

hatching ideas for an evolved tomorrow

TALES FROM & INSIGHTS

**WOULD LEHMAN SISTERS HAVE COLLAPSED
AS LEHMAN BROTHERS DID ?**



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(For the purpose of this article we have assumed Lehman Brothers represent the significance of masculine energy and our proposal is of Lehman Sisters signifies the feminine energy)

Leadership is all about making decisions and decisions have always been influenced by what state of mindset (masculine or feminine) we operate from either at an Individual level or influenced by the ecosystem which is the organisation culture & ethos.

For good or for bad, organisations have leaned towards Masculine energy over the years, it wouldn't be unfair to say to say that some even have inclined towards the antiquities of Masculinity and paraded it all over, often resulting into one sided biased cultural ethos. The tragedy is that it didn't stop there but the managers and future leaders are also have been groomed, coached and even cohesive to operate with masculine mindset and often exhibited in public forums as the 'future proof leaders' as rewards / trophies

So the question is what's wrong with Masculine Mindset, hasn't it worked for some and isn't it relevant even today, well the answer is very simple, it is relevant even today and

will work but only in some circumstances, for example organisations going through some big crisis, or organisations in a massive, aggressive battles with their competitors, or organisations where some quick decision making is required because of the impending changes and so on. Believing that every little crisis or change is a war zone and relying on masculine mindset isn't right. Also to worsen the matters the disaster is that masculinity being promoted at the cost of neglecting feminine mindset or many a times even publicly ridiculing feminine mindset to be perceived we are tough and market compliant .

So what's a quick self-help audit of Masculine Energy mindset in the leadership style / organisation culture. An indicative / suggestive guide will reflect the following traits if displayed are a sure indicator we are on that journey.

- a sense of macho culture of taking unwanted risk without much due diligence
- display of macho leadership style of taking and setting for unrealistic targets and goals just to impress others
- a possible Chauvinist attitude of not accepting mistakes or apprehension to accept that we don't know or understand something
- me, myself, outlook where in the belief is 'I am the center of the universe' the organisation is a sub system of the Leader rather than vice-versa
- a culture of Survival of fittest and safe your interest / back instead of co-creating / collaborating

- dog eat dog culture of surviving and guarding self-interest at any cost
- self-beliefs / attitudes over organisation ethos / values

Well we do observe some of these all the time in any organisation, so when do we hit the RED FLAG button, well simple if we observe this among our CxO we have a challenge, If we observe this among more than 20% of Future Leaders / High Potentials / Talent Pipeline, If we observe this in more than 50% of our Managers who have been Hired in last 12 months, if we observe that more than 50% of our Award winners Managers / Leaders displaying such traits

So in contrast what does any organisation culture / leadership mindset with feminine mindset / ethos represent / look like. Some traits which highlight the same are :

- Consensus as a theme NOT One man ship
- Expressing regret RATHER than pushing ones agenda just to make it right
- Where leaders proudly share in open forums 'I don't know' or 'Dont have enough insights'
- Where Risk are awarded and RECKLESSNESS are reprimanded
- Operating with long term implications rather than short term gains (nurturing vs hunting)
- Implication oriented (empathy) and not outcome oriented (winning at any cost)
- Rejection / Failures are considered and appreciated as

learning points and not a reason to become more macho and inward looking

So how do organisations and leaders build a healthy balance between these two energies or even take the risk of being perceived positively inclined towards feminine energy. Some of the inspiring practices which need to be celebrated are

- Design Programs / Sessions / Talks on Vulnerability is Strength - Be explicit in sharing with the employees that machoism is a passé and doesn't guarantee a leadership role and being vulnerable is not a reflection of a weakness. These sessions need to be delivered to all employees and are very critical at CxO levels, Sales teams, High Potentials and Entry level. Also build a culture of Vulnerability is welcomed and celebrated in public.
- Reviews are Reflections not Reprimanding Sessions : Be Gentle on Failures- Failures are part and parcel of any growth story, as an organisation culture we need to ensure that we are not too harsh on failures in public and use it as an excuse to set examples of leadership style. Let's have Hall of Failures proudly displayed as Hall of Fame
- Celebrate Consensus while taking Crucial Decisions - Appreciate the process of collective decision making with equal zeal as the celebrations of end result of that decision. More than often we work on the philosophy of rushing towards a decision because we believe that we will

get the lion star of limelight. Building consensus is a tedious process but is it always worth at the end of the day

- Encourage Diversity of Thoughts - Alignment all the time is a worrying sign as it builds a culture of recklessness and extra machoism. Encouraging teams to have diverse thoughts, even to the extent of incorporating healthy dissent as a core value is a virtue. Introduce concepts like 10th man / Six Thinking Hats (Black Hat) while discussing crucial decisions will help build a healthy ecosystem

- Listening and Not Quick Resolution is the key - How fast was the decision taken isn't always the crucial deciding factor, also many a times a conversation doesn't have to end with a decision. Many a times conversations need not have agenda / resolution points, they could be just an expression or listening forum. Ability to listen and empathise is equally respected as much as arriving at a decision in a good ecosystem

- Key Messages - As Leadership we should incorporate some of the following messages consistently to ensure a healthy ecosystem and culture in build :

- ❖ I am equally comfortable with my strength and vulnerability
- ❖ Empathy is the bedrock of our culture Not Survival
- ❖ Ethics over Economics
- ❖ Walking Along rather than Walking Alone
- ❖ Nurturing and listening rather than Hunting and

Winning at any Cost

- ❖ Building relationships beyond work
- ❖ Our Moral Compass is an indicator of Growth as much as our P&L Compass

We believe on the multiple reasons why any organisation succeeds or fails, Leadership Style and Culture plays a very critical role. In a diverse world which we operate in, our mindset should also open to feminine side of ours which for various reasons we have shied away from

At a Macro Level in our Society we need to introspect the way we are brining up our young ones. Gender roles are social constructs unique to different cultures that are assigned to individuals the moment they are born, as a society we need to explore how we encourage our young ones to break their social construct and empower them to embrace these differences and let them become limitations in their academic and professional careers . It's high time we start combating the unconscious bias. Bringing in a diversity and inclusion expert or implementing unconscious bias training at very young age in schools will help ensure that we have much evolved society.

Let's embrace the feminine side and build an holistic approach which ensures Conscience Capitalism, Ethics with Economics, Thinking with Heart and Feeling with Mind and so on. Let's salute and embrace the strength of feminine energy in ourselves and prevent the collapses of Lehman Brother and more

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