

- There is another, equally critical, factor for success in companies: teams that act as communities, integrating interests and putting aside differences to be individually and collectively obsessed with what's good for the company.

- But teams of people who subordinate individual performance to that of the group will generally outperform teams that don't. The trick, then, is to corral any such "team of rivals" into a community and get them aligned in marching toward a common goal. A 2013 paper presents a set of "design principles" for doing this, such as developing strong mechanisms for making decisions and resolving conflicts.

- you need a coach, someone who works not only with individuals but also with the team as a whole to smooth out the constant tension, continuously nurture the community, and make sure it is aligned around a common vision and set of goals.

- A 2014 study finds that it is the most insecure managers who are threatened by suggestions from others (in other words, coaching). So, conversely, publicly accepting a coach can actually be a sign of confidence.¹³ And a 2010 article notes that "group coaching" is effective but generally underused as a way to improve team or group performance (which the authors call "goal-focused change").¹⁴

- Your Title Makes You a Manager. Your People Make You a Leader.

- So when we met Bill in our weekly coaching sessions, what we discussed first and foremost was management: operations and tactics. Bill rarely weighed in on strategic issues, and if he did, it was usually to make sure that there was a strong operating plan to accompany the strategy. What were the current crises? How quickly were we going to manage our way out of them? How was hiring going? How were we developing our teams? How were our staff meetings going? Were we getting input from everyone? What was being said, what wasn't being said? He cared that the company was well run, and that we were improving as managers.

- IT'S THE PEOPLE People are the foundation of any company's success. The primary job of each manager is to help people be more effective in their job and to grow and develop. We have great people who want to do well, are capable of doing great things, and come to work fired up to do them. Great people flourish in an environment that liberates and amplifies that energy. Managers create this environment through support, respect, and trust. Support means giving people the tools, information, training, and coaching they need to succeed. It means continuous effort to develop people's skills. Great managers help people excel and grow. Respect means understanding people's unique career goals and being sensitive to their life choices. It means helping people achieve these career goals in a way that's consistent with the needs of the company. Trust means freeing people to do their jobs and to make decisions. It means knowing people want to do well and believing that they will.

- a 1999 article notes that firms that improve their management practices by one standard deviation above the mean can raise their market value by \$18,000 per employee.⁷ And a Google internal study in 2008 (one that Bill loved) proved that teams with managers who

regularly practiced a set of eight behaviors had lower turnover and higher satisfaction and performance. Topping the list of behaviors: “is a good coach.”

- When Brad Smith took over as CEO of Intuit, Bill told him that he would go to bed every night thinking about those eight thousand souls who work for him. What are they thinking and feeling? How can I make them the best they can be? Ronnie Lott says, when talking about two coaches he worked closely with, Bill Walsh and Bill Campbell: “Great coaches lie awake at night thinking about how to make you better. They relish creating an environment where you get more out of yourself. Coaches are like great artists getting the stroke exactly right on a painting. They are painting relationships. Most people don’t spend a lot of time thinking about how they are going to make someone else better. But that’s what coaches do. It’s what Bill Campbell did, he just did it on a different field.”

- IT’S THE PEOPLE THE TOP PRIORITY OF ANY MANAGER IS THE WELL-BEING AND SUCCESS OF HER PEOPLE.

- Bill and Eric understood that there’s a direct correlation between fun work environments and higher performance, with conversation about family and fun (what academics might call “socioemotional communication”) being an easy way to achieve the former.

- Marissa Mayer developed a variation of the trip report practice when she was CEO of Yahoo. Rather than trip reports, her staff meetings started with thank-yous. “My staff called it the family prayer. You have to thank another team for something that happened last week. You can’t thank yourself, and you can’t repeat what someone else said. This ends up being a nice way to recap the entire week.”

- Bill had us pay close attention to running meetings well; “get the 1:1 right” and “get the staff meeting right” are tops on the list of his most important management principles. He felt that these meetings are the most important tools available to executives in running the company, and that each one should be approached thoughtfully.

