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Researchers and authors David Rooke and William R. Tolbert tackled in a very concise way the '*seven ways of leading*' that make the most sense for high performing organizations (Harvard Business Review, April 2005). The seven approaches that they identified are: Opportunist, Diplomat, Expert, Achiever, Individualist, Strategist and Alchemist. Definitions for these labels are those to be expected, ranging from the action terms of *winning* to *avoiding, ruling, meeting (goals), interweaving, generating and transforming*.

As we work with public, private and not for profit organizations helping them to define and translate their expectations regarding leadership at all levels, the most poignant observation that appears to us as a trend is that employees at all levels mix their own ego needs of 'wanting to always win' with that of a self - identified goal of 'transforming' the organization. The sense that an employee's personal needs to win, no matter the consequences, are often mixed up as if this extreme behavioral push really represents 'making the organization better'. The key to sorting out this type of dilemma is to return to the mission of the organization frequently to not only establish/re-establish the foundation for the organization's existence (undoubtedly it does not say 'we will win and trample everyone while doing it'), but more importantly to encourage conversations about 'how' internal and external relationships will be sustained while daily project goals are being met. The finesse of building and sustaining relationships is not taught in most academic programs, nor is it used routinely in strategy building sessions where negotiating a financial or resource achievement is central to the conversation.

The best sustained relationships are those where conflict is viewed as not only healthy, but also as necessary. By necessary, the use of conflict as a tool to raise the toughest issues is both respected by all parties and valued as a means for long term growth that is of benefit to everyone throughout the entire organization. Sustainability for healthy organizations means that leadership is fully transparent (even when not legally required to practice in this manner) and welcomes conflict, questions as well as cooperative and respectful solutions. Is your organization challenged with individual efforts to use only ego needs to lead? Consider how you source your leaders? Are you confirming their attitudes toward change, their historical needs for ego gratification and using behavioral interviewing techniques and assessments to confirm 'who' you are hiring before you make that offer? If not, the efforts to involuntarily exit leaders at all levels can be very costly.