

TRUE LEADERS DELIVER

| OWL PRESS |

TRUE

Peter
Corijn

LEADERS

An essential guide to mission success

DELIVER

*'The thoughts of others
Were light and fleeting,
Of lovers' meeting
Or luck or fame.
Mine were of trouble,
And mine were steady;
So I was ready
When trouble came.'*

*A.E. Housman
(English poet, 1859 – 1936)*

*'Never walk away from home
Ahead of your axe and sword.
You can't feel a battle in your bones
Or foresee a fight.'*

*The Hámaþál
(Viking 'Words of the High One', i.e., Odin)*

A rare book that convincingly explains what leaders must do – and then clearly shows how to do it. In True Leaders Deliver Peter Corijn, both an experienced leader and brilliant storyteller, captivates, inspires, and teaches things that are invaluable to all organizations, and those who must lead them.

STANLEY McCHRYSTAL

General, US Army (Retired) and Founder & CEO of McChrystal Group

True Leaders Deliver is a unique book. It's a kit with clear 'how to' advice and practical tools. Any organization should implement them, starting today. I know Peter well, having worked with him for many years during my time as CEO of P&G. I vividly remember that he was at the same time a disciplined leader and unconventional thinker, with a breadth of interests. The book benefits from that trait. It's highly entertaining because a vast canvas of cases and stories are shared. I for one never thought that I had lessons to receive from the likes of Alice Cooper and U2. Highly recommended!

ROBERT A. McDONALD

8th Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, Retired
Chairman, President & CEO of The Procter & Gamble
Company, Chairman West Point Association of Graduates

Every CEO should distribute this book to all leadership ranks, from junior to senior. The book's an incredibly rich source of tools and insights on how to deliver. It contains what every business leader should know – and more importantly – do.

PAUL POLMAN

Business leader, campaigner, and co-author of *Net Positive*

I agree with the premise that leaders need an intrinsic drive coming from a will to make a positive contribution for all stakeholders. This intrinsic drive makes them deliver. What sets this book apart is that it provides a leader with the necessary tools and actionable advice on how to make things happen. It does not stop at the insights and strategic level and the tools and advice are based on hard earned experience. It's an engaging read because of clear, compelling cases and the variety of the sources. Strongly recommended.

JEF COLRUYT

Chairman and CEO of Colruyt Group

Prepare to be amused and scared, inspired and challenged. Peter's book is a delightful combination of focused rigor and captivating storytelling, drawn from extensive research, driven by intense curiosity. You will find yourself smiling at the lessons learned from Pablo Escobar's business model, and cringing with embarrassment at the work you will realize you, and your company, are not doing.

ANDREW ROBERTSON

President & CEO, BBDO Worldwide

There are strategy books, execution books, and leadership books. Rarely do you come across one that combines all three. Peter Corijn has written a book that combines research-based frameworks, entertaining examples, memorable quotes, and home-spun wisdom. As a one-stop-shop for how to navigate modern strategy and leadership, True Leaders Deliver delivers.

MICHAEL WADE

IMD Business School Professor of Innovation and Strategy
and Cisco Chair in Digital Business Transformation

Wow, what a wise, engaging, insightful, and practical read this was – a rare combination that emerged from Peter's unique business experience and profound curiosity. It was a pleasure to step into Peter's thinking and extract valuable insights, several of which I'll be using to strengthen delivery of my Leading & Living Innovation university course.

JOHN METSELAAR

Professor Innovation at Solvay Business School (ULB), Head of Economy, Strategy & Finance Center at The Conference Board Europe, Retired P&G Innovation Leader.

This business book rocks hard! It brings to mind the renowned SAS Survival Handbook, but with a focus on business. It certainly demonstrates that challenging situations can be conquered, and one can flourish despite crises. With a diverse range of sources and a touch of maverick spirit, Peter provides a wealth of knowledge that should be immediately applied to your business or organization the minute you finish the book. Your team and stakeholders – not to mention your career – will thank you for it.

DIMITRI PANAYOTOPOULOS

Retired Vice Chairman of Global Business Units of the Procter & Gamble Company, Senior Advisor at Boston Consulting Group, and various Board Positions

I love the gung-ho style and wide scholarship – and unlike most business books this one is NOT boring even to an outsider like myself. The Moroccan adventure is really fascinating and is worth the price of the book itself. I have always wondered – how do you turn a company around? Well, now I know, and for the first time I sense the real hard and specific work needed to do that!