- Research confirms that team meetings are a terrific opportunity to engage people, with one 2013 study concluding that the relevance of the meeting, giving everyone a voice, and managing the clock well are key factors to achieving that engagement.¹⁰ This doesn’t always happen; another study, from 2015, notes that more than 50 percent of study participants do not think that their meetings are an effective use of their time. This study covered all meetings, not just staff meetings, but still, it demonstrates that being thoughtful about preparing for staff meetings is an important management practice.

- START WITH TRIP REPORTS TO BUILD RAPPORT AND BETTER RELATIONSHIPS AMONG TEAM MEMBERS, START TEAM MEETINGS WITH TRIP REPORTS, OR OTHER TYPES OF MORE PERSONAL, NON-BUSINESS TOPICS.

- While Bill did have his top-five list of things to discuss, he didn’t write them on the whiteboard for all to see. Rather, he would hold them back, like a poker player holding his cards close to the vest. After talking about family and other nonwork stuff, Bill would ask Jonathan what his top five items were. Jonathan came to realize that this approach was Bill’s

way of seeing how Jonathan was prioritizing his time and effort. If Bill led off with his list, Jonathan simply could have agreed with it.

- In teaching his management seminar at Google, Bill advocated that each person should put his or her list on the board—a simultaneous reveal. That way everyone could see where there was overlap and make sure to cover those topics.

- In fact, while his interest in people's lives was quite sincere, it had a powerful benefit: a 2010 study concludes that having these sort of "substantive" conversations, as opposed to truly small talk, makes people happier.

- From the (not so) small talk, Bill moved to performance: What are you working on? How is it going? How could he help? Then, we would always get to peer relationships, which Bill thought were more important than relationships with your manager and other higher-ups.

- "Think that everyone who works for you is like your kids," Bill once said. "Help them course correct, make them better."

- He was mostly old-school about it, preferring face-to-face conversations, or a phone call if that wasn't possible. ("You shouldn't wait four weeks to schedule a meeting," he said. "Just get on the phone.")

- "Bill was one hundred percent substance."

- 5 WORDS ON A WHITEBOARD HAVE A STRUCTURE FOR 1:1s, AND TAKE THE TIME TO PREPARE FOR THEM, AS THEY ARE THE BEST WAY TO HELP PEOPLE BE MORE EFFECTIVE AND TO GROW.

- BILL'S FRAMEWORK FOR 1:1s AND REVIEWS PERFORMANCE ON JOB REQUIREMENTS Could be sales figures Could be product delivery or product milestones Could be customer feedback or product quality Could be budget numbers RELATIONSHIP WITH PEER GROUPS (This is critical for company integration and cohesiveness) Product and Engineering Marketing and Product Sales and Engineering MANAGEMENT/LEADERSHIP Are you guiding/coaching your people? Are you weeding out the bad ones? Are you working hard at hiring? Are you able to get your people to do heroic things? INNOVATION (BEST PRACTICES) Are you constantly moving ahead . . . thinking about how to continually get better? Are you constantly evaluating new technologies, new products, new practices? Do you measure yourself against the best in the industry/world?

- The rule of two not only generates the best solution in most cases, it also promotes collegiality. It empowers the two people who are working on the issue to figure out ways to solve the problem, a fundamental principle of successful mediation.¹³ And it forms a habit of working together to resolve conflict that pays off with better camaraderie and decision making for years afterward.

- To get those ideas on the table, Bill would often sit down with individuals before the meeting to find out what they were thinking. This enabled Bill to understand the different perspectives, but more important, it gave members of his team the chance to come into the room prepared to talk about their point of view. Discussing it with Bill helped gather their thoughts and ideas

before the broader discussion. Maybe they would all be aligned by the time they got there, maybe not, but they had already thought through, and talked through, their own perspective and were ready to present it.

- a 2016 study shows that when it is called a debate rather than a disagreement, participants are more likely to share information. They perceive that other participants are more receptive to dissenting opinions.

- Marissa Mayer admits to having had this problem when she was at Google. Then one day Bill gave her a new rule: when she was discussing a decision with her team, she always had to be the last person to speak. You may know the answer and you may be right, he said, but when you just blurt it out, you have robbed the team of the chance to come together. Getting to the right answer is important, but having the whole team get there is just as important. So Marissa sat, uncharacteristically quiet, while her team debated issues. She didn't like it, but it worked. She gained new respect for her team and their ability to handle problems.

