

## Effective leadership lies below the surface

Emotion—Cognition—Behavior—Communication



Sharpen a Culture of High Commitment. Realize Results through High Performance.

### Feel. Think. Act. Talk.

Today's workforce has been described as largely unengaged and in need of clear leadership direction. The leaders of tomorrow must learn to employ a leadership approach that reaches the emotional level.

In order to make the kind of real connection that engages employees and therefore drives performance, leaders must strengthen the quantity and quality of their relationships by addressing the deepest dimensions of their leadership presence. Namely, the standard psychological sequence of feeling, thinking, action, and communication.

Align4Profit represents this four-dimensional sequence in a leadership approach we call Feel. Think. Act. Talk. When leaders develop this ability, they can begin to effectively inspire enthusiasm and motivation for High Commitment along with the skill to drive accountability for High Performance.

### CEOs, Human Resources professionals and Leaders are searching for answers

With the best intentions in the world, traditional leadership development programs do not deliver what is expected. Corporations spend between 2 to 10 percent of employee compensation on leadership development, and yet the results and return on development are mediocre at best.

A report from the Said Business School at Oxford University in the UK found that British businesses and public sector organizations waste almost \$140 million on executive education programs that are poorly conceived



delivered. The study went on to say that only 35 percent of HR directors and 21 percent of other executives believed that their current training and development programs were meeting corporate strategic objectives.

### Preparing for the future requires leadership to radically change the game

CEOs desire the kind of emotional persuasion that isn't taught in business schools and doesn't come naturally to disciplined, analytical thinkers in business. Change in workplace demographics and the impact of Generations X and Y clearly dictate the need for a different leadership approach.

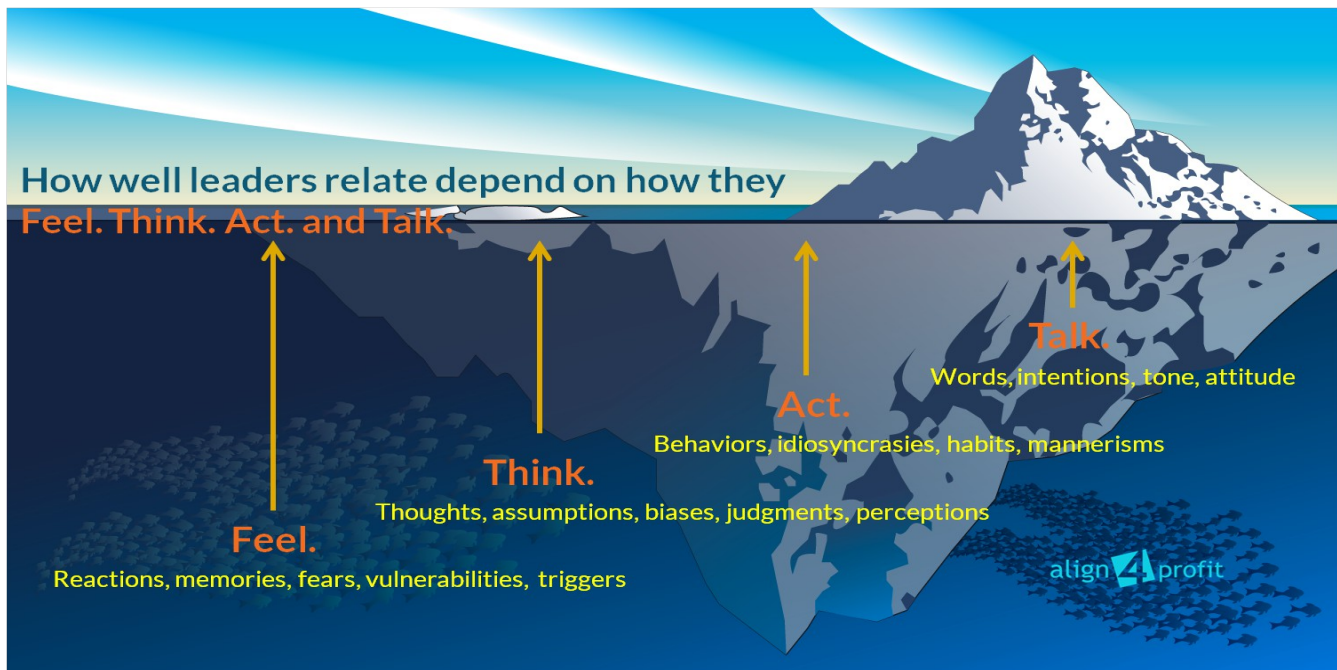
### A fundamentally different approach

We believe, only when leaders transform their behavior toward emotional persuasion can they lead the change they claim they want. This requires a different approach—the ability to feel, think, act, and talk, and of course, listen, in ways that are fundamentally different. In order to develop such an approach, at Align4Profit we focus our attention first on the four-link Emotion Chain:

### Emotion—Cognition—Behavior—Communication

When leaders strengthen their human connections by managing this chain, it enables them to inspire committed and profitable performance. This building of quality relationships cannot simply be learned and executed by prescribed patterns of behavior. Rather, leaders must align the way they Feel. Think. Act. Talk. They must courageously dive deep into the waters of intimacy.