ROBERT TWIGGER

Explorer and bestselling author of 15 books, translated in 16 languages, including *Angry White Pyjamas* and *Red Nile*

True Leaders Deliver is exactly what the title promises. Tools based on hard-earned hands-on experience are offered to make a mission happen. It also has that quality too seldom found in business books: it's highly engaging and readable. Peter taps into a wide variety of sources. Insights are drawn from business cases but equally from special forces, history and even from rock stars. Importantly, the advice is always brought back to practice and how to win in the marketplace. It's the sort of book I wish I had read at the start of my career, though senior executives will benefit from it as well. Don't miss it.

TONY SALDANH

President Transformant, Co-Founder Inixia Inc., Bestselling author of *Why Digital Transformations Fail*

This is exactly the business book my entire leadership team needs. More than yet another book with lots of theory, it's an incredibly rich source of real-life advice on how to sustainably win in the marketplace. Peter manages to back-up insights with useful tools and compelling cases from all walks of life. Everything is put together into one integrated and compelling process, the Lean Organism Model. Can't wait to get my hands on 100 copies straight away.

FRANCISCO JAVIER VAN ENGELEN

Board Member & CFO Signify

Peter Corijn was a legendary out-of-the-box creative thinker in his time in P&G. This outstanding book is a continuation of Peter's unique perspective and the discontinuous angles he views subjects. It's a refreshing view that is certain to strengthen the depth of any leader, in any facet of life.

JAMES MICHAEL LAFFERTY

CEO Fine Hygienic Holding

In the evermore dynamic business world, where new, unique, and privileged insight is increasingly powerful and leverageable, Peter's body of work blazes a new trail with fresh perspective that would benefit businesses in any stage of development, from start-up to steady state. A must-read for ambitious enterprises everywhere.

STEVEN P. STANBROOK

NED Imperial Brands, Past COO International Markets SC Johnson

True Leaders Deliver is a valuable business book for both seasoned leaders and executives and people managing their first team. The book offers a practical road map for leading an organization through strategy, building capability and execution. I have known Peter for many years, he is a successful leader with a proven track record. We are fortunate to learn from his practical experiences and many inspiring examples.

STEPHEN SCHUELER

CEO of Enerjen Capital, Chairman of European Maritime

There are so many business books out there. Many are interesting to read but not relevant, quite a few are relevant but not interesting to read. Peter's book delivers on both: relevancy and style. It provides deep insights into the concept and philosophy of leadership and, at the same time, translates those into practical, hands-on "how to" tips. Clearly, worth reading and applying.

WERNER GEISSLER

Retired Vice-Chairman of the Procter & Gamble Company

As CEO and author, I've formulated the (IQ+EQ+TechQuotient+BloodyQuick) ^{CreativityQuotient} equation as the way towards Peak Performance. True Leaders Deliver is an outstanding example of bringing this theory to life and weaponizing it through inspirational stories and ready to use tools. Peter is a Master in all five elements. He shares his secrets compellingly in this book.

KEVIN ROBERTS^{CNZM}

Former Chairman/CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi Worldwide, Author of best-sellers *Lovemarks* and *64 Shots*, Founder of Red Rose Consulting

Drawing on examples and experiences from P&G, the military, and the music industry, Peter has developed a management system called the Lean Organism. It enables you to supercharge your team and drive mission success. Warmly recommended and highly actionable. If you want to play with the best, then learn from the best.

BRAM DESMET

CEO Solventure, Assistant Professor Vlerick Business School and Peking University, author of *Supply Chain Strategy and Financial Metrics*

Business books are not quite my thing, but every rule has its exception. True Leaders Deliver completely captivated me. I've kept on nodding my head in agreement with its content. Peter is a great storyteller drawing hard core business lessons from the unlikeliest of sources. If you read one business book this year, make it this one.

CLAUDE L. MEYER

Retired President of The Procter & Gamble Company

Peter wrote a very insightful, no nonsense, captivating book combining exciting leadership experience, human insights and stories from history. The book is a condensed piece of must-know information for leaders and entrepreneurs. It reads like a novel and is anything but boring (I find so many leadership books boring!). True Leaders Deliver is a very well-written piece of storytelling for those who want to make a difference.

