



Schachter Monthly

By Ephraim Schachter • Mar 01, 2022
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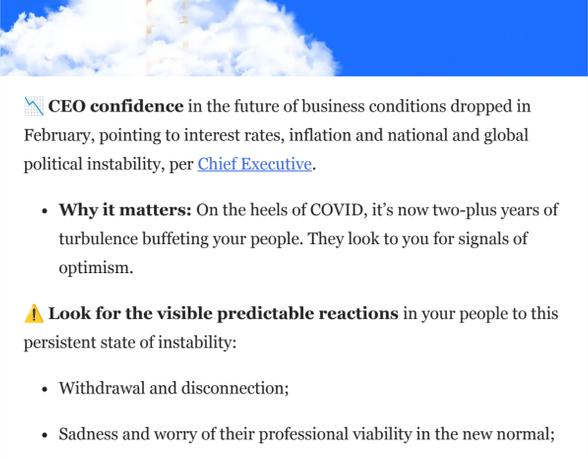
🌱 **Happy March** to my Business and HR exec friends! Here are this month's straightforward insights and actionable tools & tips.

🇺🇦 **Situational awareness:** As of this writing, Ukraine is still under attack. Ways to support its people, [here](#).

- Books will be written about President Volodymyr Zelensky's leadership through this existential crisis.

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1 big thing: Optimism amid instability



📊 **CEO confidence** in the future of business conditions dropped in February, pointing to interest rates, inflation and national and global political instability, per [Chief Executive](#).

- **Why it matters:** On the heels of COVID, it's now two-plus years of turbulence buffeting your people. They look to you for signals of optimism.

🚩 **Look for the visible predictable reactions** in your people to this persistent state of instability:

- Withdrawal and disconnection;
- Sadness and worry of their professional viability in the new normal;
- Outward expressions of anger; or
- Confusion and busywork.

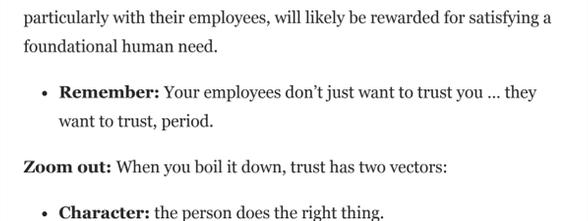
You're only human, and might even recognize yourself in one or more categories. If only intermittently.

🔍 **CEOs & top tiers of leadership** are scrutinized for cues signaling optimism, or a lack thereof. It's their words and deeds that shape expectations and drive behavior.

🔥 **The leadership imperative:** Exercise your stewardship and redirect your colleagues to productivity by modeling and rewarding three key traits:

1. **Equanimity** — Get centered and take a breath. As the Brits said in the World War II poster, "Keep Calm and Carry On."
2. **Agility** — Loosen up to find your bearings in evolving circumstances.
3. **Direction** — Help others distinguish the signal from the noise.

2. Leading in an era of low trust



📰 **What's new:** Americans' trust in institutions continues to drop, with big business and government at about one-third and 40%, respectively, per [Morning Consult](#).

Why it matters: CEOs and senior leaders who focus on building trust, particularly with their employees, will likely be rewarded for satisfying a foundational human need.

- **Remember:** Your employees don't just want to trust you ... they want to trust, period.

Zoom out: When you boil it down, trust has two vectors:

- **Character:** the person does the right thing.
- **Competence:** the person does things right.

Zoom in: Character deficiency is a company's risk factor. Most key leaders can do the technical side of their job just fine.

CXOs can take hold of this lever for competitive advantage.

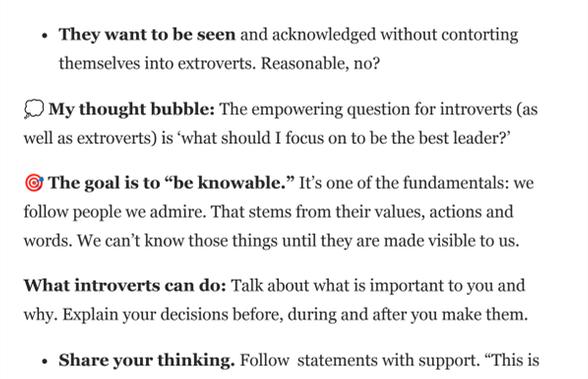
👉 **Identify established leaders** with a trust deficit. You know who they are.

- Examples include, low empathy, intimidation, solo agendas, team disengagement.
- Provide tough-but-honest feedback and support their professional development.

👑 **Scope out and visibly promote leaders** of high integrity who inspire loyalty. They're not hard to find.

The bottom line: While it's not Corporate America's obligation, alone, to heal low institutional trust, it's to everyone's benefit.