In the illustration, below shows that what a person feels, thinks, does, and says is anchored deep below the surface of what others see and hear when they relate to one another. Like the iceberg that sunk the *Titanic*, the most treacherous challenges associated with managing one's self lie below the surface.





### And if you don't go deep...

According to the Gallup Organization, from 75 to 80 percent of today's workforce is not engaged. And 51 percent doesn't understand what is expected of them to reach their goals, says a Harris Poll. These numbers represent only those costs associated with leadership sins of omission, of failing to engage employees by not going below the surface to reach them at their operative level.

Greater losses are caused when leaders Feel. Think. Act. Talk. in ways that cause stress and anxiety. That is, when they not only fail to make constructive contact at an intimate level and actually do damage below the surface. Costs associated with stress, depression and anxiety disorders—the top health and productivity concerns for organizations—have been estimated at \$44 billion a year, according to Annexa.

For more details, read [Economics of Stress in the Workplace](#).

### How to Feel. Think. Act. Talk. like an Aligned Leader

It should be clear that real and sustainable change will only take place when leaders address the way they Feel. Think. Act. Talk.

First they must understand how their behavior is perceived. For this reason, carefully individualized leadership development and coaching must begin with an honest and candid professional assessment. Align4Profit's [Leadership Attraction Profile](#) accurately calibrates leadership emotions, thinking, behavior, and conversations, so that leaders can begin to make the appropriate modifications.

Then a well-designed and professionally executed leadership development program can ensure that leaders understand and build upon the dimensions in which they excel and work to develop those they need to acquire or improve.

### Emotion—Cognition—Behavior—Communication

To do so requires an understanding of how Emotion—Cognition—Behavior—Communication flow and work below the surface, among the innermost emotional and cognitive dimensions of each leader, and in an intimately individualized way. To illustrate just how immediately and powerfully this below-the-surface process operates, it will help to briefly survey theories of emotion.