OLIVIER ONGHENA-'t HOOFT

Executive Chair Global Inspiration & Noble Purpose Institute (GINPI),
entrepreneur and solutionist. Author of the acclaimed 'Book of Noble Purpose'

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WHEN EVERYTHING'S ON THE LINE

THE 4 PILLARS OF MISSION SUCCESS & THE LEAN ORGANISM

Leadership is a complex and multi-faceted topic, but its essence can be distilled into a simple truth: *leaders deliver*. They get things done and leave the businesses, organizations, and communities they serve, in a better state than they found them.

This practical guide is designed to help you accomplish these outcomes and is suitable for both seasoned executives and those new to the business field. What sets it apart is that it provides guidance not only on **WHAT** needs to be done, but also on **HOW** to put those recommendations into action. Through a unique combination of insights and case studies from business, history, psychology, Special Forces and even rock stars, it will equip you with the tools needed to take your business and leadership to the next level.

The book will explore the four pillars that serve as the foundation of mission success. A varied set of narratives will successively cover The Mission Success Equation, the F.A.Y.U.R. methodology, Change Management, and the importance of creating a Supercharged Team. Finally, all these concepts will be integrated into ‘The Lean Organism Management Model’.

Let’s define the core elements of the first pillar with a thought-provoking query: what if your family’s lives were at stake? That was the exact circumstance people encountered on June 3, 2017. On that fateful day, a van deliberately rammed into pedestrians on London Bridge. It then crashed on the south bank of the River Thames. The three occupants of the vehicle jumped out and ran to the nearby Borough Market area. The assailants initiated a stabbing spree, with one of the terrorists storming into a restaurant brandishing a large blade. If you were present, what would you do? What resources do you wish you had? The following bullet points are critical, and they also apply to your business:

- **Strategic Clarity:** the mission is ‘save my family’. How? Escape. If no other choice, fight back.
- **Perfect Execution:** a clear plan that can be flawlessly executed because all have trained for such an eventuality.
- **Capabilities:** mastery of Krav Maga – the celebrated Israeli self-defence technique – would be a good skill set to have. Knowledge and experience would be at a premium. Merely having the awareness to never wear flip flops outside of the home might already make a difference, because mobility and speed could prove essential.
- **No Excuse Ownership:** This element tops them all; will other people help you? They might but most will focus on running away faster than you. There’s a reason why

we admire heroes and stand in awe of recipients of the Medal of Honor: it's exceedingly rare. It's up to you first and foremost. If there's no ownership, all is lost. You alone stand between victory or loss. Failure is not an option.

Rest assured that somewhere on the planet, there is a company working with the mindset 'as if their family was at stake'. This was the case for Elon Musk and his SpaceX team when they tried to get their first rockets off the ground.* Such leaders and companies will beat you unless you act alike. Here's the equation:

Pillar 1: The Mission Success Equation ('MSE')
= (Strategic Clarity + Perfect Execution + Capabilities) x No Excuse Ownership.

However, it is not enough. To get back to the terrorist attack: it's useless to say, 'Boy, I wish I knew karate,' just before the knife hits. It's too late now. Therefore:

Pillar 2: Skills must be built before a crisis happens.
A crisis will happen. We just do not know the timing and shape of it.

Let's take a lesson from evolution. It's often said that the species that survives is the one most adaptable to change. There is a key piece missing in that statement: to survive in the face of change, the trait that allows you to thrive in a different environment must already be present in the population.

Here's an example that illustrates the idea: a population of foxes all have short-hair furs, perfectly adapted to the mild

* In his first start-up, Musk told an investor: 'My mentality is that of a samurai. I would rather commit 'seppuku' (ritual suicide) than fail.'¹

climate region where they live. One day, by random mutation, a fox is born with a massive fur coat. Some of its offspring are also much hairier because the genetic mutation is hereditary. The same applies to the next generations. Then, the climate starts to change. It gets much colder. The shorter-hair foxes start to feel mightily uncomfortable. Their offspring eventually freeze to death. Only the longer-haired foxes survive and reproduce, until eventually a thick fur becomes the observed norm. The fox as a species was able to cope with the climate change but only because the feature suited to the new habitat existed in the skulk.

