



THE POWER OF RESILIENCE

NAVIGATING CHANGE IN A COMPLEX WORLD
WHAT IT MEANS FOR THE LEADERS
OF TODAY AND TOMORROW

NAVIGATING CHANGE WITH RESILIENT LEADERSHIP

EMBRACING HUMAN-CENTRICITY AND ADAPTABILITY



In the dynamic and ever-evolving business landscape of today, resilient leadership has emerged as the cornerstone for organizations striving to navigate the complexities and uncertainties of an increasingly chaotic world.

This article delves into the essence of resilience and explores the characteristics that define resilient leadership, providing insights into how leaders can cultivate this competency to steer their organizations towards success amidst turbulence and change.

What is Resilience and Resilient Leadership?

Resilience, by definition, is the capacity to withstand adversity, bounce back from difficult life events, and swiftly recover from setbacks.

It encapsulates the ability of a material, system, or individual to regain its original form, position, or condition after being bent, stretched, or pressed.

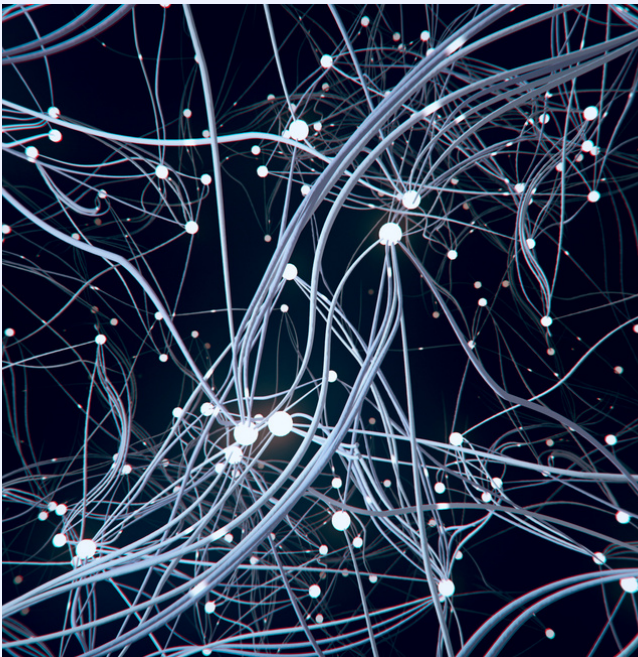
Resilient leaders exemplify the aptitude to navigate their teams and organization through challenging or turbulent situations with agility, flexibility, and adaptability. They possess the emotional intelligence to maintain composure under stressful circumstances, exhibiting empathy to provide appropriate and relevant support, motivation, and encouragement to their workforce.

Resilient leaders harness these qualities to cultivate an overall organizational resilience, enabling their teams to persevere and thrive in the face of adversity.



From V.U.C.A. to B.A.N.I.

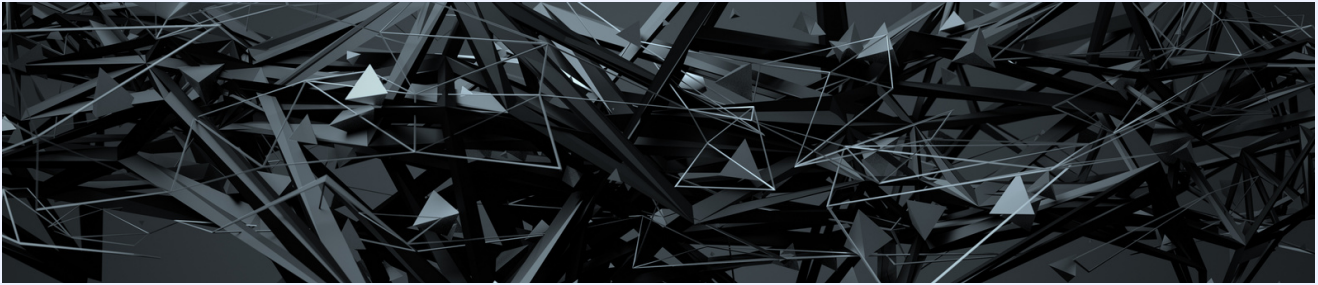
The acronym **V.U.C.A.**, which stands for Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity, is widely attributed to Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus, two American economists, who in the 1980s, introduced the term to capture the dynamic and turbulent business environment that organizations faced, emphasizing the need for adaptability and agility in leadership and organizational strategies.



