



**SCALABLE  
LEADERSHIP**

# 4 STEPS TO SCALABLE LEADERSHIP

How to improve your leadership to scale up your business growth



## CONTENTS

<b>Scalable leadership – the key to business growth</b>	4
What is scalable leadership?	4
The scalable leadership cycle	5
<b>The four-step program to scalable leadership</b>	6
1. Create local order	7
2. Unbore the boring	8
3. Enjoy being led	9
4. Break your bubble	10
<b>The scalable leader's checklist</b>	11

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**BUSINESSES DON'T  
FAIL BECAUSE OF  
A BAD PRODUCT  
OR UNQUALIFIED  
STAFF.**

**THEY FAIL BECAUSE  
OF LEADERSHIP.**

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# SCALABLE LEADERSHIP – THE KEY TO BUSINESS GROWTH

You can choose to make leadership the key element in spurring your business success. To do so, you need to scale your time, skills and knowledge and create an environment where the people you lead can flourish.

The world and business are changing. To find balance between chaos and order and to use the continuous change to drive business growth, leaders need to change. In this ebook, we'll describe how scalable leadership can help you better meet the requirements of a modern leader – predicting what's to come, adapting to rapid changes, making decisions faster and seizing opportunities that are profitable in the long-term as opposed to simply dealing with the urgent, but not important, issues.

## What is scalable leadership?

Scalable leadership is not about you leading others. It's about creating an environment where people can lead each other. Scalable leadership is the way to build your organization in a way that strengthens its organic growth. It's about making sure your people share the same goals and find meaning in working towards them together as a team. It's about making your people feel energized and encouraging them to take responsibility and support each other. It's about creating success by allowing people to actually enjoy their work.

## The scalable leadership cycle

Scalable leadership is a cyclical form of leadership, based on four sequential and partly overlapping phases. No matter what your current situation is, the scalable leadership cycle will provide you with a systematic approach to develop your leadership.

- 1 First, you create a local order to cope with the chaotic reality.

*How? Collect and analyze information, list facts and presumptions and document your findings. This is how you understand where your organization is right now - think about it as a map for your organization.*

- 2 Then you make the best out of the local order to keep it enchanting.

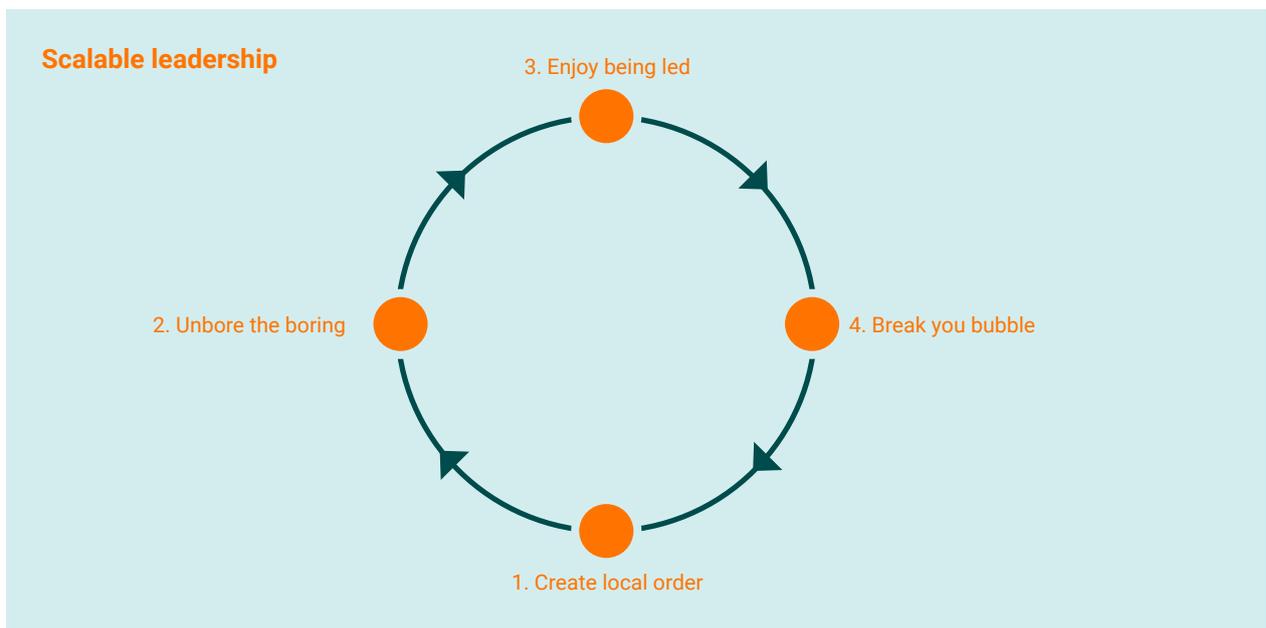
*How? Co-create plans and processes to make people more committed to implementing them. This is when you work with your colleagues to create something great together.*

- 3 Once you've managed to engage your people in co-creation, it's time to empower them to steer your company to success.

