



Being the Sandwich Filling:
Leading from the Middle
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Your biggest challenges at work?



- Take a minute to jot down the parts of your role that challenge you the most.
- Why?
- How does the system you work in help/hinder you?
- What do you wish you could do/know that would make your job better as a leader?
- What personal strengths do you already have that you can bring to bear on these challenges?

REALITIES ABOUT LEADERSHIP



- ▶ We conflate leadership with being the boss.
- ▶ We over-attribute power to positional leaders.
- ▶ Teachers crave order but despise authority.
- ▶ Academicians are ambivalent (some would say conflicted) about being in a leadership role.
- ▶ Leading a faculty has much in common with managing a firm of creatives.
- ▶ There is no choice: we all lead and we all follow all the time.



*"And the way you kids kick ass today will speak volumes
about the leaders of tomorrow you will be."*

STUDIES OF LEADERSHIP: CROSS-INDUSTRY, CROSS-CULTURE



What made no difference:

- Intellect
- Charisma
- Strategic Thinking
- Bias for Action

STUDIES OF LEADERSHIP: CROSS-INDUSTRY, CROSS-CULTURE



What made a difference:

Self-Control—Manages impulses in order to have a positive impact on others.

Integrity—Does the right thing even when personally difficult, inconvenient, or unpopular.

Empathy—Can understand the unspoken concerns of others

Teamwork—Collaborates with peers outside one's own organization.