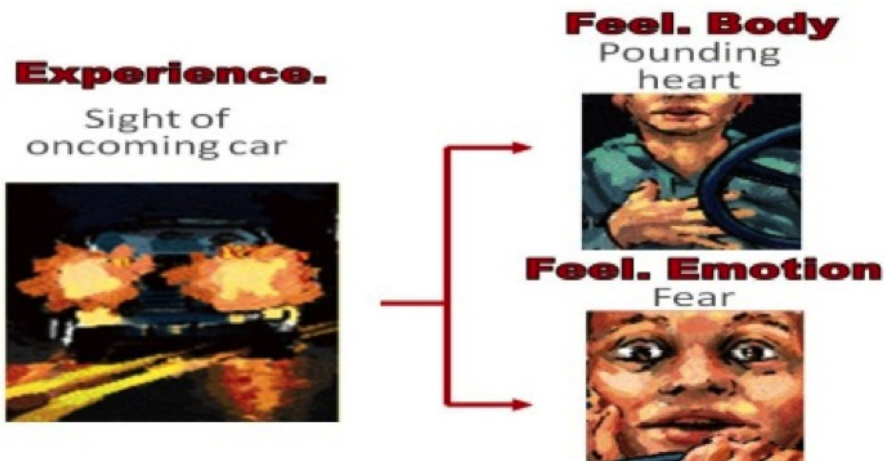


### Three Theories of Emotion

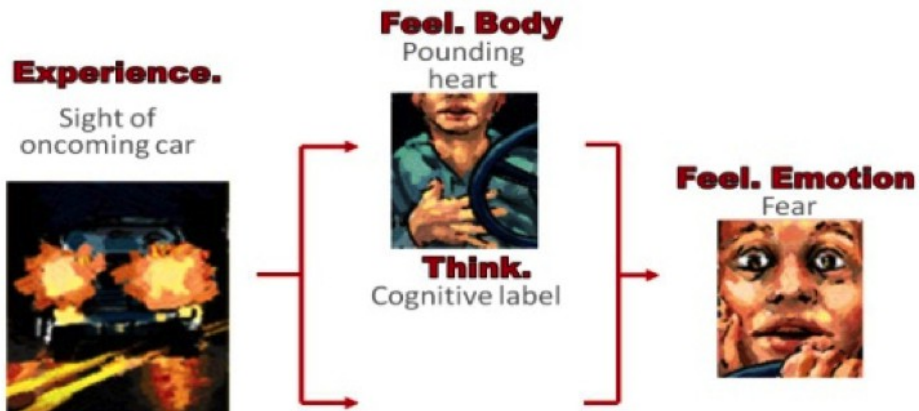
James and Lange argue that we feel emotion *after* we become aware of our bodily responses. In other words, the experience of emotion begins with our awareness of physiological responses to emotion-arousing stimuli.



Cannon and Bard contended that we feel emotion when our body responds to stimuli.



Schachter and Singer's two-factor theory states that to experience emotion, we must be aroused and cognitively label the emotion.





The divergence of opinion with regard to stimulus and emotion underscores the inseparability of the two. It also reinforces the inescapable impact of emotion-arousing stimuli upon individuals and, therefore, the necessity to address emotional management under the guidance of a methodical and scientifically directed discipline.

Align4Profit's research into and our experience with leadership development enable us to show leaders specifically how to create trust and how to work with a range of different types of people. We help leaders develop the flexibility to adapt and regulate the way they Feel. Think. Act. Talk. in order to lead in an emotionally mature and influentially intimate way. In addition, we help them effectively check unproductive behavior that compromises employee engagement and performance.

These goals can be achieved when leaders understand the link between the way they perceive emotionally charged events and how they respond to them.

## Two Sides of Emotion

The effective leader knows:

1. Emotions can be used very effectively in positive ways to sponsor change. They are able to assess and generate emotions to assist thought and action.
2. Emotions can also derail any effort to communicate, negotiate, make decisions, or improve productivity.

We believe leaders can learn to bridge emotional derailments by introducing reflective self-regulation and intentionally generating constructive emotions.

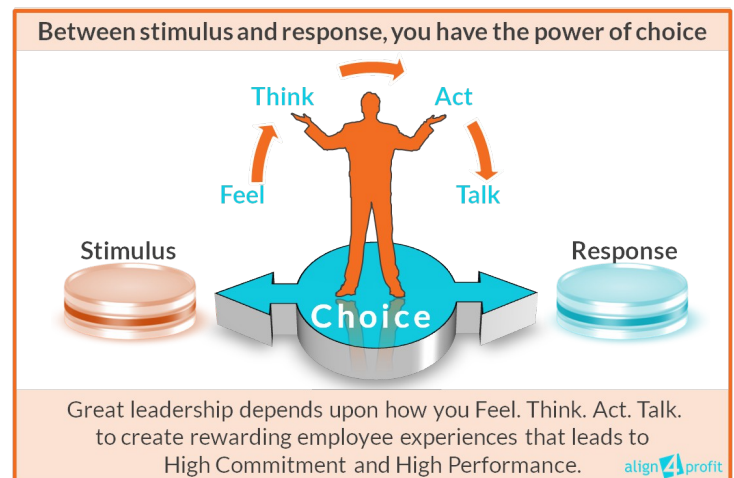
## How Emotion Works

Whether positive or negative, emotions are psychological responses that involve an interplay among:

- physiological arousal
- expressive behavior
- conscious experience

Some emotional responses occur immediately and without reflective self-regulation. In such cases, sensory input bypasses the cortex and triggers an immediate reaction outside of conscious awareness. In the workplace, when most employees experience an emotionally charged event, they can react in a split second without thinking.

Often such reactions are predetermined based on habits, perceptual propensities, personal characteristics, beliefs, moral values and a host of past experiences. The application of Feel. Think. Act. Talk. skills gives leaders the ability to experience emotionally charged stimuli and to introduce choice into their responses.





## Be Choice-full

Such leaders understand and manage their emotions, constantly check their biased and old thinking patterns, actively regulate their behaviors, and consistently practice quality communication with a high degree of frequency. As a result they effectively inspire action, motivate engagement, and mobilize performance.

Let's look more closely at what each of these four elements entails.

**Feel.** From the beginning of life, experiences and the memory of those experiences, create beliefs and trigger emotions. Emotions give meaning to and spark thoughts. Only when leaders align the way they feel with the way they intend to lead, the goals of the organizations, and the needs of employees can they hope to establish the quality connections necessary for building trust.

