

# Leadership Deficiencies Ruin Businesses and Derail Careers

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Leadership capabilities increasingly fail to meet escalating needs. Why?

Widespread weaknesses manifest themselves most dramatically in business when leaders are unable to handle the human ramifications of accelerating technology disruptions. Problematic human-nature issues also have created long-term lost opportunities because so many business leaders and key individual contributors, trying to escape their painful awareness that they didn't have a good grasp of some crucial success factors, fell for a series of books that provided only simplistic solutions.

Following are some business books, published over the last half century, that created valuable pointers to specific aspects of the underlying nature of our chronic problems:

## Mysterious Human-Nature Barriers to Leadership Success

Enigmatic Mental Issues	Book Title	Authors	Date
Esoused theories vs. theories in use	Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness	Argyris & Schon	1974
Tacit knowledge	The Knowledge-Creating Company	Nonaka & Takeuchi	1995
Business culture change	Deep Change	Robert E Quinn	1996
Knowing vs. doing	The Knowing-Doing Gap	Pfeffer & Sutton	2000
People process	Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done	Bossidy & Charan	2002
Exposé of simplistic business books	The Halo Effect...and the Eight Other Business Delusions...	Phil Rosenzweig	2014
Technology-caused leadership defects	The Fourth Industrial Revolution	Klaus Schwab	2017

Like with the blind men and the elephant parable, each of these books provided inspired insights into seemingly isolated organization success factors, but the best and the brightest from the business community have failed to identify the big picture – the common root cause. What did they miss?

- *Situational* barrier [domain specialization]: Investigators have failed to generalize the various insights that the business community has developed, including those identified above.
- *Elusive and Illusive* barriers: These enigmatic activities are *elusive* because they operate outside of normal awareness. They are also *illusive*. They create internal *certainties* within us that we experience as so profoundly real that most people most of the time cannot muster the courage to examine and change them when they are dysfunctional or become obsolete.
- *Worldview* barrier: A crucial aspect of human nature that is not well understood are the internal “mental lenses” through which we view the world – our *worldviews*. One ubiquitous worldview among scholars is that we should use omni-potent science, which works great for the brain, to solve our human-nature problems. The human mind is a unique non-physical phenomenon that interacts bidirectionally in still-mysterious ways with the physical brain. We must recognize that we need a unique theory to master enigmatic aspects of mental activities. That is particularly true now because the crucial mental mechanism of constructed certainties is distributed in indecipherable ways in the brain, but we can now model it effectively at the mind level.

Examining insights into human-nature mysteries that experts have identified outside of business might help us better see the bigger picture and discover the root cause of our many problems.

Following is a list of some non-business books, published over the last century, that created powerful insights into different aspects of chronic mental mysteries:

### **Mysterious Human-Nature Characteristics**

<b>Enigmatic Mental Issues</b>	<b>Book Title</b>	<b>Authors</b>	<b>Date</b>
Big lies	Mein Kampf	Adolf Hitler	1925
Cognitive dissonance	A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance	Leon Festinger	1957
Science paradigms	The Structure of Scientific Revolutions	Thomas Kuhn	1962
Reality constructions	The Social Construction of Reality	Berger & Luckmann	1966
Reality reconstructions	Snapping	Conway & Siegelman	1978
Two mental modes	Thinking, Fast and Slow	Daniel Kahneman	2013

Each of these books provided penetrating observations into seemingly isolated human traits, but here again researchers operated in silos and thereby failed to identify root causes and to universalize their breakthroughs as a means to overcome enigmatic human-nature problems.

The solution to our growing dysfunction in many aspects of our lives requires that we explicitly recognize that we operate in two distinct modes and then create a powerful theory that explains the synergies and conflicts between our thinking mode and automatic mode. We need to systematize the concepts outlined in the two tables above plus such other well-known dual-mode insights as conscious vs. unconscious and thinking intelligence vs. emotional intelligence.

The new theory must explain crucial distinctions between our thinking mode and automatic mode, including thoughts vs. certainties or beliefs, learning (acquire new knowledge) vs. transforming (becoming different), and two distinct forms of what we consider “true” (correspondence with facts using the thinking mode vs. certainties constructed into the automatic mode).

Any candidate for a standard model of the mind must include constructed certainties in some form that incorporates business incarnations of organizational cultures, self-images, and problem-solving worldviews. This will be a necessary process to overcome systemic leadership deficiencies and to create the framework for a sustainable series of differing forms of successes. Any adequate model of human nature must also explain other types of certainties, such as succumbing to disinformation and Big Lies and the construction and maintenance of shared values.

In addition to a comprehensive theory, which the thinking mode executes, we will need to propagate a new worldview embedded in the automatic mode, which empowers people to understand and use the theory.

Involuntary activities transform through feelings and repetitions, not through knowledge, so any viable general theory of the human mind must include feelings-based processes.

A previous business-success mantra was systematic *continuous learning*, which is a thinking-mode activity. Now, our future successes and well-being require that we add methodical *periodic transforming*, which is an automatic-mode activity.

The needed theory of the mind must also include how to manage the compulsive need to avoid or escape discomfort, which can empower people to avoid rampant simplistic solutions.

**The required transformation in how we create systematic progress requires fundamental progress in how we create systematic transformations!**

We suffer increasing failures because we lack an overarching theory of human-nature that models our many problematic involuntary activities. Fortunately, one now exists that subsumes and explains each of the enigmatic items in the above tables, and many more, which you can see outlined [here](#).