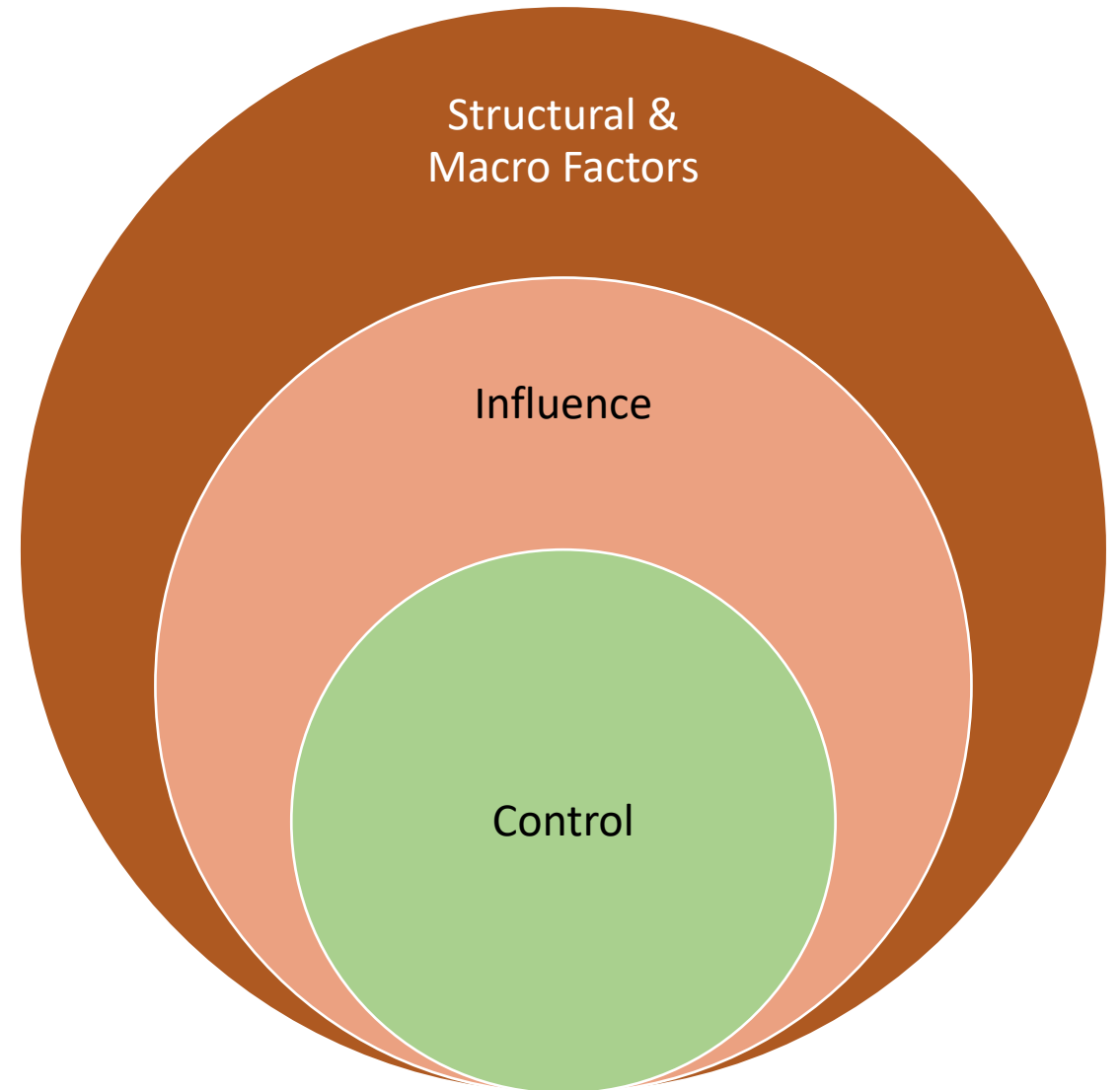
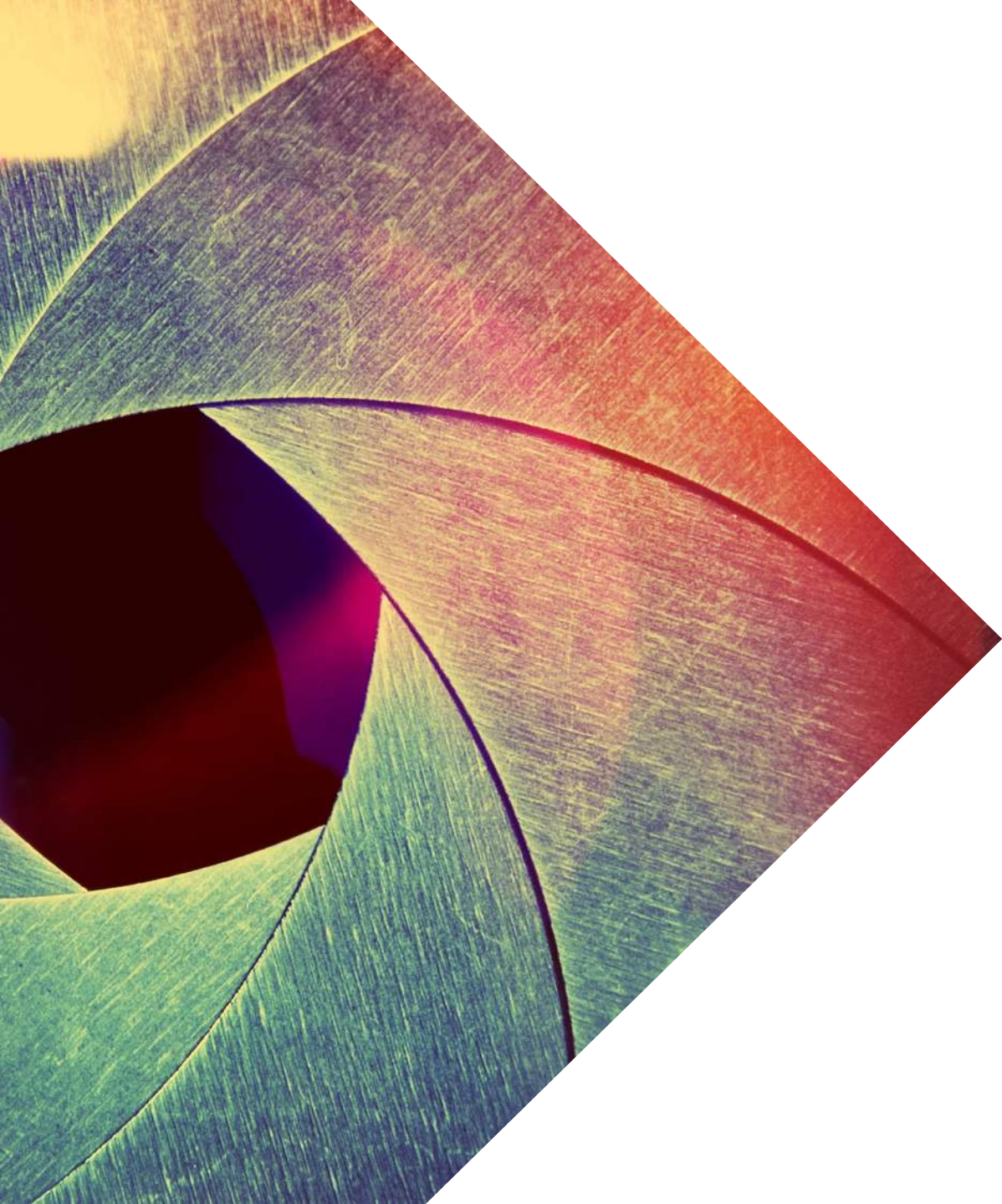
Self-Confidence—“Speaks truth to power.”

