



Leadership Concept Series

Excerpted from the book:

It Comes Down to This

Leadership, Management, and Getting from Here to There

By Chris Kaufman

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The Perfect can be the Enemy of the Good

Sometimes good enough is good enough

Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien.

(The best is the enemy of the good)

- Voltaire / 1764

Simplicity and the number one killer of children – A Story

Dehydration is the biggest single killer of children in the modern world. According to UNICEF and WHO, diarrhea in its various forms, from amebic dysentery to Cholera, kills 1.5 million kids a year and impacts the development of millions more. If you take the total of childhood deaths caused by AIDS, Measles, and Malaria, it is still less than those caused by diarrhea. Diarrhea is the most vicious killer of our time.

Yet, diarrhea is a symptom. When caused by an external trigger, diarrhea is a defense mechanism. Your body is attempting to get rid of the thing that is causing distress. The mechanism by which diarrhea-inducing diseases cause death is your body's reaction to it rather than a toxin or a cellular invasion as with many bacterial or viral infections. Your gut feverishly extracts liquid from your body and uses it to flush out your intestinal tract. You have watery and often violent bowel movements. In the process, the water in your system is depleted and your vital salts and electrolytes are expelled. You become dehydrated. Very rapidly, your body is unable to function due to the lack of liquid and out-of-balance electrolytes. You can die. Every year 3.5 million people travel down this path and do not recover.

How should we deal with this? As you might expect, there are many ways of attacking the problem including:

- Improved clean water supplies
- Clean, well cooked food
- Adequate sewer systems

All of the above go to root causes and systemic solutions. They are undoubtedly the best ways to eliminate chronic and repeated diarrhea outbreaks. They are also expensive, take time,

and must be implemented within tricky political frameworks. Fortunately there is also a simple and relatively easy stop-gap made of water, sugar, and salt.

The Miracle of ORS

Cholera and most diarrheas are relatively easy to treat. Your body can handle most antigens which cause diarrhea if your defenses do not kill you in the process. You simply need to help it out by replacing the liquids and salts being flushed away. You do this by making and drinking Oral Rehydration Solutions (ORS). Here is the recipe:

1. Find the cleanest water you can. If it is really murky, filter it through a piece of cloth. If it is clean drinking water (bottled), skip the next step.
2. Boil the water for at least three minutes, then cool
3. In five cups of water dissolve:
 - a. 6 teaspoons of sugar
 - b. ½ teaspoon of salt
4. Get it into the patient:
 - a. Adults and large children: 3 quarts a day
 - b. Children under age of two: ¼ - ½ cup per feeding
5. Keep up until the diarrhea stops

Simple Works

Find out where the problem lies and fix it. It is a lesson we all would do well to take to heart. A couple of comments from guys who know what they are talking about:

"The discovery of oral rehydration therapy is as important as the discovery of penicillin."

*Professor Mamdouh Gabr
Cairo University, Faculty of Medicine*

"Nearly 90% of mortality from diarrhea is due to fluid loss. Accurate and timely replacement of that loss is lifesaving."

*Dr. Norbert Hirschlorn
Nutrition Reviews Volume 40, page 87, 1982*

Good Enough. . .

What does that mean?

It's simple: Do not let your desire for perfection or even finding a really good solution keep you from getting the job done. It does not mean you should intentionally create shoddy products or let quality slip and impact your customers negatively. It does not mean you should be lazy or slide by at the lowest level of acceptability. It means you understand and are working to the correct outcome.

Repeat that concept: *What is the outcome we are looking for and what is the best way to get there?*

What should we do? You Decide:

- **Global Deaths from Dehydration:** Should I spend my energy building clean water supplies with a multiple-year lead-time? Or should I start by saving hundreds of thousands of lives with sugar and salt water?
- **Snoring and Lack of Sleep:** Should I try to lose enough weight to stop snoring? Or start by using a \$15 dental device to adjust my jaw and prevent 90% of night time snoring.
- **System Implementations:** Should we bring in the new system with the all the new capabilities and all the new layers of risk? Or, should we just get it installed and stabilized without the all the new efficiencies but at least get it up and running safely and securely?

When is it good enough?

You will have to decide when something is good enough and when striving for perfection will actually impair your ability to achieve your desired outcome. Sometimes, excellence is the desired outcome or is your competitive differentiator. In that case, it is not good enough until it is excellent. However, here are some examples of things that were good enough and worked:

- **Microsoft Windows:** It was pretty crummy when it first came out. But it filled a market need and gave Microsoft their incredible foothold in graphical user interface market.
- **Flip Video:** Low image quality, ultra convenient. Market trade-off met by “good enough.”
- **Hulu:** It is blurry and it ties up the computer but I am in control
- **MP3:** Low sound quality but hey, I can get 7,000 songs in my pocket!

That’s the ticket!

“Good Enough” may be exactly what you are looking for. Remember, there is no rule that says you cannot improve on a JGE (Just Good Enough) solution. However, if you are late to the table or never arrive because of your quest for elegance or perfection, success becomes much more difficult.

Remember, you are working for solutions and success, not perfection. If perfection happens to align with the other two, that is great. But it is hard to build on success if you do not have one.

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Chris Kaufman advises organizations on Strategic, Tactical, and Operational planning and execution.
If you have decided to succeed, Chris can help you chart the course.

He is also available to speak on Leadership and Management or facilitate your corporate or industry event.
He brings common sense, commitment to results, and an eye for the absurd to all his engagements.

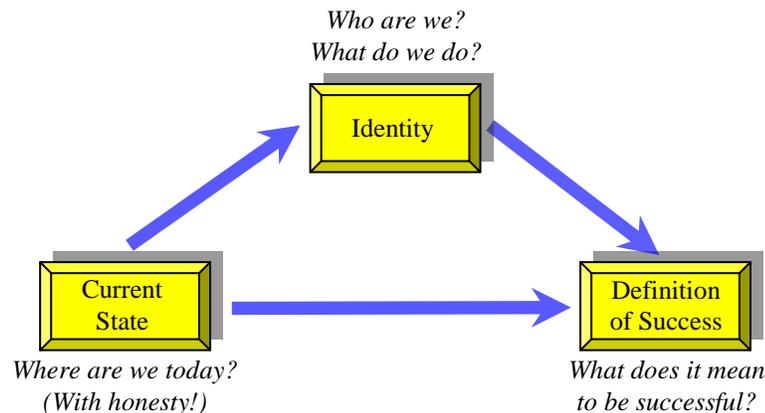
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Agovia

Manage to Success

Success: Decide to do what is necessary // Plan rapidly // Execute effectively

Agovia works with organizations that have decided to succeed rather than just go through the motions. Our strength is common sense advice and management consulting. We are not theorists, we are realists. Everything we do is built to achieve outcomes and results. Our focus is the whole business and the organization. We help organizations take control and manage their road to the future. We begin with achievement of clarity and understanding of the three elements upon which a deliberate path to success can be built:



Once known, everything else is possible. We help our clients rediscover and use the basic tools of management and leadership to craft and control their journey to success. We do it effectively, rapidly, and with a sense of humor.

Success is achievable. Experience says your team has the necessary talent and brains. We get the team around a table and we hammer out who we are, where we are going, and how to get there.

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