

Keller Center Research Report



» September 2019, Volume 12, Issue 3

Out of Office: What Type of Employee is Best Suited for Remote Work?

Sara Jansen Perry, PhD, Cristina Rubino, PhD, and Emily M. Hunter, PhD

If You Want More than Just “Likes,” Attachment is Better than Attitude

Rebecca VanMeter, PhD, Holly A. Syrdal, PhD, Susan Powell Mantel, PhD, Douglas B. Grisaffe, PhD, and Erik T. Nesson, PhD

The Closer the Message, the Better

Yanli Jia, PhD, Yunhui Huang, PhD, Robert S. Wyer Jr., PhD, and Hao Shen, PhD

Watch Your Tone on Social Media

Renato Hübner Barcelos, PhD, Danilo C. Dantas, PhD, and Sylvain Sénécal, PhD

Intellectual Humility

Maria Arauz, MBA Candidate

INSIDER: Leaders Eat Last

Zack Snider, MBA Candidate

INSIDER: Rise and Grind

Jackson Price, MBA Candidate



Baylor University

HANKAMER SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
Keller Center for Research

Keller Center Research Report

Baylor University, Keller Center for Research
Hankamer School of Business
One Bear Place #98007, Waco, TX 76798
www.baylor.edu/kellercenter » Keller_Center@baylor.edu

Keller Center Research Report is a trademark owned by Baylor University.
© Baylor University. All rights reserved.

Editorial Staff

Randy Hacker, MBA
Executive Director

Marjorie Cooper, PhD
Editor

Amanda Rodriguez, MBA
Associate Editor

Table of Contents

Out of Office: What Type of Employee is Best Suited for Remote Work?	1
<i>Sara Jansen Perry, PhD, Cristina Rubino, PhD, and Emily M. Hunter, PhD</i>	
If You Want More than Just “Likes,” Attachment is Better than Attitude	7
<i>Rebecca VanMeter, PhD, Holly A. Syrdal, PhD, Susan Powell Mantel, PhD, Douglas B. Grisaffe, PhD, and Erik T. Nesson, PhD</i>	
The Closer the Message, the Better	12
<i>Yanli Jia, PhD, Yunhui Huang, PhD, Robert S. Wyer Jr., PhD, and Hao Shen, PhD</i>	
Watch Your Tone on Social Media	16
<i>Renato Hübner Barcelos, PhD, Danilo C. Dantas, PhD, and Sylvain Sénécal, PhD</i>	
Intellectual Humility	19
<i>Maria Arauz, MBA Candidate</i>	
INSIDER: Leaders Eat Last	22
<i>Zack Snider, MBA Candidate</i>	
INSIDER: Rise and Grind	26
<i>Jackson Price, MBA Candidate</i>	

Out of Office: What Type of Employee is Best Suited for Remote Work?

Sara Jansen Perry, PhD, Cristina Rubino, PhD, and Emily M. Hunter, PhD

Many U.S. employees believe working from home—or at least away from the office—can bring freedom and stress-free job satisfaction. But our recent research says, “Not so fast.” Our study, published recently in the *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, examines the impact of remote work on employee well-being and offers several strategies to help managers provide remote-work opportunities that are valuable to all types of employees and the company.



Popularity of Remote Work

Remote work (i.e., performing work at a location other than one’s primary office) is one form of flexibility that is highly valued by many employees and often used by organizations to attract high quality applicants (Allen et al. 2012; Humphrey, Nahrgang, & Morgeson 2007; Thompson et al. 2015). In their most recent study, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM 2017) found that 59% of 2,700 firms across industries offer employees the opportunity to work remotely on an ad-hoc basis, up from 54% in 2014. Twenty-three percent of firms offer full-time remote work arrangements, and 35% offer part-time arrangements. This shift suggests that people and organizations find value in remote work, begging the question: how does the extent to which one engages in remote work impact well-being? The conclusion from over a decade of empirical research on the linkage between remote work and well-being is, “it depends” (e.g., Gajendran & Harrison 2007). Because working remotely impacts the physical, social, and psychological context of work, more extensive remote work can be depleting due to the challenges it presents and resources it consumes (e.g., time spent coordinating with others, managing ambiguity, or managing non-work stressors, loss of socio-emotional support), causing increased strain (Sewell & Taskin 2015). Despite the challenges, however, remote work also stimulates employees by offering important benefits, leading to increased motivation, satisfaction, and commitment, and reduced turnover and work-family conflict (Gajendran et al. 2015; Golden 2006a; Rousseau, Ho, & Greenberg 2006).

Demand-Control Model: Autonomy and Strain in Remote Work

We aim to contribute to this line of work by untangling the independent and interactive effects of the extent to which an employee works physically away from the primary office (ranging from none to full-time) and the job autonomy (i.e., discretion, a form of control) available to

employees. Autonomy is a valuable resource across jobs that helps employees avoid strain, and it is particularly critical in remote work (Gajendran & Harrison 2007). Although workers may perceive they have greater autonomy given their flexibility in choosing *where* they work, they may still have limited autonomy regarding *how* they accomplish tasks. The level of autonomy can vary based on job level (e.g., manager versus team member) and across employers, as some employers provide more specific and detailed task requirements, performance standards, and electronic monitoring processes when employees work remotely compared to on-site workers (Ambrose & Adler 2000).

Strain, a diminished state of well-being, is the outcome of interest in this study, and we examine three forms: exhaustion, disengagement, and dissatisfaction. Because remote work can be challenging in addition to its benefits, we position remote work as a possible job demand leading to strain, if not used in the proper way. The Demand-Control (D-C) model proposes that job demands and control (i.e., autonomy) interact to predict strain, wherein individuals who experience high demands with little personal control will experience the most negative health consequences (Karasek 1979).

Demand-Control-Person Model: Emotional Stability as Moderator

Emotional stability captures how even-keeled someone is or, on the opposite end, how malleable their emotions are. If something stressful happens at work, a person who is high on emotional stability would take it in stride, remain positive, and figure out how to address it. A person low on emotional stability might get frustrated and discouraged, expending energy with those emotions instead of on the issue at hand. We expect that individuals with lower levels of emotional stability will experience higher levels of strain as the extent of remote work increases, regardless of their level of job autonomy, because they are either unaware of the existence or utility of this resource, or they perceive it as an additional threat, burden of responsibility, or need for accountability (Rubino et al. 2012). In contrast, individuals with high levels of emotional stability can capitalize on the benefits of job autonomy as a resource, which may become more important as the extent of remote work increases (Kammeyer-Mueller et al. 2016).

