

Digital Transformation & Interoperability



ANALYSIS - EVALUATION - OPPORTUNITIES - KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Everton Santos, Spencer Corbett

KLAS Insights 2025: How Global Healthcare is Investing in AI, Cloud and Digital Transformation

Emma Scatterty

Building Digital Skills and Leadership in Scotland

Chrystalla Charalambous

Digital Therapeutics: Transforming Healthcare Through Innovation and Addressing Key Gaps

Crystal Broj

The Rise of the "Phygital" Command Centre: Connecting Technology and Human Touch in Healthcare

Thierry Godelle

How Interoperability and Automation Are Reshaping Medication Management in European Hospital Pharmacies

Anca del Río

Reinventing Health Systems from the Core: Integrating Data, Technology and Talent for the Future of Care

Márcio Silva

Healthcare 4.0: Why Digital Transformation and Interoperability Are Key to Future-Proofing Hospital Management

Dr. KaT Zarychta

Mental Health in the Digital Era





Creating Your Leadership Legacy: Aligning Purpose, Passion and Impact

Healthcare leaders can create a lasting legacy by aligning purpose with values, building authentic relationships and fostering trust. Emphasising emotional intelligence, daily intentional actions and psychological safety, values-driven leadership enables lasting impact. A true legacy is measured not by titles, but by lives influenced and communities strengthened through consistent, compassionate leadership.



DR. DAVID L.
SCHREINER,
PH.D.

Fellow of the
American College of
Healthcare Executives
(FACHE) |
Dixon, USA

key points

- Legacy is defined by how others experience your leadership, not just achievements.
- Values-driven leadership inspires action and fosters authentic relationships.
- Emotional intelligence is essential for creating trust and psychological safety.
- Daily intentional actions shape a meaningful and lasting leadership legacy.
- Great leaders align personal purpose with organisational impact and community care.

Imagine, for a moment, that you've announced your retirement from your leadership role. You're walking through the hospital or office for what might be the last time. People stop to shake your hand, share heartfelt stories and sincerely say, "Thank you." What do you hope they're expressing in that moment? How do you want to be remembered? Welcome to the profound yet accessible concept of your leadership legacy.

Your leadership legacy transcends a mere record of accomplishments; it is the lasting impression you leave on those you've impacted. Especially within healthcare, where stakes are high and human connections critical, leaders wield enormous influence not through hierarchical authority alone, but through meaningful relationships, consistent

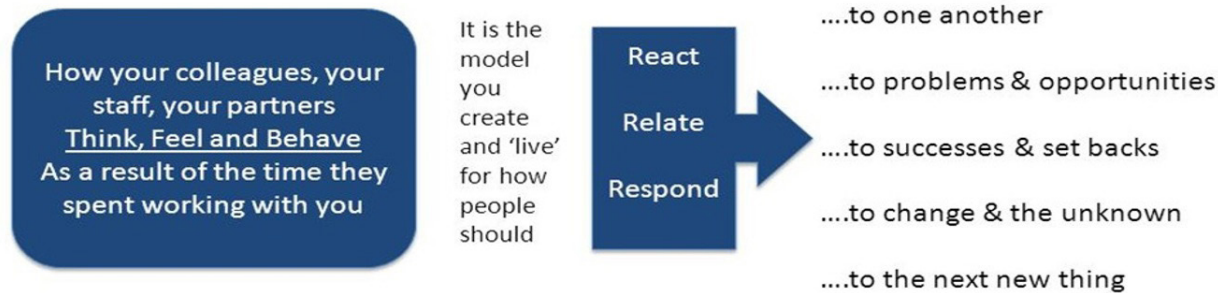
actions and steadfast values. Crafting your legacy, therefore, is an intentional journey—shaping tomorrow through deliberate engagement today.

Defining Your Legacy

While the idea of legacy can seem grand and perhaps intimidating, at its essence, it is deeply human and relational. In their insightful work "Your Leadership Legacy" (2006), Robert Galford and Regina Fazio Maruca assert that legacy is fundamentally how others experience your leadership. Are you remembered as a passionate advocate tirelessly championing your community's healthcare needs? Perhaps you're seen as an innovative builder who introduced entrepreneurial energy into healthcare delivery. Or maybe you're the empathetic



What is a Leadership Legacy?



lies not merely in aspiration but in its practical, everyday application. The source question I try to solve is this: How can I engage in a more meaningful way with the people who matter the most?

“Your leadership legacy transcends a mere record of accomplishments; it is the lasting impression you leave on those you’ve impacted.”

Your legacy is not about image it is about effect

It is about you becoming a role model for others

Figure 1. What is a Leadership Legacy? Source: HIMSS. (2025). Creating Your Leadership Legacy [Conference Presentation]. HIMSS Executive Summit.

guide whose thoughtful advice and genuine care nurtured countless professional journeys.