Equally, organizations and leaders must develop the right DNA upfront to be able to overcome future challenges. Evolution happens at random. Organizations need to be deliberate about preparation, and deploy F.A.Y.U.R. The acronym represents:

- Fluid Strategy and Execution
- Agility
- Your Leadership
- Understanding
- Resilience

There's overlap between this and the MSE (see figure 1). Indeed, it's hard to get Strategic Clarity and to know which Capabilities are needed without Understanding. Perfect Execution requires Resilience and Agility. Simply everything revolves around Your Leadership.

Unfortunately, there is no such thing as a permanent competitive advantage, which introduces the third pillar.

Pillar 3: We must master change; ideally even drive it to create new advantages in the endless cycle of creative destruction.

‘The Red Queen effect’ erodes business superiority. This character from Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking Glass* (the sequel to *Alice in Wonderland*) is running to stand still. The Red Queen is a metaphor to describe that time always diminishes advantage. Unless we progress, we go backwards. To use the words of biologist Matt Ridley: ‘Every invention sooner or later leads to a counter-invention. Every success contains the seeds of its own overthrow. Every hegemony comes to an end.’² At some point in the future, there will be major disruptions – Black Swans* – that turn everything upside down. History is full of improbable events ‘that can never happen’. The world is becoming ever more VUCA (Volatile Uncertain Complex Ambiguous), to the extent that some argue it should be referred to as BANI (Brittle Anxious Nonlinear Incomprehensible). Just in the period 2015 -2023, Europe has faced a mass immigration crisis, global climate concerns, the Covid-19 pandemic, an energy crisis and the impact of the war in Ukraine. Technology, artificial intelligence (‘AI’), and digital systems are uprooting many markets and have altered the game. Change Management is a process which we’ll discuss in detail.

The final pillar is about ensuring that the entire organization takes responsibility for managing everything that has been covered so far.

* The Black Swan tag is given to events that are outliers, with an extreme impact, and with retrospective (but not prospective) predictability. For a long time, Europeans were convinced that swans could only be white. The evidence before their eyes confirmed the thesis. That is, until the discovery of Australia where black swans do exist. One single observation was enough to change the paradigm.³

Pillar 4: Create a Supercharged Team that works in sync towards the objective.

Let's flash back to June 3, 2017. Imagine the terrorist had stumbled upon a superbly trained, highly motivated team that moved as one towards neutralizing the threat. That's the kind of spirit you want in your Supercharged Team. There must be so much electricity in the air when you walk around the office that you can charge your phone on it.

Let's add a sobering caveat though to this exalted vision: people are not your biggest asset; the RIGHT people are. Choosing the 'who' for the mission is as important as the 'what' and the 'how' to get there.

That thought completes the 4 pillars we'll develop in depth. You may not need all of them to the same degree, depending on how your business and organization are doing. Figure 1 provides the complete picture. Success sits in the bullseye where all core concepts meet. The whole is bigger than the individual parts.

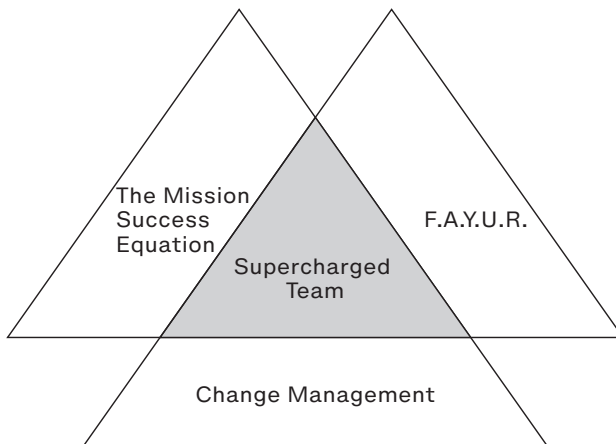


Figure 1: The Mission Success Equation (© Peter Corijn 2023)

At the end of the book, a management model will be proposed that integrates everything. Here's the blueprint of it in figure 2. Don't worry about it for now. Just like on the front of a Lego packaging, I merely want to show you what we will end up building. We will first discuss each brick of each pillar and then fit it all together in The Lean Organism Management Model.