- "A manager's job is to break ties and make their people better," Bill said. "We're going to do it this way. Cut the shit. Done."

- Bruce Chizen, the former CEO of Adobe who worked with Bill at Claris, calls this "making decisions with integrity," which means following a good process and always prioritizing what is the right thing for the business rather than any individual.

- This is consistent with the King Arthur round-table model of decision making that Bill described to Brad Smith when Brad became CEO of Intuit. (As Brad tells us this story, he points out the model of the legendary table, with a full complement of seated knights, that sits in the corner of his office.) If you have the right conversation, Bill counseled, then eight out of ten times people will reach the best conclusion on their own. But the other two times you need to make the hard decision and expect that everyone will rally around it. There isn't a head of that table, but there is a throne behind it.

- THE THRONE BEHIND THE ROUND TABLE THE MANAGER'S JOB IS TO RUN A DECISION-MAKING PROCESS THAT ENSURES ALL PERSPECTIVES GET HEARD AND CONSIDERED, AND, IF NECESSARY, TO BREAK TIES AND MAKE THE DECISION.

- In any situation there are certain immutable truths upon which everyone can agree. These are the "first principles," a popular phrase and concept around Silicon Valley. Every company and every situation has its set of them. You can argue opinions, but you generally can't argue principles, since everyone has already agreed upon them. As Bill would point out, it's the leader's job, when faced with a tough decision, to describe and remind everyone of those first principles.

- LEAD BASED ON FIRST PRINCIPLES DEFINE THE "FIRST PRINCIPLES" FOR THE SITUATION, THE IMMUTABLE TRUTHS THAT ARE THE FOUNDATION FOR THE COMPANY OR PRODUCT, AND HELP GUIDE THE DECISION FROM THOSE PRINCIPLES.

- MANAGE THE ABERRANT GENIUS ABERRANT GENIUSES—HIGH-PERFORMING BUT DIFFICULT TEAM MEMBERS—SHOULD BE TOLERATED AND EVEN PROTECTED, AS LONG AS THEIR

BEHAVIOR ISN'T UNETHICAL OR ABUSIVE AND THEIR VALUE OUTWEIGHS THE TOLL THEIR BEHAVIOR TAKES ON MANAGEMENT, COLLEAGUES, AND TEAMS.

- the money isn't always about the money. For sure, everyone needs to be paid a fair salary that affords them a good lifestyle. For a great many people, the money is about the money. But it's also about something else. Compensation isn't just about the economic value of the money; it's about the emotional value. It's a signaling device for recognition, respect, and status, and it ties people strongly to the goals of the company.

- This is why the superstar athlete who is worth tens or hundreds of millions pushes for that next huge contract. It's not for the money; it's for the love.

- MONEY'S NOT ABOUT MONEY COMPENSATING PEOPLE WELL DEMONSTRATES LOVE AND RESPECT AND TIES THEM STRONGLY TO THE GOALS OF THE COMPANY.

- Bill started his business career as an advertising and marketing guy, then added sales to his portfolio after joining Apple. But through his experiences in the tech world, in his stints at Apple, Intuit, Google, and others, Bill came to appreciate the preeminence of technology and product in the business pecking order.

- if you have the right product for the right market at the right time, go as fast as you can. There are minor things that will go wrong and you have to fix them quickly, but speed is essential.

- Bill told the poor product manager, if you ever tell an engineer at Intuit which features you want, I'm going to throw you out on the street. You tell them what problem the consumer has. You give them context on who the consumer is. Then let them figure out the features. They will provide you with a far better solution than you'll ever get by telling them what to build.

- INNOVATION IS WHERE THE CRAZY PEOPLE HAVE STATURE THE PURPOSE OF A COMPANY IS TO BRING A PRODUCT VISION TO LIFE. ALL THE OTHER COMPONENTS ARE IN SERVICE TO PRODUCT.

- Bill's point of view on this was that letting people go is a failure of management, not one of any of the people who are being let go. So it is important for management to let people leave with their heads held high. Treat them well, with respect. Be generous with severance packages. Send out a note internally celebrating their accomplishments.