3. Introversion and organizational leadership



Introverted leaders who seek validation for their inward style sometimes miss out on the opportunity to be profoundly outwardly effective.

- **Why it matters:** This can limit their impact and lead to frustration.

📰 **The topic of introversion** is clickbait online. Articles shoot to "Most Read" shortly after they're posted, e.g., this recent one in [The Atlantic](#).

- My own ["The #1 Mistake Introverted VPs Make in Meetings"](#) is the most viewed item on our website.

Big picture: Introverts' many gifts, skills, aptitudes and talents often get overlooked in an extroverted corporate culture.

- **They want to be seen** and acknowledged without contorting themselves into extroverts. Reasonable, no?

💬 **My thought bubble:** The empowering question for introverts (as well as extroverts) is 'what should I focus on to be the best leader?'

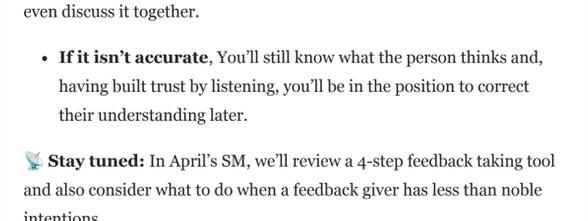
🎯 **The goal is to "be knowable."** It's one of the fundamentals: we follow people we admire. That stems from their values, actions and words. We can't know those things until they are made visible to us.

What introverts can do: Talk about what is important to you and why. Explain your decisions before, during and after you make them.

- **Share your thinking.** Follow statements with support. "This is important because ..."

👉 Go deeper: My take on how hard work alone no longer differentiates a senior leader, [here](#).

4. March pro tip: Taking feedback



👉 **Learning how** to receive tough feedback is critical to your success as an executive.

- **Why it matters:** Not cultivating this skill may mean lost opportunities for the self-awareness, professional growth and relationship-building key to leading large, complex organizations.

Tough feedback is hard to take. You might recognize and agree with it and that hurts. Alternatively, you may disagree with the substance finding it unfair and off the mark.

👤 **Take it anyway.** Proceed under the assumption that the giver is well intentioned and that the substance is more-or-less accurate.

- **Their intention** is for you to change your behavior in order to produce better outcomes for the work group, organization, or even, you.

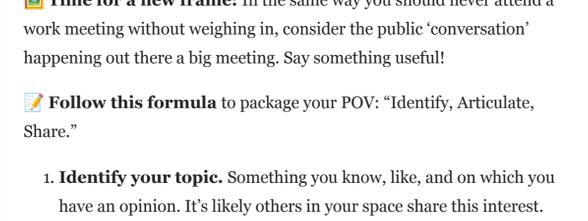
The bottom line: Whether or not the substance is accurate, they believe it and are trying to help. Your gracious acceptance projects you as a trustworthy leader and your work relationship will improve. That helps to get stuff done.

💡 **Besides**, if the feedback is accurate, don't you need to know this about your performance? The odds are that everyone else does. They may even discuss it together.

- **If it isn't accurate**, You'll still know what the person thinks and, having built trust by listening, you'll be in the position to correct their understanding later.

🐦 **Stay tuned:** In April's SM, we'll review a 4-step feedback taking tool and also consider what to do when a feedback giver has less than noble intentions.

5. Career Corner: Package your POV



📦 **Career-savvy** senior leaders understand that their external 'market value' influences how they're seen, compensated and promoted within their organizations.

- That's why some shop outside offers with no real intention to leave. Right?

Why it matters: Many others are squeamish about seeking outside profile and don't do enough of it.

- **They wrongly believe** their boss wants them internally-focused, minding the fort. They don't want to signal self-interest.

The reality is that your organization economically benefits when your value is increased. Star talent attracts more star talent. It's an asset to you AND them.

📦 **Package your Point of View** to increase your market value. Share your thinking to build your brand and authority. To get known ... you have to be known *for something*.

📅 **Time for a new frame:** In the same way you should never attend a work meeting without weighing in, consider the public 'conversation' happening out there a big meeting. Say something useful!

📄 **Follow this formula** to package your POV: "Identify, Articulate, Share."

1. **Identify your topic.** Something you know, like, and on which you have an opinion. It's likely others in your space share this interest.
2. **Articulate your content.** Write 300-700 words following your formulaic structure of choice. The 4Mat and S-O-A-R work well.
3. **Share your POV.** Put it put there in formal and informal publications. This can be a blog post, LinkedIn update, or article for a trade association newsletter.
 - Don't forget live events. Sit on a panel or alumni group webinar.

💡 **At a loss?** piggyback off of others' published content by commenting with well-reasoned, additive insights.

📧 **Thanks for** starting March with us. *Please invite your friends and colleagues to [sign up](#) for Schachter Monthly.*

- 🌐 See you in April!

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