Volatility referred to the unpredictable and rapidly changing nature of market conditions, customer demands, and competitive landscapes. Uncertainty encompassed the lack of predictability and the inability to foresee future events or outcomes.

Complexity arose from the intricate interconnections and interdependencies within systems, making it challenging to understand cause-and-effect relationships; and Ambiguity involved situations with incomplete information, contradictory, or subject to multiple interpretations, leading to a lack of clarity.

However, recent times have witnessed an evolution into a more intense state of **B.A.N.I.**, an artificial word coined by Jamais Cascio, in his article “Facing the Age of Chaos”,^[i] wherein he precipitated a paradigm shift by defining the current business environment as Brittle, Anxiety, Non-linear, and Incomprehensible. This heightened state of chaos and uncertainty, further compounded by the rapid pace of technological advancements and changes, necessitates the adoption of new leadership approaches and organizational capabilities to navigate effectively and thrive in the face of constant disruption.



“The emergence of the B.A.N.I. World concept is not merely a theoretical exercise; it represents a fundamental shift in our understanding of the world.... The traditional tools and frameworks that served us well in the V.U.C.A. era may no longer suffice in this new landscape.” [i] 1

In a B.A.N.I. world, brittleness is characterised by systems and structures that appear stable can suddenly and unexpectedly collapse or be disrupted, leading to global ripple effects. This brittleness makes the world feel more terrifying and unstable. Additionally, people are feeling heightened levels of anxiety due to factors like misinformation, rapid change, and the incomprehensibility of complex global challenges. This anxiety can lead to rigidity and a sense of powerlessness.

Cause and effect relationships have increasingly become highly unpredictable, with minor issues potentially leading to unfathomable and disproportionate consequences, making it difficult to deduce clear causes for many problems.

And finally, the complexity of information and events in the world has become too great for the human mind to fully grasp. Everything is interconnected in ways that defy simple understanding.

In this B.A.N.I. world, where organizations now operate, technological advancements, particularly in Artificial Intelligence (AI), have become mainstream. Coupled with the constant shift in market dynamics against the backdrop of global crises, the business landscape is being challenged and redefined.

Navigating this environment requires a significant degree of agility and adaptability from both individuals and the organizations in which they operate.



Mere survival is no longer sufficient; to thrive and flourish amidst such upheaval, individuals and organizations must embrace a growth mindset and an openness to change. Exercising flexibility in all senses of the word, fostering creativity in problem-solving, cultivating critical thinking skills, and enveloping these qualities with a strong dose of interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence are essential.



In this context, resilient individuals as leaders are expected to withstand adversity, adapt swiftly, and emerge even stronger. Resilient leaders possess the ability to navigate their teams and organizations through challenging or turbulent situations with agility, flexibility, and adaptability. They leverage emotional intelligence to maintain composure under stressful circumstances, coupled with the empathy to provide appropriate and relevant support, motivation, and encouragement to their workforce.

By harnessing these qualities, resilient leaders cultivate an overall organizational resilience, enabling their teams to persevere and thrive in the face of adversity.

Inter-play Between Personal and Organisational Resilience

Keeping the current research and trends in mind, at ODE, we have studied the interplay between personal and organizational factors that contribute to overall resilience. What we have discovered is that at the individual level, the key attributes that power personal resilience comprise of leaders having the following key competencies:

- **A Growth Mindset**
- **Purpose**
- **Social Connection**
- **Empathy**
- **Mindfulness**
- **Energy**



When individuals imbibe these competencies, they transcend mere words and become paradigms that they genuinely believe in and consciously exercise through intentional actions. These competencies act as a connecting bridge that drives overall organizational resilience in the workplace.

Resilient leaders who embody these competencies do not merely pay lip service to these concepts, instead, they internalize these qualities as guiding principles, shaping their thought processes, decision-making, and interactions with their teams and the broader organization.

Their actions then become a powerful force, inspiring others to adopt similar mindsets and approaches, ultimately fostering a culture of resilience that permeates throughout the organization.



As these competencies take root, they facilitate a shared understanding and collective commitment to navigating challenges, embracing change, and capitalizing on opportunities.

This alignment between individual and organizational resilience creates a synergistic effect, enabling organizations to weather storms, bounce back from setbacks, and continuously evolve to meet the ever-changing demands of the modern business landscape.

