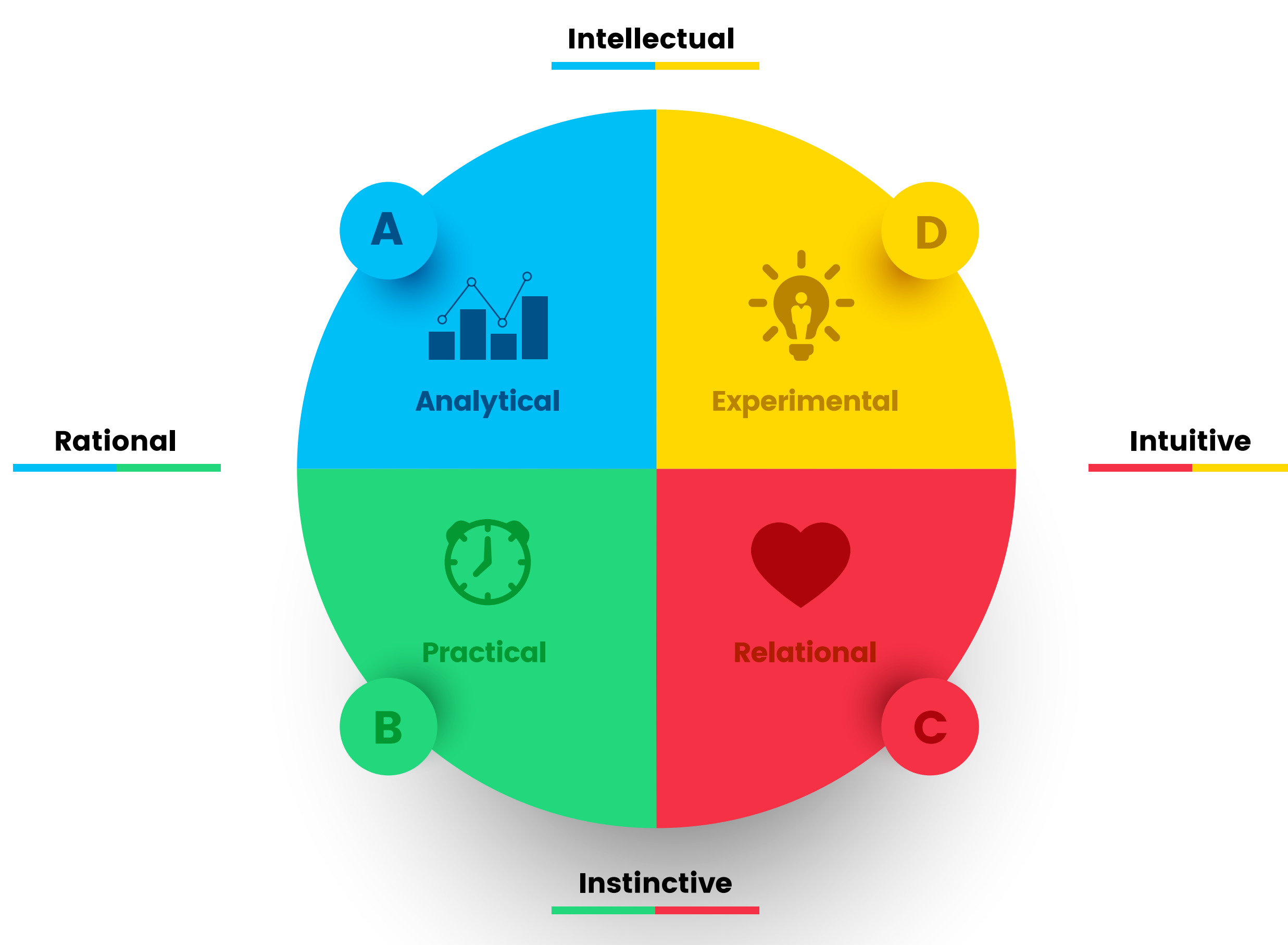


5 Guidelines to an Entrepreneurial Organization

From the Co-founder of the world's largest PC software company, Bill Gates who redefined home computing, to "The Grandfather of the Digital Revolution," Steve Jobs who forever changed the consumer electronics industry, to Mark Zuckerberg's Facebook, to Uber's founder Travis Kalanick, these famous entrepreneurs have one thing in common: they challenged the status quo and flourished in an increasingly competitive global market place. Entrepreneurship is a driving force of progress. There is a big shift in most of entrepreneurial thinking that is moving from the traditional thinking, problem solving and paying-attention-to-details with its left-brain foundation, to a critical focus on visualization, creativity, relationships and collaboration, which are more in the domain of right-brainers. Whole Brain® Thinking is a methodology designed to help thinkers, teams and organizations to better leverage the full spectrum of thinking available. It acknowledges that while different tasks require different mental processes and different people prefer different kinds of thinking, organizations will get better results once they can strategically leverage the full spectrum of thinking available, Whole Brain® thinking is not only reserved for Einstein and Picasso, it teaches you to capitalize on these strengths and build a business. When this technology is used in operations it allows effective communication, guidance, management and problem solving, better and more robust decision making and personal developments while it shapes a comprehensive and complete personality. The following guiding principles apply to every entrepreneur-minded person:

1. Knowing thyself and others

Building a business is a journey of individual growth, understanding personal discomforts and the attempt to courageously move past the comfort zone. When you transform yourself, you transform your business. Diverse cognitive preferences can cause tremendous tensions in any group, yet innovation requires the cross-fertilization of ideas. And because many new products are systems, rather than stand-alone pieces, many business projects cannot proceed without the cooperation of people who receive different messages from the same words and make different observations about the same incidents. The single most valuable contribution of comprehending different thinking and communication styles helps on the process of innovation.