**Think.** Emotion precedes cognition and is constantly validated against how one thinks about past, present or current experiences. This self-talk is often fraught with biases, old thinking, and unchecked perceptions. When leaders manage their emotions, keep an open mind, consistently update their own thinking, and regularly integrate the ideas of others, they gradually free their cognition of limited thinking.

**Act.** Emotion and thought provide instructions for the body to follow. They shape the physical manifestations of how people respond to events. The body literally expresses the way a person feels and thinks, even when they try to cover it up. When leaders align their feelings and thinking, it enables them to present themselves in a transparent, congruent, and authentic way, with no hidden agendas.

**Talk.** The alignment of emotions, thoughts, and behavior opens up heartfelt exchange of views and two-way communication. Aligned leaders know when to stop talking and start listening and attend to what others say. They know when to ask questions and when to be a bit more directive in a telling way. This attentiveness signals respect, develops a sense of curiosity, and fosters humility.

Mastering and aligning all four Feel. Think. Act. Talk. elements enables leaders to practice quality conversation, which consists of the 4Ups!

- Bring it Up! Courageously
- Talk it Up! Candidly
- Wrap it Up! Clearly
- Follow it Up! Conscientiously

[Read more about the 4 Ups!](#)



## Putting Feel. Think. Act. Talk. to Work

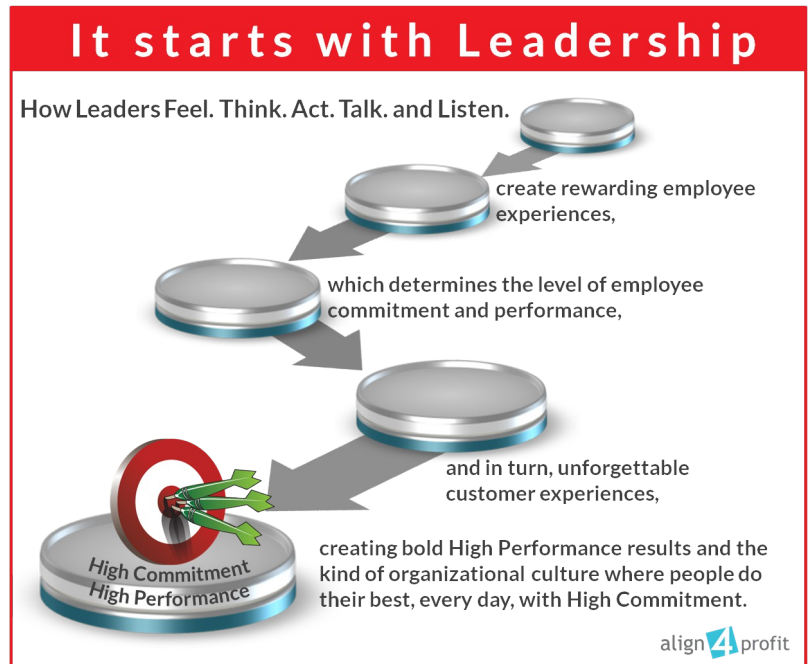
The biggest barrier between leaders and great leadership is the challenge of regulating reactions driven by one's fear-based survival instincts. When leaders develop this ability, they can begin to effectively inspire enthusiasm and motivation for High Commitment along with the skill to drive accountability for High Performance.

As illustrated on the right, leadership behavior results in superior business outcomes.

It is every leader's job, then, to modify her or his behavior in order to achieve extraordinary results. Such modification calls for professional leadership development that focuses on emotional persuasion based on an understanding and application of the way leaders Feel. Think. Act. Talk.

At Align4Profit we have realized phenomenal results with this fundamentally different approach. Based on feedback from hundreds of leaders in a variety of industries, we can summarize the evaluations of their newfound leadership capabilities to include:

- Use the de-trigger skill of emotional management
- Remove limiting beliefs and perceptions
- Recognize and manage personal roadblocks
- Demonstrate executive maturity and leadership presence
- Exhibit empathy and inspire with energy
- Tenaciously steer toward achievement of objectives
- Speak up without the fear of conflict, failure, or defeat
- Create safe passage for others to use their full voice
- Learn how to drive accountability while motivating engagement



## What now?

If you want to demonstrate greater proficiency managing your Feel. Think. Act. Talk., abilities, contact us to learn more about the [Leadership Development Solutions](#) that may be right for your specific situation. We look forward to hearing from you [info@align4profit.com](mailto:info@align4profit.com) 972-608-0400.