



INSPIRING OR INTIMIDATING: LEADERS WITH POSITIVE ENERGY DRIVE IMPROVED CORPORATE PERFORMANCE

In a dynamic competitive world, high performing organizations are created when all stakeholders feel that they have a voice and represent critical elements to the success of the organization. Leaders set the tone by creating a culture that attracts and retains the best and the brightest or produces burnout and disengagement.

Seventy percent of today's workers are disengaged and over eighty percent are planning to look for a new job. Turnover costs are estimated to be as high as three hundred percent of base salary. Many organizations find themselves grappling with high rates of absenteeism and high turnover. Often, these organizations also find themselves shackled by conflict and adversarial attitudes where blame, coercion, intimidation, insufficient support and inefficiency abound. These environments are *catabolic*.

Catabolic or negative energy refers to the energy a body or an organization uses to generate the power to counteract a stressor. Catabolic energy is draining and stressful. Catabolic organizations experience lack of engagement, motivation and innovation, low morale, low productivity, and poor performance.

Corporate catabolism can cause organizations to be in constant reactive mode, consistently pulling on its most available, strongest people to counteract challenges, draining its most valuable resources. Prolonged corporate catabolism will result in decreased profitability and an inability to attract high quality workers.

In organizations suffering from the impacts of corporate catabolism, characteristic behaviours are exhibited. The 'victim' profile is illustrated by low self-confidence, apathy, lack of commitment, low energy and productivity and avoidance of decisionmaking. The 'aggressive' profile is demonstrated by argumentative, defensive, controlling behaviours, low emotional intelligence, coercion and lack of trust, and often leads to a suppression of creativity.

Organizations that are filled with positive energy are *anabolic*. Anabolism is the process by which the body builds itself up and grows. Anabolic energy is constructive, expanding, rejuvenating and sustainable. Anabolic energy focuses an individual's perception in a manner that solves, resolves, understands and creates.

Anabolic organizations use positive energy to fuel high levels of productivity, employee engagement and innovative thinking, and to reduce stress and anxiety. An anabolic culture turns challenge into opportunity. Challenge and crisis are used to slingshot the organization forward, powerfully bonding its teams together through collaboration, a common sense of purpose and strong collegial support.

Anabolic leaders have high emotional intelligence; they acknowledge and seek to understand different perspectives and they ensure transparency of information throughout the organization. They are calm, inspiring and motivating and easily respond to unforeseen circumstance. Anabolic leaders encourage emotional connections and a



common sense of purpose and values. Strategic, tactical and policy decisions receive real buy-in because everyone's opinion is valued.

Organizations can shift to a more anabolic culture by focusing efforts on three levels: the individual, the social network and the organization as a whole.

Overall change is most sustainable in a corporation when it begins at the individual level. Individual employees are encouraged to realize that they are only victims of circumstances if they grant that power and authority to their circumstances and to others. Events may unfold in an unpredictable manner, but anabolic individuals recognize that they always have a choice as to how they respond. Rather than permitting an automatic reaction to situations, awareness is developed so that intentional choices are made that will bring about the best result. 'Response-ability' and resiliency grow, contributing to the expansion of an anabolic culture.

A company's social network reflects the culture of the organization. Its values, policies and motivations are demonstrated by what employees believe, think, and talk about. Identifying key influencers and using that network to begin a wave of change nurtures anabolic cultures.

At the organizational level, anabolic or positive energy is encouraged when communication is transparent, clear and frequent and when all stakeholders feel invited and encouraged to contribute. Anabolic organizations are adaptable, flexible and nimble and support vulnerability, stimulating creativity and innovation.

The most successful organizations are those that are infused with powerful, positive, anabolic leaders, at all levels. No matter the current experience, transformation into a more thriving, inspiring, positive, productive, and successful organization is always possible.

MacLean Sewell Coaching programs are rooted in the conviction that everyone is a leader. Each person's style of leadership affects their own wellbeing and success and has a powerful influence on those with whom they interact. Energy Leadership and Appreciative Inquiry models are utilized to help our clients shift towards creating networks of anabolic ideal leaders that drive engagement and profitability to new heights.

What type of leader do you choose to be? MacLean Sewell Coaching will customize programs to best suit your needs, optimizing quantifiable results. Visit us at www.macleansewellcoaching.com