- Doing layoffs properly has a positive impact on both the people being laid off and the people who stay on with the company.

- As Bill once told Ben Horowitz about a departing executive: "Ben, you cannot let him keep his job, but you absolutely can let him keep his respect."

- HEADS HELD HIGH IF YOU HAVE TO LET PEOPLE GO, BE GENEROUS, TREAT THEM WELL, AND CELEBRATE THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

- Bill's perspective on boards starts with this observation: the CEO manages the board and board meetings, not the other way around.*23 Board meetings fail when the CEO doesn't own

and follow her agenda. That agenda should always start with operational updates: the board needs to know how the company is doing. That includes financial and sales reports, product status, and metrics around operational rigor (hiring, communications, marketing, support).

- He was also quite clear about what a bad board member looks like: "Someone who just walks in and wants to be the smartest guy in the room and talks too much."

- IT'S THE CEO'S JOB TO MANAGE BOARDS, NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

- Perhaps the most important currency in a relationship—friendship, romantic, familial, or professional—is trust.

- One academic paper defines trust as "the willingness to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations about another's behavior."

- Not surprisingly, when Google conducted a study to determine the factors behind high-performing teams, psychological safety came out at the top of the list.

- Finally and fortunately, in what football fans might call a Hail Mary play, he remembered a quote from Tom Landry, who coached the NFL's Dallas Cowboys for twenty-nine years, a stint that included twenty straight winning seasons and two Super Bowl titles. "A coach is someone who tells you what you don't want to hear, who has you see what you don't want to see, so you can be who you have always known you could be." That's what I want, Jonathan told Bill.

- The traits of coachability Bill sought were honesty and humility, the willingness to persevere and work hard, and a constant openness to learning.

- ONLY COACH THE COACHABLE THE TRAITS THAT MAKE A PERSON COACHABLE INCLUDE HONESTY AND HUMILITY, THE WILLINGNESS TO PERSEVERE AND WORK HARD, AND A CONSTANT OPENNESS TO LEARNING.

- Bill's listening was usually accompanied by a lot of questions, a Socratic approach. A 2016 Harvard Business Review article notes that this approach of asking questions is essential to being a great listener: "People perceive the best listeners to be those who periodically ask questions that promote discovery and insight."

- Often, when people ask for advice, all they are really asking for is approval. "CEOs always feel like they need to know the answer," Ben says. "So when they ask me for advice, I'm always getting a prepared question. I never answer those." Instead, like Bill, he asks more questions, trying to understand the multiple facets of a situation.

- PRACTICE FREE-FORM LISTENING LISTEN TO PEOPLE WITH YOUR FULL AND UNDIVIDED ATTENTION—DON'T THINK AHEAD TO WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO SAY NEXT—AND ASK QUESTIONS TO GET TO THE REAL ISSUE.

- Bill was always 100 percent honest (he told the truth) and candid (he wasn't afraid to offer a harsh opinion).

- "When I'm really annoyed or frustrated with what someone is doing," she says, "I step back and force myself to think about what they are doing well and what their value is. You can

always find something. If we're in public, I'll praise them on that. I'll give constructive feedback as soon as I can, but only when the person is feeling safe. Once they are feeling safe and supported, then I'll say 'by the way' and provide the feedback.

- NO GAP BETWEEN STATEMENTS AND FACT BE RELENTLESSLY HONEST AND CANDID, COUPLE NEGATIVE FEEDBACK WITH CARING, GIVE FEEDBACK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND IF THE FEEDBACK IS NEGATIVE, DELIVER IT PRIVATELY.

- You want to be supportive and demanding, holding high standards and expectations but giving the encouragement necessary to reach them. Basically, it's tough love. Disagreeable givers are gruff and tough on the surface, but underneath they have others' best interests at heart. They give the critical feedback no one wants to hear but everyone needs to hear."

- DON'T STICK IT IN THEIR EAR DON'T TELL PEOPLE WHAT TO DO; OFFER STORIES AND HELP GUIDE THEM TO THE BEST DECISIONS FOR THEM.

