hold people accountable to values
- Everyone 2 jobs: regular & culture steward
- Irrevocable license to lead by values
- Even as voice of one

# 2010 Booz & Co. Survey

(1800 Executives)

- 64% say biggest frustration =  
too many conflicting priorities
- Only 13% of organizations meet  
researchers' "standard of coherence"

# 5. Collaboratively Align



# Alignment Steps

- Purpose, Values, Vision: see previous slides
- Goals: specific, measurable, prioritized by stakeholder
- Strategy: how to achieve goals
- People: what kinds of people we need
- Structure: how to organize formally and informally
- Processes: systems and policies needed
- Action Plans: who will do what by when
- Communication Loops: metrics, meetings, recognition/discipline

# Summary

**Commit to build an excellent, ethical,  
and enduring organization**

## **5 Practices**

- 1. Hire and promote for head & heart**
- 2. Set lofty, inspiring purpose, shared values, & vision**
- 3. Flex between steel & velvet**
- 4. Empower stewards with an irrevocable license to lead by the shared values**
- 5. Collaboratively align**

# Contact Info

- Website (blogs & free resources)  
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- Facebook: TripleCrownLeadership
- New book (May): *Leadership Wisdom:  
Lessons from Poetry, Prose, and Curious Verse*