In my leadership journey, I’ve realised that a meaningful legacy is grounded in authenticity and sincere relational connections. When I recently spoke at the HIMSS conference alongside Sara Johnson, we highlighted that your legacy emerges naturally when your vision aligns seamlessly with personal values—a concept central to my work, which I call Values-Driven Leadership.

Values-Driven Leadership: The Core of Your Legacy

Values-driven leadership involves leveraging core beliefs to inspire purposeful action, encourage innovation and enhance organisational well-being. In my best-selling book, “Be the Best Part of Their Day, Supercharging Communication with Values-Driven Leadership” (Schreiner 2024), I emphasise that truly transformative leaders constantly learn, bravely challenge norms and passionately innovate for others’ betterment. The power of this philosophy

Today’s leaders have the tremendous advantage that organisations increasingly recognise the significance of “soft skills”—traits such as empathy, humility and emotional intelligence—as foundational competencies for executive roles. More companies are prioritising empathy, humility and self-awareness over administrative, financial and technical skills, talent leaders told *Fortune* (Colvin 2023). Becker’s Hospital Review (2023) confirms that healthcare boards now seek leaders who excel in emotional and relational capabilities, acknowledging these as vital for sustained success. Such leaders foster psychological safety, where employees freely share ideas, voice concerns and innovate without fear—an environment critical to growth and resilience, as highlighted by Amy Edmondson’s extensive research (Nembhard & Edmonson 2006).



Crafting a Legacy with Intention

To construct a meaningful, enduring legacy, leaders must begin with deep self-awareness. Reflect on this question: “What unique contribution can only I provide?” Whether you excel as an Ambassador smoothing challenging relationships, an Advocate fiercely promoting essential causes or a People-Mover adept at nurturing talent, your leadership style should reflect your authentic self.

In my own experience, I’ve embraced my roles as a Relationship Builder and Change Leader, anchored deeply in the ACE model—Ask, Connect, Energise. This framework has profoundly influenced my ability

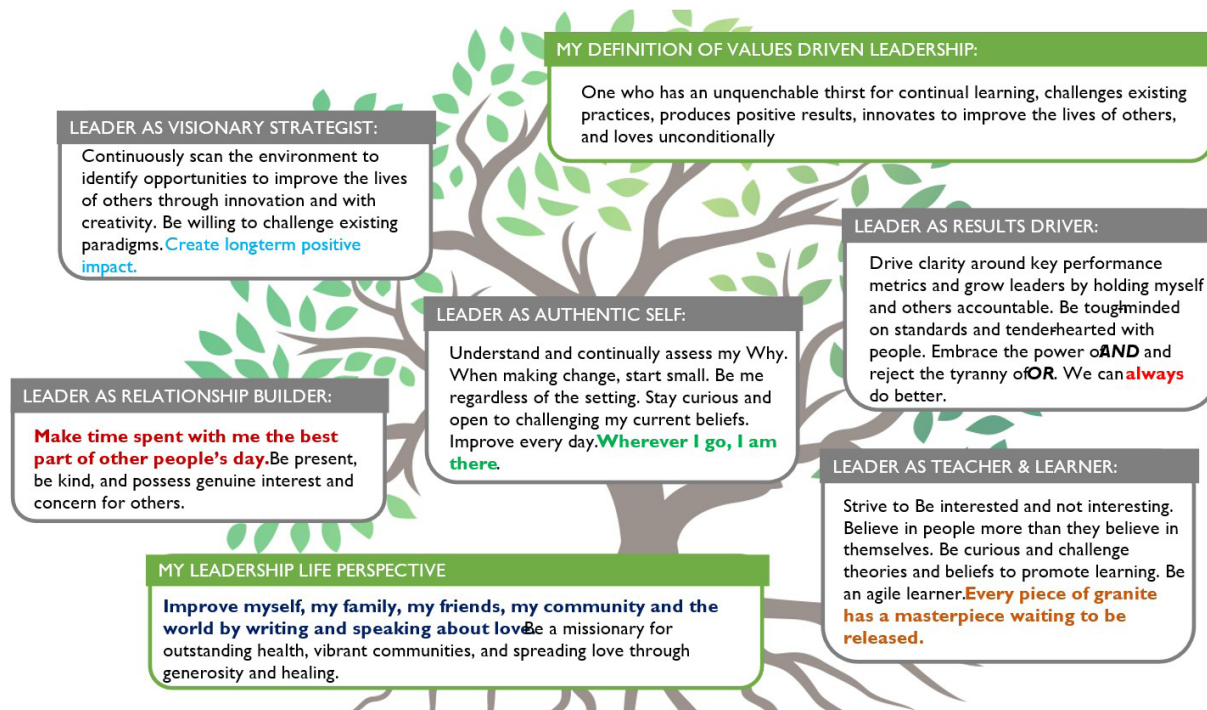
to cultivate meaningful relationships. By consistently asking insightful questions, connecting authentically on a personal level and energetically engaging stakeholders, leaders transform ordinary interactions into extraordinary opportunities for lasting impact.