- Bill's perspective was that it's a manager's job to push the team to be more courageous. Courage is hard. People are naturally afraid of taking risks for fear of failure. It's the manager's job to push them past their reticence. Shona Brown, a longtime Google executive, calls it being an "evangelist for courage."

- BE THE EVANGELIST FOR COURAGE BELIEVE IN PEOPLE MORE THAN THEY BELIEVE IN THEMSELVES, AND PUSH THEM TO BE MORE COURAGEOUS.

- FULL IDENTITY FRONT AND CENTER PEOPLE ARE MOST EFFECTIVE WHEN THEY CAN BE COMPLETELY THEMSELVES AND BRING THEIR FULL IDENTITY TO WORK.

- He started by building trust, which only deepened over time. He was highly selective in choosing his coachees; he would only coach the coachable, the humble, hungry lifelong learners. He listened intently, without distraction. He usually didn't tell you what to do; rather, he shared stories and let you draw conclusions. He gave, and demanded, complete candor. And he was an evangelist for courage, by showing inordinate confidence and setting aspirations high.

- Perhaps Charles Darwin said it best in his book *The Descent of Man*: "A tribe including many members who, from possessing in a high degree the spirit of patriotism, fidelity, obedience, courage, and sympathy, were always ready to aid one another, and to sacrifice themselves for the common good, would be victorious over most other tribes; and this would be natural selection."

- always to work the team, not the problem. In other words, he focused on the team's dynamics, not on trying to solve the team's particular challenges. That was their job. His job was team building, assessing people's talents, and finding the doers. He ran toward the biggest problems, the stinkers that fester and cause tension. He focused on winning but winning right, and he doubled down on his core values when things turned south. And he brought resolution by filling the gaps between people, listening, observing, and then seeking people out in behind-the-scenes conversations that brought teams together.

- "When I became CEO of Google," Sundar Pichai says, "Bill advised me that at that level, more than ever before, you need to bet on people. Choose your team. Think much harder about that."

- WORK THE TEAM, THEN THE PROBLEM WHEN FACED WITH A PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY, THE FIRST STEP IS TO ENSURE THE RIGHT TEAM IS IN PLACE AND WORKING ON IT.

- Bill called this the ability to make "far analogies." The person has to work hard, and has to have high integrity. Finally, the person should have that hard-to-define characteristic: grit.

- When he interviewed job candidates to assess these points, he wouldn't just ask about what a person did, he would ask how they did it.

- Sundar notes that "sometimes decisions come up and people have to give up things. I overindex on those signals when people give something up.* And also when someone is excited because something else is working well in the company. It isn't related to them, but they are excited. I watch for that.

- "I learned an incredibly important lesson," she says. "It's not what you used to do, it's not what you think, it's what you do every day."

- Carol Dweck points out in her 2006 book, *Mindset*, someone's true potential is unknowable, since "it's impossible to foresee what can be accomplished with years of passion, toil, and training."

- PICK THE RIGHT PLAYERS THE TOP CHARACTERISTICS TO LOOK FOR ARE SMARTS AND HEARTS: THE ABILITY TO LEARN FAST, A WILLINGNESS TO WORK HARD, INTEGRITY, GRIT, EMPATHY, AND A TEAM-FIRST ATTITUDE.

- PAIR PEOPLE PEER RELATIONSHIPS ARE CRITICAL AND OFTEN OVERLOOKED, SO SEEK OPPORTUNITIES TO PAIR PEOPLE UP ON PROJECTS OR DECISIONS.

- This can be a problem: a 2017 Harvard Business Review article notes that sometimes members of minority groups hesitate to bring other members of that group into their organizations because they don't want to be perceived as giving special treatment, and they worry that the people they bring in might not "make the grade."

- GET TO THE TABLE WINNING DEPENDS ON HAVING THE BEST TEAM, AND THE BEST TEAMS HAVE MORE WOMEN.

- Bill's approach, Shona says, was always to tackle the hardest problem first. "You have to address that first." A litmus test for when issues have simmered for too long, a way to spot the elephant, is if the team can't even have honest conversations about them. This is where the coach comes in, as a "tension spotter."