Need Satisfaction as Mediator

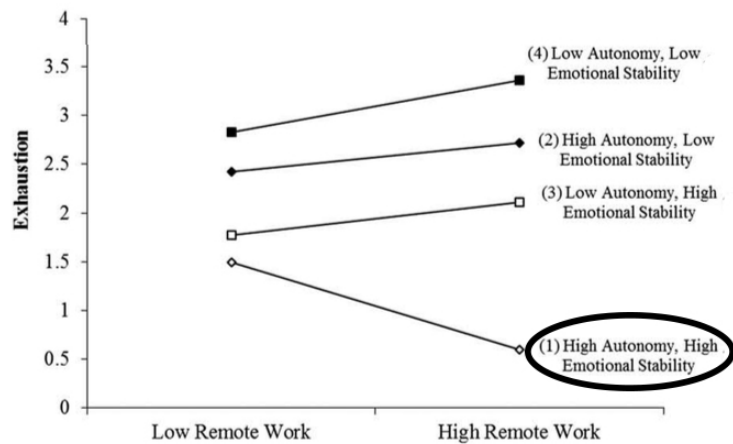
One reason these factors are important in predicting strain is because they impact the degree to which basic needs for autonomy, relatedness, and competence are met, as predicted by Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan 2000). First, the innate need for autonomy is not necessarily satisfied when employees work remotely; we directly test the link as we examine joint effects of the extent of remote work and emotional stability. Second, relatedness need satisfaction is relevant because isolation is the most common concern when employees work remotely (Belle, Burley, & Long 2015; Thatcher & Zhu 2006). Finally, competence need satisfaction refers to how effective persons feel in interacting with their environment and in applying their own abilities toward achieving goals (Chiniara & Bentein 2016). Employees who

work remotely do not receive as much feedback, coaching, or encouragement from others, have less visibility among coworkers, and cannot as easily compare their own abilities with their peers (Sewell & Taskin 2015). Thus, we posit that extent of remote work is negatively associated with all three types of need satisfaction among all combinations of autonomy and emotional stability, except when autonomy and emotional stability are both high.

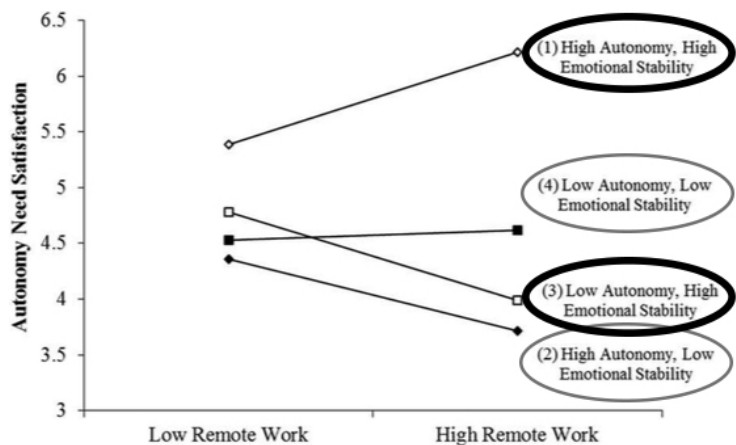
Findings

We studied a total of 403 working adults in two separate studies. We measured each employee’s autonomy, strain, and emotional stability. In short, our research has two key findings:

- Autonomy is critical to protecting remote employees’ well-being and helping them avoid all three forms of strain, but emotional stability is also a requirement for autonomy to have optimal effect in reducing strain in remote work (see figure to right as exemplar). This effect is partly explained by autonomy, relatedness, and competence need satisfaction. *Overall, employees reporting high levels of autonomy and emotional stability appear to be the most able to thrive in remote-work positions, by having these needs met and experiencing better well-being.*



- Employees with lower levels of emotional stability actually have lower need for autonomy (see figure to right). As the black circles indicate, employees with high emotional stability best meet their need for autonomy when they both work remotely and have high autonomy. Following a completely different pattern, as indicated by the gray circles, employees with lower emotional stability and lower autonomy also meet their need for autonomy moderately well, regardless of the extent to which they work remotely. In contrast, these less emotionally stable employees with high autonomy experience more detrimental effects as they work remotely more often.



What it Means

Interestingly, this work contradicts past research that says autonomy is a universal need that everyone possesses, suggesting that employees who are lower in emotional stability may not need or want as much autonomy in their work. This lower need for autonomy may explain why less emotionally stable employees don't do as well when working remotely, even when they have autonomy.

We offer several recommendations for managers who design or oversee remote-work arrangements, particularly those in the real estate industry, which features a high degree of remote work and autonomy among agents, but less among office staff. Most importantly, we first suggest managers look at employee behaviors when deciding who should work remotely; if someone does not handle stress well in the office, they are not likely to handle it well when working remotely either.

However, if less emotionally stable individuals must work remotely, managers should take care to provide more resources, other than autonomy, including support to help foster strong relationships with coworkers and managers. Managers should also consider providing proper training and equipment for remote work, including proper separation of work and family spaces, clear procedural and performance expectations, and regular contact (virtual or face-to-face) with coworkers and managers.

Recommended Reading

Perry, Sara Jansen, Cristina Rubino, and Emily M. Hunter (2018), "Stress in Remote Work: Two Studies Testing the Demand-Control-Person Model," *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 27(5), 577–593. [doi: 10.1080/1359432X.2018.1487402](https://doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2018.1487402)

References

Allen, Tammy D., Ryan C. Johnson, Kaitlin M. Kiburz, and Kristen M. Shockley (2012), "Work-Family Conflict and Flexible Work Arrangements: Deconstructing Flexibility," *Personnel Psychology*, 66, 345–376.

Ambrose, Maureen L. and G. Stoney Adler (2000), "Designing, Implementing, and Utilizing Computerized Performance Monitoring: Enhancing Organizational Justice," *Research in Personnel and Human Resource Management*, 18, 187–219.

Belle, Stuart M., D. L. Burley, and S. D. Long (2015), "Where Do I Belong? High-Intensity Teleworkers' Experience of Organizational Belonging," *Human Resource Development International*, 18, 76–96.

Chiniara, Myriam and Kathleen Bentein (2016), “Linking Servant Leadership to Individual Performance: Differentiating the Mediating Role of Autonomy, Competence and Relatedness Need Satisfaction,” *Leadership Quarterly*, 27, 124–141.

Deci, Edward L. and Richard M. Ryan (2000), “The “What” and “Why” of Goal Pursuits: Human Needs and the Self-Determination of Behavior,” *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 227–268.

Gajendran, Ravi S., David A. Harrison, and Kelly Delaney-Klinger (2015), “Are Telecommuters Remotely Good Citizens? Unpacking Telecommuting’s Effects on Performance via I-Deals and Job Resources,” *Personnel Psychology*, 68, 353–393.

Gajendran, Ravi S. and David A. Harrison (2007), “The Good, the Bad, and the Unknown About Telecommuting: Meta-Analysis of Psychological Mediators and Individual Consequences,” *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92, 1524–1541.

Golden, Timothy D. (2006a), “Avoiding Depletion in Virtual Work: Telework and the Intervening Impact of Work Exhaustion on Commitment and Turnover Intentions,” *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 69, 176–187.

Humphrey, Stephen E., Jennifer D. Nahrgang, and Frederick P. Morgeson (2007), “Integrating Motivational, Social, and Contextual Work Design Features: A Meta-Analytic Summary and Theoretical Extension of the Work Design Literature,” *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92, 1332–1356.

Kammeyer-Mueller, John D., Lauren S. Simon, and Timothy A. Judge (2016), “A Head Start or a Step Behind? Understanding how Dispositional and Motivational Resources Influence Emotional Exhaustion,” *Journal of Management*, 42, 561–581.

Karasek, Robert A. (1979), “Job Demands, Job Decision Latitude, and Mental Strain: Implications for Job Redesign,” *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24, 285–308.

