



The Executive's Paradox: How to Stretch When You're Pulled by Opposing Demands

David G. Jensen

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"When I find a short seller, I want to tear his heart out and eat it before his eyes while he's still alive." That's Dick Fuld, the high-commanding former CEO of the now-defunct Lehman Brothers (founded in 1850)... Before the Great Recession, Fuld's chief risk officer at Lehman Brothers issued a warning about the "sense of complacency" regarding risk. Two months later, the bull-in-the-china-shop Fuld gored his own risk officer. Fuld sacked her because he was unable or unwilling to address **THE EXECUTIVE'S PARADOX**.

In fact, Fuld failed to stretch when he was pulled by two distinct paradoxes -- one leadership and one strategic... Instead of managing the tension between his commanding leadership style (take-charge drill sergeant) AND his empowering style (take-care servant leader), Fuld's drill sergeant always won the tug-of-war. In addition, Fuld also failed to manage a strategic paradox - the one most responsible for the Great Recession: increasing profits AND mitigating risk...

--- Unfortunately, Fuld is not the great exception of what happens when leaders mismanage **THE EXECUTIVE'S PARADOX**, he is the great example. Consider...

1. Toyota, long the high-flyer in the auto industry, crashed and lost \$2.5 billion more than General Motors during the Great Recession. Toyota leaders over-focused on growth instead of managing the tension between growth AND quality.
2. Boeing's innovative 787 aircraft, the Dreamliner, was more than three years late and billions of dollars over budget because executives mismanaged the stability AND change paradox.
3. High-tech guru Geoffrey Moore points out that many former technology giants, such as Digital Equipment Corporation, Silicon Graphics, and Wang, lost their way because they failed to stretch when pulled by today's realities AND tomorrow's dreams.

--- These anecdotes are the tip of the iceberg - the stories we all see in the popular press. There is a mass of research evidence below the surface demonstrating that leaders who fail to manage **THE EXECUTIVE'S PARADOX** fail to lead effectively. One study of more than 1,000 organizations discovered that 45 out of every 100 executives suffered sinking profits because they mismanaged their paradoxes...

If you ever feel like you're paddling down a raging river with crowds of demanding stakeholders on opposite riverbanks, all shouting at you to paddle to their side at the same time, this book is for you.

--- **THE EXECUTIVE'S PARADOX** teaches you how to avoid picking sides when you're pulled by opposing leadership and strategic demands. You learn to stretch, not snap, as you develop new, business-boosting skills, such as how to:

- Expand your long-term, strategic thinking AND deliver short-term, bottom-line results.
- Gain buy-in to any change AND build a platform of stability.
- Demand accountability for results AND increase employee engagement.
- Innovate by exploring the future AND optimize by exploiting the present.

--- **DAVID JENSEN** knows your leadership challenges because he faced them when he was an executive. He understands that you have many options to deal with your challenges because he's studied them as a researcher. Dave delivers proven tools that get results because he's tested what works with over 10,000 leaders. Isn't it time to put his decades of leadership experience to work for you by reading ***THE EXECUTIVE'S PARADOX?***

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