- SOLVE THE BIGGEST PROBLEM IDENTIFY THE BIGGEST PROBLEM, THE "ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM," BRING IT FRONT AND CENTER, AND TACKLE IT FIRST.

- Psychologists would call this approach "problem-focused coping," in contrast to "emotion-focused coping." The latter may be more appropriate when facing a problem that can't be

solved, but in a business context focusing on and venting emotions needs to happen quickly, so more energy is directed to solutions.

- we are always taught the value of “positive coaching,” of leading with praise and then following with constructive feedback. But when we get back to work, we forget all that and rip into people.

- DON'T LET THE BITCH SESSIONS LAST AIR ALL THE NEGATIVE ISSUES, BUT DON'T DWELL ON THEM. MOVE ON AS FAST AS POSSIBLE.

- WINNING RIGHT STRIVE TO WIN, BUT ALWAYS WIN RIGHT, WITH COMMITMENT, TEAMWORK, AND INTEGRITY.

- LEADERS LEAD WHEN THINGS ARE GOING BAD, TEAMS ARE LOOKING FOR EVEN MORE LOYALTY, COMMITMENT, AND DECISIVENESS FROM THEIR LEADERS.

- This is one example of the power of observation at work; listening, looking for patterns, assessing strengths and weaknesses.

- Listen, he told her, we decided not to make that change to that particular thing this time. I'm sorry and I know it's tough, but you're going to have to suck it up. Deal with the problem, okay?

- FILL THE GAPS BETWEEN PEOPLE LISTEN, OBSERVE, AND FILL THE COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING GAPS BETWEEN PEOPLE.

- PERMISSION TO BE EMPATHETIC LEADING TEAMS BECOMES A LOT MORE JOYFUL, AND THE TEAMS MORE EFFECTIVE, WHEN YOU KNOW AND CARE ABOUT THE PEOPLE.

- Academic studies point out that there is a “compensation effect” between warmth and competence: people tend to assume that people who are warm are incompetent and those who are cold, competent.

- You're as dumb as a post.”

- You'd fuck up a free lunch.” 3. “You're so fucked up you make me look good.”

- That's the sound of your head coming out of your ass.”

- THE LOVELY RESET TO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE YOU HAVE TO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE: ASK ABOUT THEIR LIVES OUTSIDE OF WORK, UNDERSTAND THEIR FAMILIES, AND WHEN THINGS GET ROUGH, SHOW UP.

- ALWAYS BUILD COMMUNITIES BUILD COMMUNITIES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF WORK. A PLACE IS MUCH STRONGER WHEN PEOPLE ARE CONNECTED.

- Bill believed in doing favors for people.

- Adam Grant, crediting businessman Adam Rifkin in his book Give and Take, calls “five-minute favors.” They are easy for the person doing the favor, requiring minimal personal cost, but mean a lot to the recipient.

- “being an effective giver isn’t about dropping everything every time for every person. It’s about making sure that the benefits of helping others outweigh the costs to you.”

- HELP PEOPLE BE GENEROUS WITH YOUR TIME, CONNECTIONS, AND OTHER RESOURCES.

- When Dick Costolo took over as CEO of Twitter, Bill counseled him to work well with the company’s founders, Biz Stone, Jack Dorsey, and Evan Williams. Today you are the CEO and they are the founders, Bill said, but someday you will be the ex-CEO and they’ll still be the founders. It’s not you versus them; it’s you and them. You are here to help them.

- LOVE THE FOUNDERS HOLD A SPECIAL REVERENCE FOR—AND PROTECT—THE PEOPLE WITH THE MOST VISION AND PASSION FOR THE COMPANY.

- In fact, it is often the highest-performing people who feel the most alone. They usually have more interdependent relationships but feel more independent and separate from others.

- Bill would have helped Eric figure out the best next steps for him. He would not have told Eric what to do; he would have helped him devise his own plan.

- DON’T WASTE TIME WORRYING ABOUT THE FUTURE. Allow serendipity to play a role. Most of the turning points in life cannot be predicted or controlled.

- the world faces many challenges, and they can only be solved by teams. Those teams need coaches.