Rousseau, Denise M., Violet T. Ho, and Jerald Greenberg (2006), “I-Deals: Idiosyncratic Terms in Employment Relationships,” *Academy of Management Review*, 31, 977–994.

Rubino, Cristina, Sara Jansen Perry, Alex C. Milam, Christiane Spitzmüller, and Dieter Zapf (2012), “Demand–Control–Person: Integrating the Demand–Control and Conservation of Resources Models to Test an Expanded Stressor–Strain Model,” *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 17, 456–472.

Sewell, Graham and Laurent Taskin (2015), “Out of Sight, Out of Mind in a New World of Work? Autonomy, Control, and Spatiotemporal Scaling in Telework,” *Organization Studies*, 36, 1507–1529.

Society for Human Resource Management (2017), *SHRM Customized Employee Benefits Prevalence Benchmarking Report*, Alexandria, VA.

<https://www.shrm.org/ResourcesAndTools/business-solutions/Documents/Benefits-Prevalence-Report-All-Industries-All-FTEs.pdf>

Thatcher, Sherry M. B. and Xiumei Zhu (2006), “Changing Identities in a Changing Workplace: Identification, Identity Enactment, Self-Verification, and Telecommuting,” *Academy of Management Review*, 31, 1076–1088.

Thompson, Rebecca J., Stephanie C. Payne, and Aaron B. Taylor (2015), “Applicant Attraction to Flexible Work Arrangements: Separating the Influence of Flextime and Flexplace,” *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology*, 88, 726–749.

About the Authors

Sara Jansen Perry, PhD

Assistant Professor of Management, Baylor University

Dr. Sara Jansen Perry (PhD – University of Houston) teaches courses in HR Staffing and Negotiation & Conflict Resolution and conducts research on stress at work and leadership influences, including in remote work arrangements. In 2017, she won the Outstanding Scholarship Award for research productivity among tenure-track faculty at Baylor University and the Young Scholar Award in the Hankamer School of Business. She has published in several high visibility journals, including *Journal of Applied Psychology* and *Journal of Management*, in addition to a book published by Oxford University Press entitled *Organized Innovation: A Blueprint for Renewing America’s Prosperity*. She also serves on the editorial board for *Human Resource Management Review* and as a reviewer for *Journal of Management* and *Journal of Applied Psychology*, among others. She is a member of Academy of Management, Southern Management Association, and Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychologists.

Cristina Rubino, PhD

Associate Professor of Management, California State University-Northridge

Dr. Cristina Rubino (PhD – University of Houston) teaches human resources and organizational behavior to undergraduates and organizational behavior to MBA students. Her major research interests include employee health and well-being and diversity. She has published academic articles in journals such as *Personnel Psychology* and *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, among others.

Emily M. Hunter, PhD

Associate Professor of Management, Baylor University

Dr. Emily Hunter (PhD – University of Houston) teaches negotiation and conflict resolution to undergraduates and organizational behavior to MBA students. She also conducts research on work-family conflict, employee deviance, and servant leadership, which has been published in the *Journal of Management* and the *Journal of Applied Psychology*, among others.

If You Want More than Just “Likes,” Attachment is Better than Attitude

Rebecca VanMeter, PhD, Holly A. Syrdal, PhD, Susan Powell Mantel, PhD, Douglas B. Grisaffe, PhD, and Erik T. Nesson, PhD

In recent years, there has been a lot of discussion about social media’s potential to help drive desired business outcomes. Businesses that rely heavily on word-of-mouth referrals, like real estate (Riggs 2016), can benefit substantially from supportive social media posts because of social media’s multiplied reach and frequency. For example, a single positive recommendation



can result in repeated exposures with hundreds of friends and followers on Twitter and Facebook (VanMeter et al. 2018). The rise of this technological networking power has been recent and rapid. Only about a decade after Facebook became available to the general public, nearly one third of the world’s population had some form of active social media account (Kemp 2015).

However, for marketers juggling multiple media channels, insight is still lacking about how they should use social media to help achieve results. Which content should be directed at which people with what frequency? Which consumer behaviors on social media will truly impact business performance?

Our research was aimed at providing answers to some of those questions. We wanted to understand behavioral differences in people who feel generally positive about social media but are not necessarily bound to it in any strong emotional way, compared to people who are emotionally attached to it, feeling a deep personal resonance with social media.

Attachment to Social Media

Developmental psychologists have long described implications of deep bonds vs. the lack thereof, particularly regarding attachments between mothers and infants (e.g., Bowlby 1980). Different levels of attachment play out with different responses and behaviors. Those more deeply bonded have a sense of security and comfort while in connection, and anxiety and distress in separation. In adults, attachments also can form with intangible things like brands, and services (Mende, Bolton, & Bitner 2013; Thomson, MacInnis, & Park 2005). We used attachment as a lens through which to look at people’s social media behaviors. The core idea was

that positive attitudes toward social media might be associated with more “cursory” social media behaviors, whereas people with deeper attachment to social media would display actions more valuable and impactful for organizations.

Study 1: Token vs. Meaningful Social Media Behaviors

In Study 1, we surveyed over 400 people regarding social media actions toward a group of establishments in a restaurant district. We measured both attitude toward social media and attachment to social media and asked respondents to complete a behavioral checklist of social media actions they had taken. Some behaviors were more cursory, such as looking, learning, or liking on social media. Others were more consequential, such as advocating, sharing company posts, or purchasing.

We found that people with positive attitudes toward social media tend to engage in cursory behaviors, such as simply looking at or liking social media content. But, people with deeper emotional bonds to social media were more likely to engage in behaviors like sharing, actively promoting, and purchasing. In line with other consumer research (Kristofferson, White, & Peloza 2014), we labeled the former actions, “token behaviors,” and the latter “meaningful behaviors.” Our study supported the notion that token social media behaviors may be driven by positive attitude, but more meaningful social media behaviors are driven by attachment.

Study 2: Traditional Word-of-Mouth vs. Recommending on Social Media

In Study 2, we asked over 500 respondents to express personal attitudes and attachments to several prominent brands (e.g., Wal-Mart, Coke, AT&T). We also asked how likely they would be to recommend those brands in general (i.e., traditional word-of-mouth), and how likely they would be to use social media to recommend the brands.

We found that recommending a brand, in general, is influenced by both attachment and attitudes toward the brand. However, depth of attachment to social media—not attitude toward social media—influences whether recommendations will be expressed on social media platforms. Our study supported the notion that attachment to social media augments the likelihood of recommendation on social media, but generally positive attitudes toward social media do not. Again, a deep sense of bonding with social media was better than positive attitudes in catalyzing social media behaviors that matter.

Study 3: A Surprising Online Bump for People Generally Less Likely to Recommend

In Study 3, we collected data from a new sample of over 900 respondents. A different analytical approach was applied involving statistical interactions of some of the measures from Study 2. Specifically, we wondered how general recommendation tendencies might be expressed on

social media platforms under conditions of deeper or less deep attachments to social media. We found that people who are likely to recommend offline also did so online, whether they were attached to social media or not. Surprisingly however, people lower in likelihood to recommend in general show an increase in social media recommendation only if they are strongly attached to the medium. Stronger attachment to social media gave traditionally less-vocal people a comfortable platform on which to recommend. Once again, attachment to social media led to more consequential outcomes.