Achievement Orientation—Sets challenging and attainable goals, takes entrepreneurial risks.

MYTHS THAT MAKE ACADEMIC LEADERS POWERLESS



- ▶ We are likely going to work together for years. If I am demanding of my colleagues, they may get retribution when they have the opportunity.
- ▶ I am more like a peer among equals. I am not a manager, nor do I have the authority to tell anyone what to do.
- ▶ I have neither carrot nor stick. It is not really possible either to reward or punish my colleagues.
- ▶ Because I am in this role, I need to have answers to everything, or else people will think I am incompetent.
- ▶ As a department chair, I am neither fish nor fowl. Being neither fully a faculty member nor an administrator, my role is not clear to me or anyone else.
- ▶ I am not the head of school; therefore, I can do nothing.
- ▶ I am only in this role because someone must do it; I have never thought of myself as an academic leader.
- ▶ I am not an agent of administration; my role is to advocate for colleagues to senior school leaders.



Over to you again



- Take a few minutes and write down what is in these concentric circles for you.
- What can you really be in control of at work? What actually belongs in the circle of influence even if you have been acting like it was something you could control?
- What can you influence?
- What is in the outer circle, even if you wish it was not?

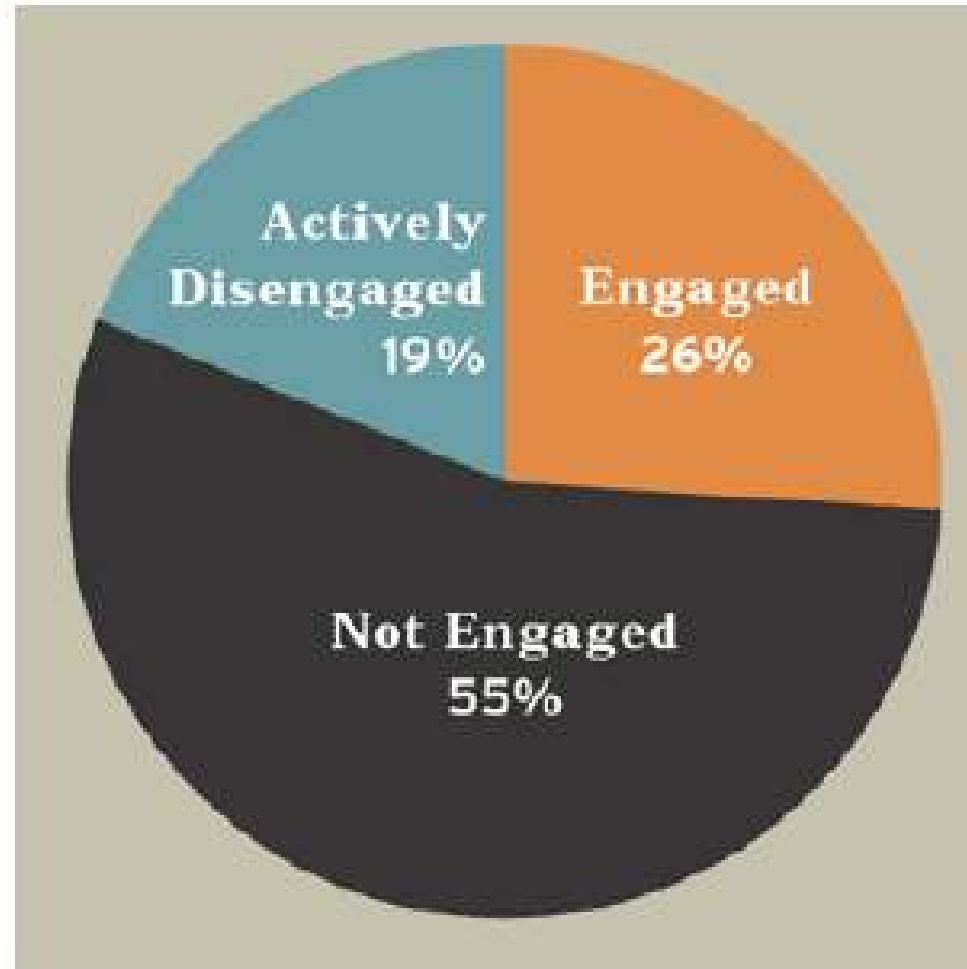
GALLUP'S ENGAGEMENT DATA



How do great leaders inspire top performance in employees? How do they generate enthusiasm, unite disparate personalities to focus on a common mission, and drive teams to achieve ever-higher goals? How do they solve complex, inter-locking problems?

