

GOLDILOCKS, PORCUPINES & CHAMELEONS – PART 1

What is the “Goldilocks Zone” and how can leaders become stronger by getting into sync with it? One of the many challenges that leaders face is to keep the inner core and outer ring, which we will discuss in this blog, operating in the “Goldilocks Zone”, meaning a “just right” relationship with expressing ones beliefs and core values in a complex world.

Twenty-first century leaders face three significant challenges.

1ST

First, they must provide for the longer-term welfare and progress of the organization.

2ND

Second, they must make sound decisions in a fast changing and complex world.

3RD

And third, they must deal regularly with unprecedented circumstances.

This series explores a framework for staying effective over time, making difficult decisions and handling unprecedented circumstances in a manner that:

(1) honors the beliefs, core values and deep convictions of the leader (and organization), and (2) applies these in a wise and effective manner to a wide array of unique situations.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NON-NEGOTIABLE, UNCHANGING INNER CORE OF THE LEADER AND HIS OR HER CONTEXTUALLY GENERATED ATTITUDES, DECISIONS AND ACTIONS CAN BE PICTURED AS THREE CONCENTRIC CIRCLES.

I call these the inner core, outer ring and context. The inner core is “tight.” By this, I mean that it is home to an unchanging set of timeless principles, core beliefs, enduring values, deep convictions and non-negotiable commitments. The outer ring is “loose.” It is home to a flexible set of timely, appropriate and effective responses to the context. The context is a dynamic and changing set of threats and opportunities, problems and possibilities faced by the leader and organization.

When the inner core and outer ring are in the Goldilocks zone, the outer ring serves the critical function of informing the inner core with real world-real time feedback and information relevant to sustained effectiveness.

THIS PROMPTS THE LEADER TO EXERCISE WISDOM AND DISCERNMENT IN THE PROCESS OF APPLYING TIMELESS PRINCIPLES IN A TIMELY, CONTEXT-FRIENDLY WAY; TO EFFECTIVELY EXPRESS ONE'S ENDURING BELIEFS AND CORE VALUES IN A TRANSIENT WORLD.

Next week we will take a closer look at the function of the inner core and the outer ring, and explore the dynamic interplay between them.

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