Conclusions

Across three studies, we found that individuals with strong attachment to social media are more likely to engage in actions that matter to marketers. Marketers certainly should continue to think about the *what* in social media marketing—i.e., content. But emphasis also should be placed on *who* receives that content. A segment of individuals deserves special effort and attention—those who find deep security and connection in social media.

In a real estate context, those individuals would be more likely to use social media to recommend specific agencies or brokers, share with their network positive posts about specific properties, and be more willing to give strong online testimonials. Given that real estate is a heavily referral-based business, a logical conclusion is that people strongly attached to social media can open “social” doors that lead to more inquiries in shorter amounts of time, increased showings, increased annual sales, and enhanced efficiencies for agents and brokers.



Recommended Reading

VanMeter, Rebecca, Holly A. Syrdal, Susan Powell-Mantel, Douglas B. Grisaffe, and Erik T. Nesson (2018), “Don't Just “Like” Me, Promote Me: How Attachment and Attitude Influence Brand Related Behaviors on Social Media,” *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 43, 83–97.

References

Bowlby, John (1980), *Attachment and Loss: Sadness and Depression, Vol. 3*, New York: Basic Books.

Kemp, Simon (2015), “Digital, Social & Mobile Worldwide in 2015,” *We Are Social*.
<http://wearesocial.com/uk/special-reports/digital-social-mobile-worldwide-2015>

Kristofferson, Kirk, Katherine White, and John Peloza (2014), “The Nature of Slacktivism: How the Social Observability of an Initial Act of Token Behaviors Affects Subsequent Prosocial Action,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40(6), 1149–66.

Mende, Martin, Ruth N. Bolton, and Mary Jo Bitner (2013), “Decoding Customer–Firm Relationships: How Attachment Styles Help Explain Customers' Preferences for Closeness, Repurchase Intentions, and Changes in Relationship Breadth,” *Journal of Marketing Research*, 50(1), 125–42.

Riggs, Amanda (2016), “How Real Estate Agents Acquire New Business,” *National Association of Realtors, Economists’ Outlook*.

Thomson, Matthew, Deborah J. MacInnis, and C. Whan Park (2005), “The Ties that Bind: Measuring the Strength of Consumers' Emotional Attachments to Brands,” *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 15(1), 77–91.

About the Authors

Rebecca VanMeter, PhD

Assistant Professor of Marketing, Ball State University

Dr. VanMeter (PhD – University of Texas at Arlington) teaches undergraduate marketing research, principles of marketing, and the master's level survey of marketing at Ball State University. Her research focuses on issues related to social media, consumer behavior, servant leadership, ethics, and research methods. She has published papers in the *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Journal of Personal Sales & Sales Management*, *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, *Academy of Marketing Science Review* and various conference proceedings. She is currently serving as the Executive Director for the Society for Marketing Advances (SMA).

Holly A. Syrdal, PhD

Assistant Professor of Marketing, The University of Southern Mississippi

Dr. Syrdal (PhD – University of Texas at Arlington) teaches digital marketing, marketing management, social media marketing, and services marketing at the University of Southern Mississippi. She is a doctoral fellow of the Academy of Marketing Science (2015), the Society for Marketing Advances (2014), and the Marketing Management Association (2013 and 2014). She also has five years of industry experience working for a national service provider and a regional hospital. Her research interests include digital marketing, as well as services and non-profit marketing, ethics, and marketing pedagogy. Her research has been published in various conference proceedings and journals including *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, *Journal of Retailing*, and *Journal for Service Science*.

Susan Powell Mantel, PhD

**Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and Professor of Marketing,
University of Cincinnati**

Susan Powell Mantel (PhD – University of Cincinnati) is the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs at the University of Cincinnati. Prior to joining Cincinnati, she served as Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Marketing at Ball State University and she also spent time on the faculty of Indiana University’s Kelley School of Business and the University of Toledo. Mantel’s research interests include consumer information processing, influences of effect on consumer responses, judgment and inference processes, decision making in a sales setting, and marketing and sales strategy. She has authored articles in these areas which have been published in various business and marketing journals such as *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *Journal of Operations Management*, *Journal of Business Research*, *Psychometric Bulletin and Review*, *Psychology & Marketing*, as well as several book chapters and national conference proceedings.

Douglas B. Grisaffe, PhD

Associate Professor of Marketing, University of Texas at Arlington

Dr. Doug Grisaffe (PhD – Vanderbilt University) is the former Vice President, Chief Research Methodologist for a customer experience measurement consulting firm. He taught as an adjunct faculty member at Vanderbilt University and Southern Methodist University. At the University of Texas at Arlington he teaches a variety of marketing and analytics courses at the undergraduate, masters, doctoral, and executive levels. He won the UT System Regent’s Outstanding Teaching Award, the College of Business Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award, and the College of Business Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award. Doug’s research has been published in a variety of journals including *Journal of Service Research*, *Journal of Advertising Research*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, *Journal of Personal Selling and Sales Management*, *Journal of Business Research*, *Marketing Letters*, *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, *Journal of Marketing Analytics*, and *Human Resource Management Review*.

Erik T. Nesson, PhD

Associate Professor of Economics, Ball State University

Dr. Nesson (PhD – Emory University) joined Ball State University in 2012. His research interests include health economics, law and economics, and labor economics. Dr. Nesson’s current projects include measuring the effects of the effects of public policies on risky behaviors such as smoking, alcohol use, and tobacco use, examining the relationship between education and health, and developing new methods to measure health inequality. His research has been published in the *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, *Health Economics*, the *American Journal of Health Economics*, and *Economics and Human Biology* and has been covered by the *Washington Post* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

The Closer the Message, the Better

*Yanli Jia, PhD, Yunhui Huang, PhD, Robert S. Wyer Jr., PhD,
and Hao Shen, PhD*

Driving down Interstate 35 south from Dallas, Texas, toward Austin, there is no shortage of scenery. The sprawling countryside extends seemingly forever with the horizon and pasture blending together like that of an impressionist painting that would even bring Monet to tears. As the terrain transforms from flat Midwest grassland to rutted hill country, you feel yourself become more drawn to the surrounding countryside.

If you tried to keep track of the number of billboards that you passed on the side of the road, you'd lose track after the first ten miles. The messages on the advertisements range from divorce attorneys to local venues promising sweet revelry. There is also a good chance you will drive past a billboard covered with a PSA or a politician claiming sweet nothings and empty promises. What determines the effectiveness of these ads littered across the interstate? Would your belief in



the candidate's proposals depend on the distance of the billboard from the interstate? We attempted to answer this question by testing our hypothesis that a person's physical proximity to the message would increase vividness of the visual images they form of the message's implications and consequently strengthen their belief that the message is true.

Overview of Experiments

We conducted six experiments to evaluate how physical distance affected consumers' beliefs in an event or product. For example, participants' distance to information about the high probability of surviving an airline crash can influence their belief that there would be survivors of a real-life airplane accident. The experiment was conducted in March of 2014, five days after Malaysian airline (Flight MH370) went missing. No reports had come out whether there had been any survivors of the airplane incident. Participants were then split into two groups: one sitting in the front of the class and one in the back. After the two groups were seated, they were shown an article suggesting a high survival rate of airplane crashes in general on a projector towards the front of the classroom. Participants were then asked to answer a survey asking them about the likelihood of someone surviving the Malaysian airline crash. Results showed that participants were more likely to believe that someone would survive the accident when they were seated in the front row and closest in proximity to the presentation.

