



PURPOSE

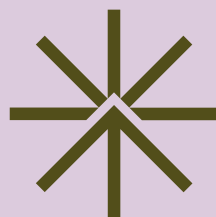
THE IMPACT OF PURPOSE

A SHORT ARTICLE

 THE
PURPOSEFUL
LEADER

“EMPIRES DO NOT SUFFER
EMPTINESS OF PURPOSE AT
THE TIME OF THEIR CREATION.
IT IS WHEN THEY HAVE BECOME
ESTABLISHED THAT AIMS ARE
LOST AND REPLACED
BY VAGUE RITUAL.”

Frank Herbert, Author of *'Dune'*





With regard to a definition of purpose, The Purposeful Leader argues that it is a helpfully disruptive force.

As a leader, it is important to consider this, and to acknowledge that when you consciously commit to discovering your purpose, you are partnering with something that's positively disruptive. This article explores this in a little more detail.

When organisations and teams become established, purpose becomes replaced with vague ritual, collusion and loyalty. Status quo and bureaucracy come to life and take priority, whilst those who commit to leading purposefully are sidelined and politely encouraged to get back in their boxes.

Purpose is a disruptive force. Not disruption in partnership with evil, but disruption in partnership with good. When leaders discover and commit to their purpose, something in their body gets activated as they re-orientate their relationship with the projects and teams they lead. An awakening occurs where the project of today is in service of something greater that exists in the tomorrow. Disruption in this instance is a win:win for any organisation, in that it both serves the individual leader *and* the additional stakeholders.

Committing to your purpose moves you from isolation to connection. It shifts you from unconscious consumerism to conscious contribution. And it does this because it is asking you not to think only of yourself, your career and your future, but to consider the broader system that you are already contributing to, including your family, your local community, your team and the organisation that you work for.

To partner with the system in this way means to consciously move beyond passivity without seeking to dominate. It means to '*work with*' rather than '*work for*' or '*work against*'. It requires an open, humble and curious posture, where you're prepared to ask questions, go public, and seek and listen to other perspectives. To partner means to flex, adapt and change your mind based upon feedback you're receiving from the system. Purpose helps you recognise that you are not passive, you are connected. You are connected to all the stakeholders, in the present, mentioned above, and you are connected to the future.

When you actively commit to your purpose, and partner with the system around you, the system will sit up, notice and respond. This response might be experienced in the form of a reprimand, and seduction back to stasis, or increased followership. In other words, by this simple act of commitment, disruption will occur. When you live purposefully, the system will change; this is an inevitability. Discovering purpose is an awakening; not just for you but for those around you also. By behaving differently, the system will have to recalibrate and discover a new relationship, a new response. Purpose challenges the existing constrained paradigms and societal norms, and asks you to reconsider them. As A.C. Grayling notes, "It is a fair bet that scrutiny of social norms... will prove productive for an enquirer, one way or another." Ultimately, purpose is about disruption - a life giving, provocative and enriching disruption.

Disruption in this context is hugely positively intended. It is not disruption for the sake of it. Neither is it disruption that seeks to be harmful or destructive for the system in which we co-exist. Purposeful disruption partners with all that is good in life. In order for that to happen, the disruption firstly needs to begin within before it extends outward.

As a leader in any organisation, this is one of your responsibilities: to begin the work of discovering and committing to your individual purpose, and leading from that place.

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