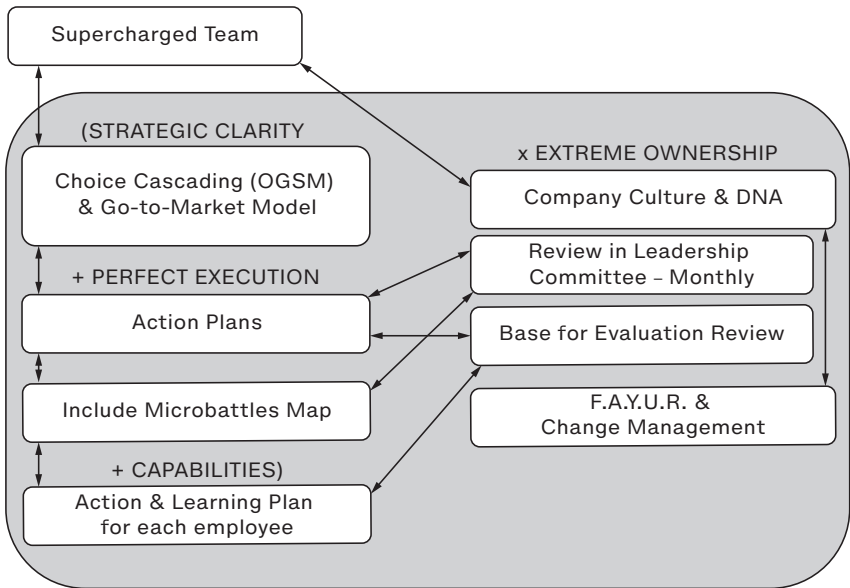


Figure 2: The Lean Organism Management Model™
 (© 2017 Peter Corijn / VUCASTAR)

The roadmap of this book:

There are four key sections, reflecting each of the pillars, with one last chapter pulling it all together. Since Supercharged Team is overlapped by the other concepts, much will already

have been addressed before we get to that topic. Hence, I will just highlight some extra insights. The core learnings are always highlighted in **bold** font. Those less interested in a topic, or pressed for time, can just read these, and move on. An executive summary is offered at the end of each chapter.

An important warning: sometimes countries or organizations you don't like will be discussed. It's not done for political reasons. My only interest is sharing best practice; no matter where it comes from. You may for instance not be a fan of the Israeli Airforce, but friend and foe agree that they are the best. Some of their tools are hence useful to copy. Anyway, it's smart to learn from competition (or your enemy).

I'm a fan of both analogical thinking and hands-on knowledge. Valuable management lessons can be drawn from a wide range of sources. Humanity is endlessly fascinating in all its endeavours. Inevitably, my executive background and leadership philosophy are part of the DNA of this book. This is my truth, and it might not be yours. However, much is also based on extensive research and interviews with CEOs and leaders, in business and other walks of life.

As much as possible, first-hand experience is reflected. Some examples: to be able to talk about the race to the South Pole, I manhauled on the ice of Spitsbergen with polar explorer Dixie Dansercour. Training for weeks in anti-terror and urban combat with experienced commandos and SWAT teams generated insights on how to plan and execute missions. To understand their concept of ownership, I've participated in programs run by (ex-) Navy SEALs. West Point TLDG and a seminar with General (ret.) McChrystal shed further

light on how to deal with VUCA. I've played support act to U2 and many others. I'm a recording indie artist (check out 'Paul Numi' on Spotify) which allowed me to get insights into the music industry. And so forth.

One case from Procter & Gamble ('P&G'), set in Morocco, will be discussed in extenso. It will be a *fil rouge*. It's hence advisable to go through the details. The case is an integral part of the narrative. A gray line on the left-hand side of the page will serve as a visual indicator throughout the book.

P&G has been fabulously successful for nearly two centuries. It's rightfully one of the most admired companies in the world. I never loved a company more. Still, as you will discover, things can go very wrong in a subsidiary. I chose the P&G Morocco experience because we often learn more from a tough challenge than from an easy task comfortably sailing in the breeze. A captain who has not navigated through a storm is not fully qualified. The same applies to a business leader. There's the risk that some feathers might be ruffled by choosing such a case. But I believe it ultimately shows P&G at its very best.