The results of the experiments make sense considering the following: When people read a message about an event or a product they are likely to form a visual image of it. The vividness of this image is dependant, in part, to their physical distance from the actual message. We believed that physical distance from a message would impact the level of attention paid to it.

Think about walking down the street and seeing a PSA poster that indicates “smoking will shorten your life.” The closer you are to the poster, the less likely you are to be distracted by something else in the background. Therefore, you are able to devote more brain power to construct a mental image of the message.

Mental Strain

Imagine you are walking down the same street, and, before you reach the PSA, you run into a friend you haven’t seen in years. You chat with the friend before she says she just changed numbers and wants to make sure you have her updated number. Your phone is dead but you have a good memory and tell her that you will be able to remember it. She gives you the 10 digit number and you repeat it to yourself over and over again trying not to forget it before you can get to pen and paper. As you stroll up to the PSA, are you still as likely to notice and process its message while juggling the phone number in your head?

To answer that question, we set up an experiment almost identical to the first with the two groups of participants in the first and last rows in the room facing the front projector. This time, we had half of the class memorize an eight digit number. We then projected a product description of an energy drink that was rich in B-group vitamins and advertised that it would enhance your memory. After viewing the description, participants were then asked to what extent they believed that this energy drink would actually improve their memory. The results showed that when participants were trying to remember the sequence of numbers, the physical distance didn’t have an impact. However, when they weren’t trying to remember the number, the physical distance led the participants in the front row to believe in the effectiveness of the energy drink more than those in the back.

Level of Detail

Another factor we wanted to take into consideration was the level of detail that was included in an advertisement. Researchers have found that when an ad’s message is in greater detail, people are more likely to form a more vivid image (Lee & Qui 2009; Reyes et al. 1980). Therefore, we wanted to see how physical distance combined with a high or low level of detail would affect a participants belief in a message.

We began by setting up our experiment similar to the first two times with two groups in the front and back of the classroom. This time, we had two classrooms for an ad without details and another classroom for an ad with details. Then we projected an ad at the front of the classroom

promoting a new cranberry juice called *Yelling* that would aid in weight loss. The first ad read “A Yelling Cranberry Juice a day keeps the pounds away,” while the second ad went on to read that the product contained “30-50% pure cranberry juice that might improve metabolism and provide essential vitamins to burn fat.” We then had participants answer a survey on how likely they believed the product would work in helping them lose weight. The results led us to believe that the level of detail in the ad and physical distance had a significant impact on each other. The combined effect of close proximity and more detail led participants to believe in the product’s effectiveness more than those in the control group.

Conclusion

These experiments have great implications for marketing in the real estate industry. As a real estate agent, you are constantly marketing yourself to the community, to buyers, and to sellers. The question is, how to maximize your marketing opportunities?

Consider the level of detail on your advertisements. As discussed earlier, when a product description is detailed, the participant is more likely to believe it. This detail helps consumers form a vivid image of the product or service being described. Your advertisements on social media, flyers, posters, and billboards may work better with a level detail that would help the reader form a better mental image of the service you provide. Such detail could include metrics detailing your customer service or the number of homes you sold in the past year—anything that can help the reader form a clearer image.

Consider the physical distance at which readers will consume your ad. If you are giving a town hall style presentation to potential clients, consider seating the most valuable customers at the front of the room. The clients who sit in the front will be more likely to believe in the information and claims they are seeing and hearing.



The next time you are driving down the highway, consider how you react to the billboards as you pass. Try and recognize the effect of the distance, mental strain, and level of detail. The results might surprise you.

Recommended Reading

Jia, Yanli, Yunhui Huang, Robert Wyer Jr., and Hao Shen (2017), "Physical Proximity Increases Persuasive Effectiveness Through Visual Imagery," *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 27(4), 435–447.

References

Lee, Yih Hwai and Cheng Qiu (2009), “When Uncertainty Brings Pleasure: The Role of Prospect Imageability and Mental Imagery,” *Journal of Consumer Research*, 36(4), 624–633.

Reyes, Robert M., William C. Thompson, and Gordon H. Bower (1980), “Judgmental Biases Resulting from Differing Availabilities of Arguments,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 39(1), 2–12.

About the Authors

Yanli Jia, PhD

Assistant Professor, Xiamen University

Dr. Yanli Jia’s (PhD – The Chinese University of Hong Kong) research is focused on consumer behaviour. Dr. Jia’s work has appeared in the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, and the *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, among others.

Yunhui Huang, PhD

Associate Professor, Nanjing University

Dr. Yunhui Huang’s (PhD – Peking University) research is focused on consumer inference, numerical information in marketing, and online retailing. Dr. Huang’s work has appeared in the *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Information Systems Research*, the *Journal of Retailing*, and the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, among others.

Robert S. Wyer Jr., PhD

Professor Emeritus, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dr. Robert S. Wyer Jr.’s (PhD – University of Colorado) research interests focus on social cognition, the cognitive representation of person and event information in memory, and the cognitive organization of beliefs and attitudes. Dr. Wyer’s work has appeared in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, the *Journal of Consumer Research*, and the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, among others.

Hao Shen, PhD

Professor, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Dr. Hao Shen’s (PhD – The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology) research is focused on the effect of mood, the effect of procedural knowledge, culture, and sensory marketing. Dr. Shen’s work has appeared in journals such as the *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Journal of Marketing Research*, and the *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, among others.

Watch Your Tone on Social Media

Renato Hübner Barcelos, PhD, Danilo C. Dantas, PhD, and Sylvain Sénécal, PhD

The value of goods and services provided by an organization is, to a large extent, dependent on a consumer's perception of the firm, and this perception is often determined by the way in which the company communicates with its customers. A company's tone of voice used in communications is critical to the success of customer acquisition, particularly in online or virtual communications. In this article, we examine the differences between "human" and "corporate" tone of voice and the impacts these differing tones have on consumer perception.



Corporate or Human Voice?

When we listen to sales calls or view advertisements on social media, we see certain differences in the approaches businesses use to reach out to consumers. The tone of voice used in these communications is an important tactic that helps drive consumer demand for a product.

A *corporate voice* is a formal, structured tone that indicates a professional conversation and is primarily used to form a business relationship with the consumer. With this tone of voice, the company strictly delivers facts and does not focus on emotional appeal to influence customers.

A *human voice* is a more casual tone of voice that replicates the way in which we speak in more personal settings. Language is friendlier and may include common words or even emoticons. The goal of this tone of voice is to appeal to consumers' emotions and build a bond rather than just converting a lead.

The difference between the two voices can be seen particularly in automated sales pitches and cold calls made to consumers. If the message used is generated by technology and has a corporate message, a corporate voice has been used. If the message is personalized, friendly and conversational, a human voice has been used. However, it is often difficult to decide the better voice to use and which voice will add the most value to the firm and appeal to the listener.

Which Voice, and When?

When deciding on the tone of voice to use in communication with consumers via social media, a primary factor to consider is the type of value—whether hedonic (emotional) or utilitarian (rational)—customers expect to receive from their purchase.