*How? Recruit people who don't need to be managed, engage your employees in decision making and share responsibility more than you'd normally dare, to the extent that it makes you uncomfortable. Let your people do the magic for you while you have your eyes on the next phase.*

- 4 Let your people to do the magic, until something changes so drastically that re-orientation is required – you need to break the bubble you created.

*How? Regularly review your organization's road map to examine if the presumptions made before are still valid. More often than not, something has changed and it's time to break the current bubble and create a new one.*





## THE FOUR-STEP PROGRAM TO SCALABLE LEADERSHIP

**SCALABLE LEADERSHIP IS A JOURNEY TO UNEXPLORED TERRITORY.**

To help you get started, we have created a four-step program, in which scalable leadership is more of a journey than a destination. It's an adventure with some inevitable pit stops, occasional motor breakdowns and speeding tickets, but also with exciting detours taking you to unexplored territory and offering eye-opening experiences.

Following these steps will allow you to make more time for the most important goal – growing your business.

## 1. Create local order

As a leader, you need information to make quick decisions. Searching for information is one thing – we all know how to google and find millions of hits for a single search term. Analyzing and finding the right information is where the challenge kicks in. The answers to all your questions are out there but how to dig them up?

Local order is a method for leaders to find the right answers and make faster decisions. It allows leaders to achieve peace of mind and focus their energy on the most important. Local order consists of facts, presumptions and guidelines brought down to a practical level. They might not be absolutely correct, but they are good enough to guide you. Documenting the local order is key so that you can revise and change it later.

***WE ALL KNOW HOW TO GOOGLE BUT FINDING THE RIGHT INFORMATION IS WHERE THE CHALLENGE KICKS IN.***

### ★ PRACTICAL TIP:

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## Start by answering 4 simple questions

Start building your local order by co-creating the answers to the following questions:

- 1) What do your customers need?
- 2) What does your staff need?
- 3) What should we do next?
- 4) What should we stop doing?

You can use interviews or simple co-creation tools, like Innoduel, to create the answer. Don't overdo it by trying to write a perfect marketing text for each. Just collect and prioritize a list of the most relevant answers, e.g. five answers to each question. In most cases, this will be enough to guide you on your way.

**★ PRACTICAL TIP:**  
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## Use co-creation to help turn strategy into action

Sometimes you need to do it twice to get it right – do, fail, learn and do it better. This is the path one of our customers went down during their strategy process. On the first try, the company put a significant amount of time and effort into creating a strategy but it was never put into action. Basically, they just ran out of gas when the implementation was about to start.

The strategy was left in to gather dust because it was created by a small strategy team in their own bubble of strategy and goals. This left the vast majority, the people who were supposed to implement the strategy, in another “real life” bubble.

To do things differently the second time around, the company involved a larger group of people in co-creating the foundation for the strategy. During the process, the expanded team became aware and interested in the strategy process and were engaged in the terminology and topics.

Now, when the strategy planning was done, it was much easier to implement the strategy as people were already aware and felt the strategy was their “own”.

## 2. Unbore the boring

After you’ve created your local order and defined what needs to be done, you’ll have to create a process to get it done. Process by definition implies something boring to most. To successfully build and implement processes, we recommend that you weed the boring out of the process.

Co-creation is a way to inspire people to find creative solutions to achieve shared goals. When people are co-creating, they’re not merely filling in the blanks of existing processes. Instead, they are defining completely new ways of doing things while simultaneously committing themselves to adopt the new approach in their behavior.

Although sometimes it’s better to get things done than make them perfect, co-creation is a way to increase the chances of making implementation more perfect. Implementing new plans and changes will be more agile as people who participate in creating them are more likely committed from the start.

All this leads to better outcomes for your business. In modern business, success is built on teamwork with different people working together and helping each other to exceed their limits.

### 3. Enjoy being led

Enjoying being led is about those magic moments when you see that your team has really stepped up, delivering something great without you lifting a finger. Those moments when you can proudly say: "I can take a month off from work without anything stopping!"