Personal Connections: The Lifeline of Leadership

Creating genuine personal connections is particularly crucial in healthcare settings. Hospitals are not merely institutions; they’re often community lifelines facing unique and daunting challenges—from financial instability to staffing shortages. Effective

leaders recognise that their legacy is intricately woven through these empathetic, personalised interactions.

“The source question I try to solve is this: How can I engage in a more meaningful way with the people who matter the most?”



My research on rural hospital leadership underscores that the most effective leaders intentionally engage diverse stakeholders—employees, physicians, board members, executives and community members—through genuine, heartfelt interactions. When a leader makes every interaction a positive, memorable experience—truly the best part of someone else’s day—a powerful shift occurs. Morale improves, loyalty deepens and organisational effectiveness skyrockets. Such leaders are cherished not just for their professional accomplishments but also for their authenticity, warmth and kindness.

Building Psychological Safety and Trust

Legacy-minded leaders deeply understand the role of psychological safety in organisational excellence. Amy Edmondson’s groundbreaking work (Nembhard & Edmonson 2006) demonstrates that teams

Figure 2. What is Values-Driven Leadership? Source: Schreiner DL (2024)



excel in environments built on trust and openness. Employees must confidently express their thoughts, concerns and innovations without fear. For healthcare leaders, cultivating this psychological safety demands vulnerability and transparency. Leaders who candidly admit mistakes, actively seek feedback and genuinely listen to it build trust, invite innovation and ensure organisational agility. Such transparency isn't a weakness; it's a profound strength.

The Legacy Mindset: Daily Actions

Crafting your leadership legacy requires purposeful daily actions guided by clear intent. One powerful practice I advocate is developing and consistently updating a Leadership Tree—a personal legacy statement and values roadmap. Updating my leadership tree quarterly ensures clarity, alignment and intentionality. A favourite legacy statement of mine states, “Understand and continually assess my ‘Why.’ When initiating change, start small, remain authentically myself in every setting and maintain curiosity, openly challenging my own assumptions.”

Regularly revisiting your Leadership Tree anchors your purpose, guiding daily decisions and behaviours toward positive organisational and community outcomes. With this intentional clarity, your actions naturally align with your broader vision, transforming daily leadership into enduring impact.

Leaving a Lasting Impact

Your leadership legacy ultimately reflects your courage to challenge norms, your ability to forge meaningful connections and your unwavering commitment to empower others. Exceptional legacy

builders embrace a philosophy of “And” (see Fig. 2), recognising it's possible to uphold high standards rigorously while caring deeply for individuals. They innovate creatively and constantly question limiting beliefs.

“Your leadership legacy is the story others will tell long after you've stepped away.”

Think of your leadership as an ongoing dialogue between teacher and learner, perpetually ready to adapt, evolve and grow. Each interaction becomes a powerful opportunity to positively affect someone's life. Tomorrow, as you engage colleagues and staff, pause momentarily and ask yourself, “Did I genuinely make today better for those around me?”

Healthcare leadership legacy isn't merely historical; it actively shapes the future. Passionately, authentically and intentionally embrace your role. Let every decision, every conversation and every meaningful connection reflect your enduring legacy vision.

A Legacy Worth Building

In my decades leading Katherine Shaw Bethea Hospital, I've discovered the profound impact of values-driven leadership. My legacy is measured not by titles or accolades but by lives improved, futures shaped and communities strengthened. The beautiful

reality of creating a leadership legacy is its everyday accessibility—every moment holds the potential to create a meaningful, enduring impact.

Ultimately, your leadership legacy is the story others will tell long after you have stepped away. Make it a story filled with purpose, passion, compassion and transformative impact. Your legacy isn't merely something you leave behind; it's something vibrant, alive and continuously unfolding through the lives of those you've influenced.

Conflict of Interest

The author receives royalties from Advantage Media. He also holds the position of Executive in Residence in Vizient, Inc.



references

Becker's Hospital Review (2023) Emotional Intelligence in Leadership. Becker's Hospital Review, 29 March 2023 (accessed: 21 March 2025). Available from beckershospitalreview.com/uncategorized/emotional-intelligence-in-leadership

Colvin G (2023) The empathetic executive: Top headhunters are turning away from cutthroat leaders and looking for CEOs with better soft skills. Fortune, 16 November 2023 (accessed: 21 March 2025). Available from fortune.com/2023/11/16/ceo-empathy-self-awareness-top-recruiters-soft-skills

Galford RM, Maruca RF (2006) Your Leadership Legacy: Why Looking Toward the Future Will Make You a Better Leader Today. Harvard Business Review Press, 208 p.

Nembhard IM & Edmondson AC (2006) Making It Safe: The Effects of Leader Inclusiveness and Professional Status on Psychological Safety and Improvement Efforts in Health Care Teams. Journal of Organizational Behavior, 27(7), 941–966.

Schreiner DL (2024) Be the Best Part of Their Day, Supercharging Communication with Values-Driven Leadership. Advantage Media Group, 139 p.



HealthManagement

Promoting Management and Leadership