In the words of former Meta COO, Sheryl Sandberg,

“Resilience is not a muscle we're born with.... we should never ask ourselves how much resilience we have, but rather how much we can build and how we can build it into ourselves, our friends, and the people around us.”²



The ODE Resilience Model

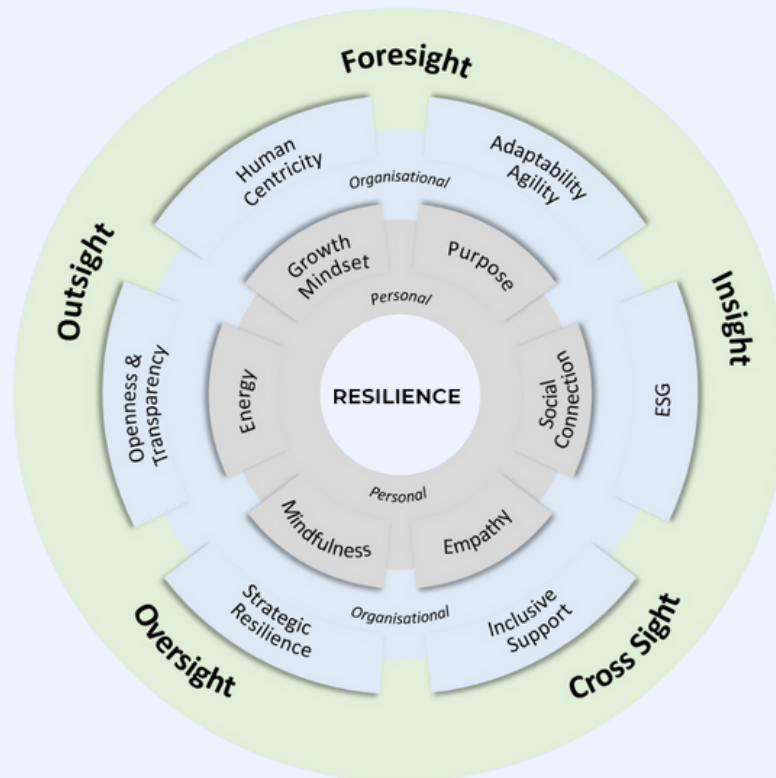
How does this discussion contribute to driving a resilient workplace culture supported by resilient leadership? For this the importance of understanding the interplay between human insight, technology and innovation cannot be understated.

In a World Economic Forum³ study, 92% of executives were found expecting to see a shift in required leadership skills, where there is growing emphasis towards cultivating 'human' skills in the future of work. This is where the dependency on core soft skills to drive agility and human-centricity show up as vital to driving organisational success.

Drawing on our experience, research, and observations, ODE has identified key connections between personal and organizational resilience. When the key competencies of a Growth Mindset, Purpose, Social Connection, Empathy, Mindfulness and Energy are overlaid with the "**5 Sights**" of **Outsight, Foresight, Insight, Cross Sight and Oversight** it forms the foundation of the core resilience aspects of an organisation:

Human-Centricity, Adaptability/Agility, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG), Inclusive Support, Strategic Resilience & Openness and Transparency.

The ODE Resilience Model



The ODE Resilience Model, as illustrated in the diagram above, clearly demonstrates the linkages between the **6 components of Personal Resilience and the additional 6 components of Organizational Resilience**.

The model highlights the interdependence between individual and organizational resilience, emphasizing that cultivating resilience at the personal level is a foundational step towards building a resilient organization. By developing the six components of Personal Resilience – individuals equip themselves with the necessary mindset and capabilities to navigate adversity and thrive in challenging environments.

This **sybiotic relationship** between Personal and Organizational Resilience, underscores the importance of both individual and collective efforts in building a truly resilient organization. By aligning and nurturing these interconnected components, organizations can cultivate a resilient workforce capable of effectively navigating the complexities and uncertainties of the modern B.A.N.I. business landscape, ultimately positioning themselves for long-term success and sustainable growth.

Connect with ODE Consulting®

As a leader in the area of Learning, Coaching and Consulting, ODE has, since 1996, embarked on a journey partnering organisations to drive transformation and change, embedding culture.

The pervasiveness of technology particularly, AI has precipitated the need for a more focused approach towards equipping individuals and organisations with human soft skills. These adjacency skills that complement and partner technical knowledge and competencies, are vital for flourishing and success in this age of uncertainty and complexity.

Interested to hear more about how you can power up the resilience muscle within your organization?

Connect with the team at ODE Consulting® to co-create the strategy towards building personal and organizational resilience.



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Bibliography and Citations:

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3 World Economic Forum. (2020). The Future of Jobs Report 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2020>