Next, after considering the type of value derived from a product or service, the tone of voice used in communication could be human and appeal to emotion, or it could be corporate and appeal to utilitarian motives. If the primary consumer value sought is driven by emotional appeal, then a human voice should be used to maximize impact. Alternatively, if the type of value is derived from the features of a product or service, then corporate voice would be more persuasive. Nevertheless, there are other factors that mitigate this relationship.

For example, other important factors to consider before deciding tone of voice for your communication are situational involvement and the level of risk involved in the purchase. In low risk cases, it is beneficial to use a human voice to influence demand, as consumers perceive the human voice as a personal connection to the brand. However, in high risk cases, a consumer attributes a more professional approach to a corporate voice and tends to trust the brand more. In high risk purchases, the customer looks for a formal approach to alleviate the stress of dealing with the risk, so a human voice may have a negative impact on the consumer's purchase intent, as they may find the tone too casual to deal with a high-risk purchase.

From this analysis there are three scenarios that arise:

- 1) Low risk, low involvement, and primarily hedonic value: In this case, the human voice would maximize purchase intent.
- 2) Low risk, low involvement, and utilitarian value: In this case, a customer is often indifferent toward the tone, so the type of voice should be consistent with the brand's overall positioning. However, this recommendation also applies if overall posts are negative concerning the brand.
- 3) High risk and either hedonic or utilitarian value: In this case, it is important to use a corporate voice to reassure customers of firm competence and reduce the risk associated with the purchase intent.

Real Estate Implications

In real estate transactions, we see varied levels of risk and value derived from purchases, and it is essential for agents to understand these factors that affect their respective clients. For example, a client buying an office space for their company franchise may see only facts-based value in the purchase and will likely be less influenced by a human tone of voice. A couple buying their first home will be more reactive to a human voice given the emotional value in the purchase, but a couple in a lower income group buying their first home may attribute a high level of risk with the

purchase and, thus, would be more influenced by a professional corporate voice. By carefully evaluating the risk and value factors of your clients, you will be better equipped to provide the proper tone of voice in your social media, advertising, or branding communications, thus driving up demand for your offerings.

It is important to note that this is an inexact science, and there are other factors like brand image and customer experiences that will influence the purchase. However, to a broad audience, analyzing the risk and value of the offering will effectively determine the consumers' reaction to the communication.

Recommended Reading

Barcelos, Renato Hübner, Danilo C. Dantas, and Sylvain Sénécal (2018), "Watch Your Tone: How a Brand's Tone of Voice on Social Media Influences Consumer Responses," *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 41, 60–80.

About the Authors

Renato Hübner Barcelos, PhD

Professor, University of Quebec in Montreal

Dr. Renato Hübner Barcelos' (PhD – Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul) research interests are related to digital marketing, consumer behavior, and marketing on social media. He has taught marketing and consumer behavior courses in Canada and Brazil.

Danilo C. Dantas, PhD

Associate Professor, HEC Montreal

Dr. Danilo Correa Dantas' (PhD – Université Pierre Mendès-France) research interests are related to music marketing and electronic commerce. His work has been published in marketing and management scientific journals such as *International Journal of Arts Management* and *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*.

Sylvain Sénécal, PhD

Professor, RBC Financial Group Chair of E-commerce, and Tech3Lab Co-director, HEC Montreal

Dr. Sylvain Sénécal's (PhD – HEC Montreal) research interests are related to consumer internet marketing and consumer neuroscience. His work has been published in marketing and e-commerce scientific journals such as the *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science* and the *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*.

Intellectual Humility

Maria Arauz, MBA Candidate



Humility is important for success. The most successful Google employees exhibit behaviors linked to intellectual humility; the best CEOs have a combination of strong professional will and humility; and leaders who show this trait can influence their team's performance. In "Finding Middle Ground Between Intellectual Arrogance and Intellectual Servility: Development and Assessment of the Limitations-Owning Intellectual Humility Scale,"

authors Megan Haggard et al. detail the findings of four studies they performed regarding intellectual humility. Through these studies, they sought to create a measure for intellectual humility to expand the current understanding of this virtue and its connection to specific behaviors, motivations, and emotions. What they found may help real estate professionals make better decisions for their teams.

Intellectual Humility and Its Spectrum

For this research, the definition of intellectual humility involved three factors: (1) owning one's intellectual limitations, (2) appropriate discomfort with those limitations, and (3) a motivation to continue to learn. The first factor—owning one's intellectual limitations—refers to a person's ability to admit that he or she has gaps in knowledge and that these gaps may impact future thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

The second factor—appropriate discomfort with one's intellectual limitations—focuses on how a person feels and reacts to these gaps. A person with intellectual humility will react in an appropriate manner by not being either dismissive or overwhelmed by his or her intellectual shortcomings. The third and last component is a motivation to continue to learn. This component refers to a love of and desire to gain more knowledge, truth, and understanding. Together, these three characteristics make up intellectual humility.

At the same time, intellectual humility falls in a spectrum between intellectual arrogance and intellectual servility. Intellectual arrogance refers to an inability to accept one's intellectual shortcomings and is related to narcissism and overconfidence in one's beliefs. At the other end of the spectrum is intellectual servility, which refers to a state of being so preoccupied with one's intellectual limitations that one struggles to do anything about them.

Intellectual humility falls in the middle of these two extremes. So, a person with high intellectual humility should be aware of his or her intellectual limitations but not disregard or be overwhelmed by them. In this context, the authors performed four studies.

What Does Intellectual Humility Look Like?

Through their first three studies, the authors were able to establish a reliable, 12-question scale that can measure intellectual humility as defined above. In the fourth study, they examined the relationship between this quality and personality factors. They found interesting connections.

The research team learned that intellectual humility is associated with traits such as openness to consider alternative ideas, agreeableness, desire to do one's work well, assertiveness (the ability to defend one's rights without imposing on the rights of others), and appropriate pride. This means that a person who is intellectually humble is likely to be open and agreeable but will also stand up and take pride in his or her beliefs. Yet, if presented with a new fact, a person high in intellectual humility will accept new information and adjust his or her beliefs accordingly. Therefore, a person who is intellectually humble is not closed-minded, excessively proud, or likely to hold on to beliefs that may be unjustified.

Real Estate Perspective

In the context of real estate, these findings are relevant because they can help realtors build more successful teams. By using intellectual humility as a selection criterion, teams can choose members high in this quality to join them, increasing their potential performance and success. To do this, you and your team should look for candidates with traits associated with intellectual humility and its definition, such as love of learning, openness to new ideas, assertiveness, and pride. For example, you may ask in an interview, “How do you respond when someone points out a mistake in your way of thinking?” The answer may reveal closed-mindedness or lack of conviction in one’s beliefs. The ideal answer will strike a balance and find a middle ground that indicates intellectual humility.

Recommended Reading

Haggard, Megan, Wade C. Rowatt, Joseph C. Leman, Benjamin Meagher, Courtney Moore, Thomas Fergus, Dennis Whitcomb, Heather Battaly, Jason Baehr, and Dan Howard-Snyder (2018), “Finding Middle Ground Between Intellectual Arrogance and Intellectual Servility: Development and Assessment of the Limitations-Owning Intellectual Humility Scale,” *Personality and Individual Differences*, 124, 184–193.

References

Collins, Jim (2001), “Level 5 Leadership: The Triumph of Humility and Fierce Resolve,” *Harvard Business Review*, January, 67–76.