You know you are there and can enjoy the ride when:

- Your team has shared goals and they work together to achieve them
- Your team consists of self-driven and proactive people who don't need to be managed
- Your team has the freedom to excel in what they do and necessary support to do so
- Your team understand that with freedom comes responsibility, ready to carry that responsibility

If you experience these magic moments every day, you are already on the scalable leadership path. Most likely your scalable approach is also reflected in your business results.

***"I CAN TAKE A MONTH OFF FROM WORK WITHOUT ANYTHING STOPPING!"***

★ PRACTICAL TIP:

### Recruit the right people

To truly enjoy being led, you need to recruit self-driven people who proactively take responsibility. To ensure you hire people with the right attitude, ask your candidates, what would they do if you disappeared for a month. Observe their initial reactions and comments. It might reveal a great deal about their readiness to enjoy the freedom you offer and take on responsibility.

If you are still seeking your magic leadership moments, or they are a rare treat, make sure that

1. Your daily decisions are based on shared values to which you and your people are committed. When the decision making in your organization is guided by strong shared values, it makes leadership more predictable and scalable. So by relying on strong values, you encourage your colleagues to use them as a basis for decision making.

2. Give more freedom and responsibility than you'd normally dare and let people surprise you positively. You'll know, you've shared enough responsibility when you find yourself uncomfortable with allowing all that freedom, struggling with letting go of your power.

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★ PRACTICAL TIP:

## Verify the crucial presumptions

*A simple example from our early history.*

We had based our business strategy on a tested presumption that people wish to have a mobile application these days. So, we built one. However, when we started selling the app, we noticed that even though our customer companies were excited about the mobile app, their customers and employees weren't willing to put in the extra effort to download it. Instead, they were happy using our responsive browser-based application, despite some obvious limitations.

Thus, we had to break our bubble and build a new local order based on the new information. This led our R&D and, in fact, our whole business model to a completely new direction with the main focus on being the world's easiest tool for co-creation. Consequently, we broke our bubble and created a new local order.

## 4. Break your bubble

So, now you have your local order. You created a comfortable bubble that allows you to make sense of the chaotic world. However, your bubble is based on presumptions and it can only describe the world partially. At some point you notice that the world has changed and you must break your bubble or you go down the drain with your inaccurate presumptions.

The first step in breaking the bubble is to understand it has to be done. We all build bubbles but breaking them is only possible if we've clearly written down the facts, presumptions and logic behind our local order. Start by revising those presumptions e.g. answers to the four questions described in step 1. If you find that something has changed, build a new local order based on the new facts and presumptions.

***THE BUBBLE YOU  
CREATED CAN ONLY  
DESCRIBE THE  
WORLD PARTIALLY.***

# THE SCALABLE LEADER'S CHECKLIST

Need more time for growing your business and focusing on long-term opportunities? It's worth finding out if scalable leadership is what you need to make that time.

We hope this list will help you start taking steps towards scalable leadership and lead your business to thrive.

## Keep it simple – stick with the basics when creating your local order

- ✓ Have you identified and documented the facts, your presumptions and the expectations from your customers and employees?
- ✓ Have you engaged your employees and customers in deciding what to focus on next and what not to spend energy on?
- ✓ Do your employees understand the logic behind your local order and commit to it?

## Processes are boring? Unbore them!

- ✓ Have you made co-creation as simple as possible by using the most efficient, yet easy-to-use, methods and digital tools for engaging your key people?
- ✓ Do you encourage employees to use their creativity every day and make changes in an agile way?

## Do the groundwork – build a solid culture on trust, freedom and responsibility

- ✓ Are your decisions and shared goals based on co-created values?
- ✓ Have you given your employees more freedom and responsibility than you'd normally dare?
- ✓ When recruiting, are you asking relevant questions that reveal how self-driven your candidates are?

## Don't let the pain of breaking your bubble daunt you – the positive effects of breaking it will be much greater

Have you revised your local order regularly and tested if your presumptions are still valid? Have you broken your bubble and made necessary changes in the past 12 months?

Small steps are better than no steps – the point is to get on the road. Remember, scalable leadership is not a destination, it's a journey. And yes, some steps are more important than others – the key is to take steps that put you ahead of your competition.

**SCALABLE LEADERSHIP  
IS NOT ABOUT YOU  
LEADING OTHERS.**

**IT'S ABOUT CREATING  
AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE  
PEOPLE CAN LEAD EACH  
OTHER.**

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