- 30 yrs.
- 17,000,000 employees.
- 8,000 organizations.
- 6 continents.
- 12 variables out of 300+.

Attitudes toward Work ¹



Source: Gallup Organization, 2011



The Clifton Q12^[1]

- Do you know what is expected of you at work?
- Do you have the materials and equipment you need to do your work right?
- At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
- In the last seven days, have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?
- Does your supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about you as a person?
- Is there someone at work who encourages your development?
- At work, do your opinions seem to count?
- Does the mission/purpose of your company make you feel your job is important?
- Are your associates (fellow employees) committed to doing quality work?
- Do you have a best friend at work?
- In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?
- In the last year, have you had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

^[1] These 12 factors by Donald O. Clifton have been shown in Gallup research to be key drivers of employee engagement across industry.

Post-Pandemic: Q12 + 4



13. At work, I am treated with respect.

14. My organization cares about my overall wellbeing.

15. I have received meaningful feedback in the last week.

16. My organization always delivers on the promise we make to customers.

THE KEY ITEMS



At work, do I have the chance to do what I do best every day? (Does this job play to me strengths? Do you get me?)

- **KNOW ME**

Do I know what is expected of me at work? (What do I need to do to be successful here? How will I be measured?)

- **FOCUS ME**

Are my co-workers committed to quality work? (What is excellence around here? What does winning look like in our university or school?)

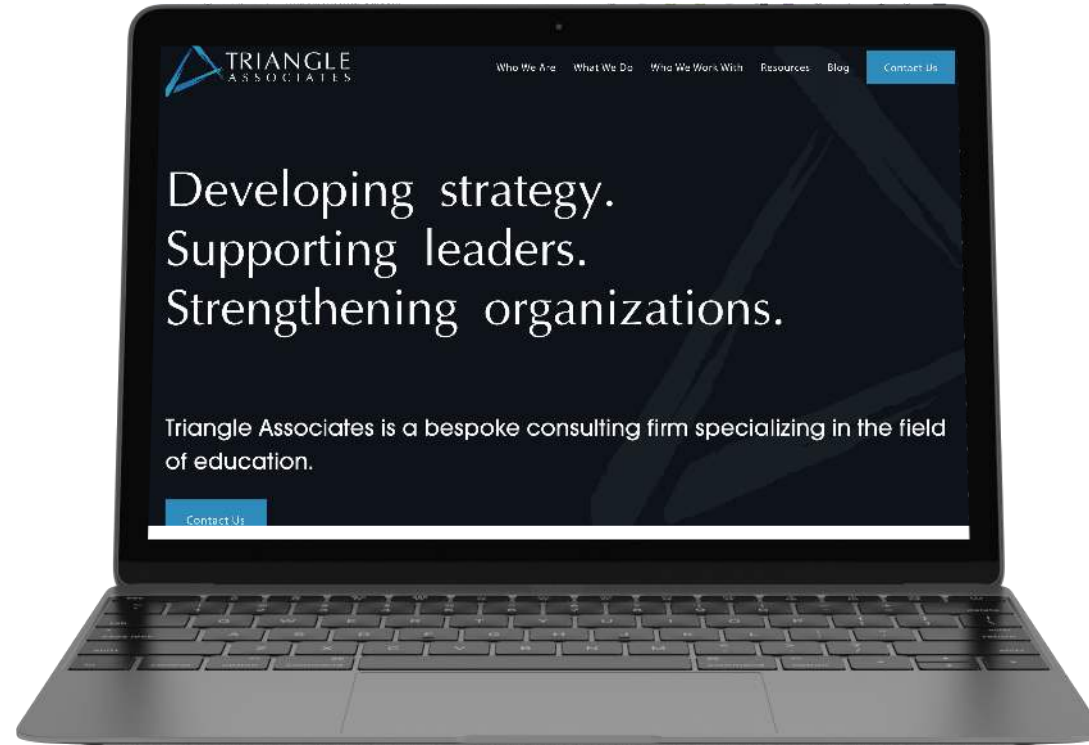
- **SURROUND ME WITH LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE**

Back to you



- How can you use your influence and the Gallup engagement findings to strengthen your leadership?
- Now, asking again, what strengths do you already bring to bear on these challenges?
- What would help you to remember these strengths and the realities of limitations when you are in the middle of an issue?

TRIANGLE ASSOCIATES



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