Friedman, Thomas L. (2014), "How to Get a Job at Google," *The New York Times*.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/23/opinion/sunday/friedman-how-to-get-a-job-at-google.html>

Whitcomb, Dennis, Heather Battaly, Jason Baehr, and Daniel Howard-Snyder (2017),
"Intellectual Humility: Owning our Limitations," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*,
94(3), 509–539.

About the Author

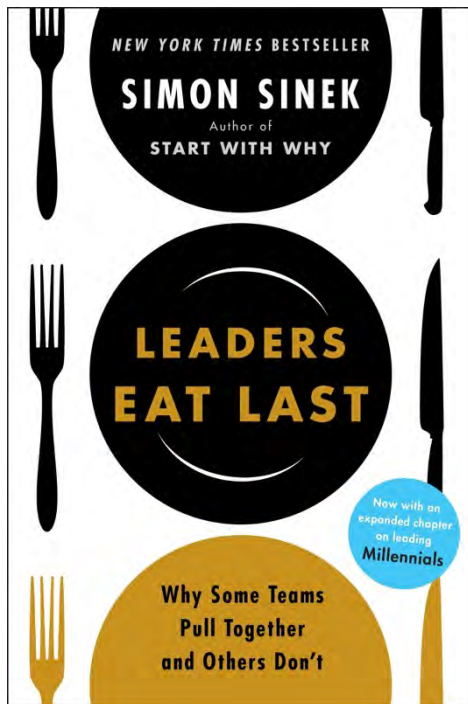
Maria Arauz, MBA Candidate

Baylor University

Maria Arauz earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Towson University. Her past work experience includes roles for companies such as Procter & Gamble and Dell. Maria is currently pursuing an MBA at Baylor University and plans to further her career in the technology industry.

INSIDER: Leaders Eat Last

Zack Snider, MBA Candidate



When was the last time you examined the system in which you work to see the impact on the men and women within? Do our actions, policies, and expectations create places where people want to be and where they can find fulfillment?

Unfortunately, these are underlying questions with drastic implications for employee wellness, productivity, and performance that are missed by many managers. If we truly want our companies to be as successful as possible, it may require a radical restructuring of how we perceive the workplace and a reconciling of our goals and desires.

In *Leaders Eat Last*, Simon Sinek lays out the “circle of safety” that forms among members of an organization by using examples from many well-known firms that succeeded or failed in their efforts to build a “circle of safety.” In circles of safety, workers form connections

with their peers and employer, belonging to something greater than themselves. Comfortable, knowing that they would support each other in times of need, workers with strong connections are better prepared to face external needs of the organization together. Forming a circle of safety is not easy, but with the following points in mind, leaders and managers will be better equipped to work with and in teams.

THINK POINT #1: Create Environments That Acknowledge Biology

Our brains are complex organs with an intricate neurotransmitter system for interpreting a wide range of bodily inputs. Our most ancient ancestors used some of these signals to drive their search for basic necessities, but the systems continue to influence us today. As scarcity diminished, work pressures, the pace of modern life, and other externalities, like social media, have impacted what our brains seek. Many find themselves in a chemical whirlwind as they go about their business, a situation that must be understood if we desire healthy teams.

Endorphins and dopamine are “selfish” chemicals, rewarding us for accomplishments that bring us back for more. Temporarily masking pain and discomfort to persevere and perform, endorphins keep us focused and enable us to persist in our efforts. Dopamine gives us feelings of satisfaction, whether from working hard towards a goal, hitting a milestone, or even meeting basic needs, like when we eat. These hits of dopamine encourage us to repeat the same activities

for continued dopamine pleasure. The feeling can be addictive to a point where we inherently pursue more dopamine, even if the pursuit is harmful.

By contrast, serotonin and oxytocin are “selfless” chemicals that help us think and work for those beyond ourselves. When we receive recognition at a graduation or awards ceremony, serotonin floods our brains amidst the external recognition. We gain status and joy for ourselves, just like those recognizing us feel responsibility and pride for their part in the journey. Oxytocin is the chemical of love and the way we form deep connections and trust to bring others into our “tribe.” It lets us know our group has our backs through long-term cooperation, releasing oxytocin in our brains. It takes time to love, and it takes time to build trust.

Each of these elements has their place, and striking a balance is key. Organizations should avoid building systems that prioritize short-term dopamine releases over oxytocin, but not go so far as to remove individual drive. A lack of balance can lead to toxic environments that discourage cooperation, while placing individual gain on a pedestal. The natural desire to seek dopamine is unavoidable, so, when forming teams, incentivize and reward behaviors that boost loyalty and connection and discourage our most selfish motives.

THINK POINT #2: People, People, People

Business is a team sport, not an individual event. Like an NFL or NBA team that relies on its players, the most valuable asset for a company is its work force. The workers alone enable the business to function, so to value them is to value the company. Most organizations label themselves as people-centric, but the reality of that can vary. Perception matters, especially when people feel they are not valued. A disconnect can then emerge where employees believe the organization sees them as inhuman measures and statistics, especially when their job could be on the line.

There’s only one issue with this: oxytocin. People don’t trust and connect with numbers—people trust and connect with *people*. Cutting employees to help boost the bottom line and pitting employees against each other in workplace competition doesn’t build healthy teams over time. Performance goals may be met, but abstractions of their person cause worker stress levels to rise and work relationships to suffer. People lose willingness to sacrifice for each other and act in their own interests. It should be no wonder that some companies struggle with high turnover and low morale. Why should you expect loyalty and enthusiasm from an employee when they don’t feel the same from you?

Take the opportunity to invest in workers so they are fully prepared for the job at the start, develop them to improve their abilities, and nurture them to keep them productive. Most importantly, support them in failure, and encourage them to succeed later. Show that you care about your people, and they will care for you as well. Teams are made of players, so work to make your players the best they can be.

THINK POINT #3: Culture Starts at the Top

First and foremost, leaders must strike a tone and abide by it. It is not viable for a leader to tell employees to respect one another and look out for one another if they are only concerned with their own success. Self-interested attitudes will be readily apparent and any initiatives, however well designed or intended, will fall short.

Leaders must not only talk the talk, they must walk the walk. All eyes are on the leader for guidance, providing an excellent opportunity for positive impact. Be aware that how you handle adversity will be mimicked, and render each decision with the team and organization's interest in mind, not your own. There are times when tough choices must be made for the good of the company or circumstances that require a change in staffing. Being transparent, honest, and empathetic can go a long way to making these times better. Mistakes will happen and judgments will be wrong, but what matters most is consistency in the person you claim to be and bringing that into every aspect of work.

Ask yourself this last question to reflect on leadership and culture: If you left the organization, would it be able to function without you? Such organizations are artificial and predicated on an individual leader directing others to accomplish their vision. Protecting status and position prevents leaders from sharing their understandings and building continuity into the organization. Guidance disappears without them and internal divisions lead to infighting that can tear the organization apart. The circle of safety is missing from these setups, and a plan for the future is not possible with leaders unwilling to make sacrifices and ensure organizational stability.



