

10x Mindsets, 100x Ventures

written by CD | AUGUST 18, 2018

If you're thinking about how you could be a 10xers and have 10x the impact of a "normal" human being, I'll argue you're thinking too small. If you go a step further and consider how you could find, recruit, inspire and develop 10 10xers, you're now looking at a 100x impact. Build a team of 100 10xers and you're talking about a 1,000x impact.

It's been [said](#) that for venture funds to provide sufficient return on investment to warrant the risks that will lead 90% or more of those investments to fail, they need the occasional unicorn. A company that returns 100x or even 1,000x the original investment to become a \$1B or more company. Having been through two unicorn IPOs and one unicorn acquisition, I've seen some of the underlying contributing factors that can, with some luck, combine to result in a unicorn exit (\$1B+).

Carol Dweck explains in [Mindset – The New Psychology of Success](#)

*We like to think of our champions and idols as superheroes
who were born different from us.
We don't like to think of them as relatively ordinary people
who made themselves extraordinary."*

Paul G. Stoltz tells us in his book [Put Your Mindset to Work](#)

*Ability to persevere begins with you, the individual.
However, change is rarely easy. In fact, sometimes it is downright
formidable.*

Daniel Coyle premise in [The Talent Code](#) is that

Greatness isn't born, it's grown.

We tend read these books more with a focus on self-improvement often overlooking the greater leverage we can gain by developing the talent on our teams, in our companies and/or in the classroom.

In an effort to understand if managers matter and how, Google initiated Project Oxygen collecting information from employee surveys, who received top manager awards, performance reviews, etc resulting in over 10,000 observations of managerial behavior.

Project Oxygen's outcome ended with eight things great managers do:

1. Be a good coach.

2. Empower; don't micromanage.
3. Be interested in direct reports, success and well-being.
4. Don't be a sissy: Be productive and results-oriented.
5. Be a good communicator and listen to your team.
6. Help your employees with career development.
7. Have a clear vision and strategy for the team.
8. Have key technical skills so you can advise the team.

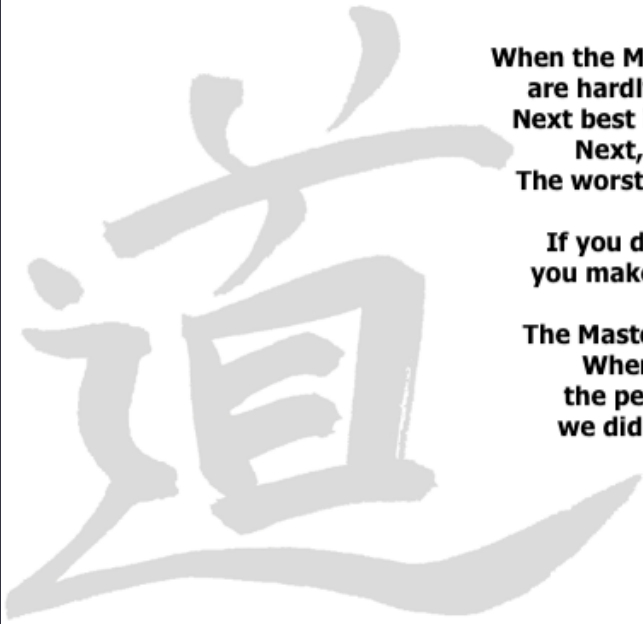
The processes of finding a disruptive offering has been looked at in such books as [Innovator's Dilemma](#) (a book I was handed upon joining Intuit and asked what it was they wanted me to do). The processes of understanding how to iterate to solutions that discover what customers want and build to that end have been explored in such books as [The Lean Startup](#) (a book based on the processes used at the startup IMVU where I spent much of my time improving processes). I have certainly experienced how both of these play a role; however, what fascinates me the most is the people it takes to turn those things into a win – the illusive 10x engineers sometimes also referred to as mythical unicorns.).

There are certainly also lots of leadership blogs, talks and books that focus on leading (e.g. to know if you're a great leader, turn around and see who is following you). My premise is that you become a 100x or 1,000x leader by developing, coaching, mentoring and advocating those that follow you.

My primary focus in this blog is on developing talent into 10xers drawing on my experience working with 10xers at six startups of which three ended up being valued at \$1B+ (two IPO'ed, three were acquired, the 6th was IMVU – the basis of The Lean Startup story).

- Level 1 leading – tell them what to do – give them a fish (aka micromanaging)
- Level 2 leading – show them how to do it – teach them to fish
- Level 3 leading – bestow the grit, confidence and experiences, insight and tools allowing them to solve whatever may come – teach them to learn

Level 3 leading empowers, inspires, grows and scales...



When the Master governs, the people
are hardly aware that he exists.
Next best is a leader who is loved.
Next, one who is feared.
The worst is one who is despised.

If you don't trust the people,
you make them untrustworthy.

The Master doesn't talk, he acts.
When his work is done,
the people say, "Amazing:
we did it, all by ourselves!"

Tao
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