An Entrepreneur is a comprehensive character who uses full capacity of his brain (the right and left hemisphere and four quadrants of the brain). Such entrepreneur should have the characteristics of an artist (creativity and innovation), those of an investigator and inventor (cognition of different dimensions of issues, discovery of phenomena) and finally those of a judge for the evaluation of ideas. Research findings show that an entrepreneur who cannot utilize the quadrant A of his brain lacks proper analytical and rational power and also is not able to improve and practice ideas. An Entrepreneur who does not utilize the B quadrant has a weak planning and schedule, lacks a prospective idea and suffers from the inability to do risk management. In addition, the entrepreneur who does not utilize quadrant C is very weak in teamwork and has poor risk management. The Entrepreneur who does not utilize quadrant D has not sufficient courage to do risk taking and lacks power of creativity and innovation. Therefore, a successful entrepreneur is somebody who takes advantage of a total capacity of the brain.

2. Empowering all employees

In the entrepreneurial sector, leaders need to understand when to adopt a directive leadership style and when to empower their people, because while overly directive and authoritarian leadership cripples creativity, being too permissive can result in great ideas never being realised. At the inception of a project, leaders should grant high levels of autonomy (in order to develop ideas and identify opportunities) and also set clear expectations in terms of deadlines and deliverables. As projects progress, with ideas and strategies becoming more concrete, leaders should adopt a more directive approach to consolidate ideas and ensure the project is completed and delivered on time. Valve, a multinational, billion dollar video games developer and distributor, takes the idea of empowerment to the extreme in that it has no managers. Valve understands that the video games industry is fast-paced and that the only way to stay ahead is to remain innovative. By having a completely flat hierarchy, employees are more committed in their work as they not only decide what project they want to work on, but also are responsible for recruiting and organising fellow team members.

3. Building talented entrepreneurial teams

Turning an enterprise into a talent-development engine is critical to retaining staff and filling senior-leadership roles. If an enterprise proves it's good at growing leaders from within, talented people will want to keep working at this environment. Innovation is usually considered as the product of heroic individual efforts. In reality, every innovation is the result of coordinated teamwork, which can be achieved by building entrepreneurial teams. The secret to creating a true synergy between individual team members, where they can function like different organs of the same body, is to look for harmonious beliefs and values but complementary skills and styles. Members of whole-brained teams don't naturally understand one another and they can easily end up disliking one another. Successful managers of diverse groups spend time from the outset getting members to acknowledge their differences—often through a joint exploration of the results of a diagnostic analysis—and devise guidelines for working together before attempting to act on the problem at hand.

4. Creating an entrepreneurial culture

An entrepreneurial culture is an open inclusive culture where social interaction and the communication of ideas are actively facilitated. By increasing communication employees are able to share different ideas, perspectives and approaches. Culture is important for an entrepreneurial venture because it is the mechanism that institutionalizes the values of its founders. Culture serves to socialize new employees, it helps them understand how they should treat the customers, how they should treat each other, how they should account for their jobs and how to generally blend in and be successful within the business.

Richard Branson has been the prototypical entrepreneur throughout the years. Since starting the Virgin Group, 46 years ago, he's overseen hundreds of companies around the world, in a wide range of industries, bearing the Virgin name. Richard Branson has consistently explained over the years that entrepreneurs need to set aside their egos and hire people who are better than they are in certain areas and make sure — despite the ups and downs of building a business — everyone's having fun at the end of the day.

5. Clearly communicating the organization's vision

In the entrepreneurial organization, where people are empowered to a much greater extent, a vision is even more important—an organization's vision acts as a powerful motivator for employee behaviour, creating a common purpose that helps pull people in a desired direction increasing performance and commitment.

As well as clearly articulating and regularly communicating the organisation's vision, leaders need to make the organization's vision concrete in terms of values and expected behaviours; motivating their people by reinforcing entrepreneurial behaviours (e.g. free-thinking, free expression, openness, honesty, courage, lack of deference...) and promoting entrepreneurial values (e.g. creativity, opportunism, proactivity, ambition, excellence...).

Through its founder and CEO, Jeff Bezos, Amazon demonstrates the vision of an entrepreneurial organisation. In 1997, Bezos wrote his first letter to Amazon's shareholders stating that "we are currently at Day One"; that is to say, the Internet and online retail is only at the very beginning of its development and revolution. Over ten years later, Bezos still believes that they are at Day One! This proactive attitude, demonstrates how the organisation appreciates 'foreseeing the unknown' — it must continue to grow and innovate in order to succeed as a business, develop new technologies and remain competitive.

Final thoughts

An entrepreneurial organization places opportunism and innovation at its heart in order to achieve growth. Achieving this requires a culture that embraces freedom of thought and freedom of expression; where co-operation and the sharing of knowledge is routine; where leaders throughout the organization articulate a guiding vision, empower people and value creativity; where mistakes and failures are viewed as progress; and where teams are made up of people with complementary traits and skill sets who believe in each other and who are willing and able to challenge the path of least resistance.

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