Conclusion

As Sinek explains in *Leaders Eat Last*, it takes every single level of the organization to build a circle of safety. Institutional inertia may push back, but the payoff is worth the effort. After all, what firm wouldn't want a unifying force that tackles external problems while fostering a common bond to find and solve internal issues? An acknowledgement of individual reality, an emphasis on the humanity of team members, and a strong beacon of leadership are the pillars on which successful teams are built. Pursuing a circle of safety for yourself may be a lofty and challenging goal, but you will be pleased with how high your teams can fly once it forms.

Recommended Reading

Sinek, Simon (2017), *Leaders Eat Last: Why Some Teams Pull Together and Others Don't*, Portfolio/Penguin: New York, NY.

About the Author

Zack Snider, MBA Candidate

Baylor University

Zack Snider is a graduate student from Harker Heights, Texas. He earned his Bachelor of Business Administration in Supply Chain Management and Management Information Systems from Baylor University. He has past work experience in logistics operations for McLane Co. Zack is pursuing an MBA and is seeking a career in procurement with a focus on healthcare supply networks.

INSIDER: Rise and Grind

Jackson D. Price, MBA Candidate

Stationed between Mark Cuban and Mr. Wonderful on the hit show *Shark Tank* is Daymond John. Focused and calculated, John embodies the archetype of a seasoned business magnate. Carefully fielding each pitch from contestants, John maintains a laser-like focus as he vets each proposition with skill acquired from years of experience.

The 49-year-old from Brooklyn is well known across the clothing industry. He started the clothing brand FUBU from a modest \$40 collection of hats on which he had hand sewn logos. He has since grown FUBU into a clothing empire, recording \$6 billion in sales.

In his latest book, *Rise and Grind*, Daymond John looks at how grit and determination have helped him become the business titan he is today. While discussing these lessons learned, John interviews individuals who have excelled in their fields and analyzes their personal routines and work habits.

THINK POINT #1: G.R.I.N.D.

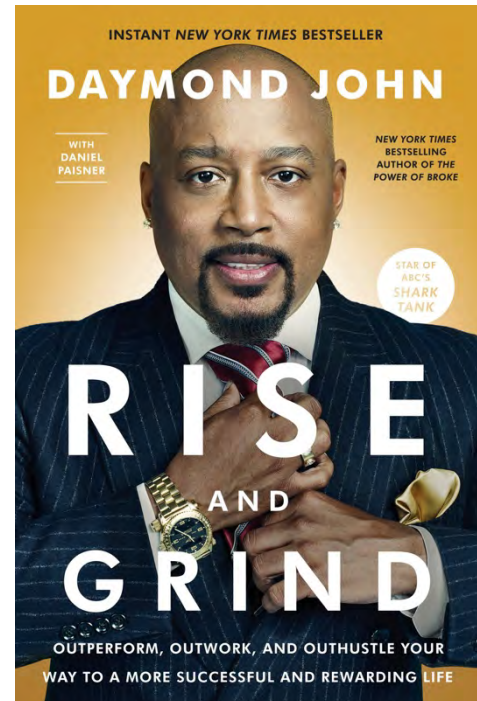
In Daymond John's first book, *The Power of Broke*, he summarized the main themes of the book with the easy-to-remember acronym SHARK. In a similar fashion, John uses the acronym GRIND to demonstrate the key takeaways of this book.

G is for "Get on it." This rule emphasizes the importance of the first step, telling readers, "You can't start moving toward your goals until and unless you take that all-important first step."

R is for "Repeat." This rule explains the importance of being systematic with your routines. John reminds the reader that humans are creatures, and it is important to structure your day in order to benefit from your habits.

I is for "Insist." Insist on *your* very best and the best efforts of your team. John states that if you demand excellence in your deliverables, excellence is what you will get in return. He also states that life isn't what you accept, its what you negotiate.

N is for "Navigate." John ties this rule back to the relentlessness of a shark. He shares that sharks never stop swimming, even while they sleep, and he connects this fact to the adage to keep moving.



D is for “Desire, Drive, Determination.” John deems this the most important rule and assigns it three virtues. He talks about first starting out at FUBU, and how he had trouble getting a loan to fill orders because no one believed that the company would succeed. He states that while you shouldn’t ignore the naysayers, let it drive you and be determined to blow past the low expectations set for you.

THINK POINT #2: Get Your Hands Dirty

Meet your customers where they live. Step outside your comfort zone, break from your routines, and take the temperature of the market you hope to serve. John talks about the different members of the Shark Tank panel and how they keep in touch with their market. Robert Herjavec, for example, spends a majority of his time around the racing circuit where he meets potential clients for his cybersecurity firm. Mark Cuban, owner of the Dallas Mavericks, sits courtside at every single Mavs game, not just because he’s a huge basketball fan, but to stay in touch with his target demographic. These sharks have gotten to the top of their respective businesses by staying in touch with the customers who got them there in the first place.

THINK POINT #3: Step Back

Toward the end of the book, John touches on the need to have discretion in one’s work-life balance. John explains that he has to take his foot off the gas every once in a while and step back to avoid having the grind actually grind him down. John tells a story about Shark Tank guest panelist Chris Sacca and how he decided to step back from his venture capital firm after it started to dominate his life. Sacca explained,

“Startup investing is one of my things, but it is not my everything. The only way I know to be awesome at startups is to be obsessively focused and pegged to the floor of the deep-end grasping for air. I succeeded at venture capital because for years, I rarely thought about or spent time on anything else”.

Business is a large part of our lives, but it is not everything. John acknowledges the importance of stepping back and asking yourself what you are really chasing.

Conclusion

Through John’s many years at FUBU and his experience as a venture capitalist on *Shark Tank*, he has acquired a wealth of knowledge when it comes to developing a company. Much of that knowledge is included in his book *Rise and Grind* and is applicable to the real estate industry. When considering think point #2, think about how you interact with your community. Are you an active member in your community or just a passive bystander? Consider looking for a local real estate organization or meet and greets that have local professionals gathering and spreading ideas. Researcher Robyn Driskell recently addressed this issue in the *Keller Center Research*

Report in “[Why People Like Where They Live](#)” and made suggestions on how real estate professionals can improve the communities in which they sell.

The real estate market is a cyclical business and has many ups and downs throughout months and years. When considering your work life balance, know your limits. When the market is at its peak and you find yourself consistently slipping and not meeting your clients’ needs, it may be time to take a step back and reevaluate your strategy.

Recommended Reading

John, Daymond (2018), *Rise and Grind*, Crown Publishing Group: New York City, NY.

References

Driskell, Robyn, Larry Lyon and Brittany M. Fitz (2018), “Why People Like Where the Live,” *Keller Center Research Report*, 11(3), 7–11.

John, Daymond (2016), *The Power of Broke*, Made for Success Publishing: Issaquah, WA.

About the Author

Jackson D. Price, MBA Candidate

Baylor University

Jackson Price is a graduate student from Colleyville, Texas. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Commerce and Business Administration from The University of Alabama’s Culverhouse College of Business. Jackson is currently seeking an MBA with a concentration in Healthcare Administration and plans to pursue a career in the healthcare industry.

Keller Center Research Report

Baylor University » Keller Center for Research » Hankamer School of Business
One Bear Place #98007 » Waco, TX 76798
www.baylor.edu/kellercenter » Keller_Center@baylor.edu

*Keller Center Research Report is a trademark owned by Baylor University.
© Baylor University. All rights reserved.*