

## Entrepreneurship as a Values and Leadership Paradigm

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### Principal Topic

Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice

Entrepreneurship as a Values and Leadership Paradigm

Paradigms are ontological orientations that influence the way we construct our realities. Leadership paradigms therefore affect the way leaders go about defining their roles as leaders and applying themselves to the responsibilities of leadership. Entrepreneurship may be seen as one type of leadership orientation, namely that of leading a business venture. As such, the entrepreneurial process relates to a particular leadership paradigm. In addition, modern day business is underpinned by a particular set of values, which in their turn are associated with a paradigm. The intersection of these two paradigms - values and leadership - creates a psychological 'space' or 'new paradigm' in which entrepreneurship thrives. What is that paradigm and how does it evolve?

This paper takes as its basis the 'Personal and Corporate Values Journey' model (Robinson, 1998), which is in turn derived from the work of Don Beck and Christopher Cowan (1983) of the national Values Center, U.S.A, after Graves' 'Emergent Cyclical Double Helix Model of Adult Bio-Psycho-Social Behaviour'. The model schematically represents the life journey of both the individual and the firm, wherein dualistic teleological intentions, namely responsibility and autonomy, may result in synergies conducive to entrepreneurship. The model integrates psycho-social elements, such as conditioning, power, duty, dependence-independence-interdependence, ethics and holism, thereby giving rise to a new way of thinking about entrepreneurship in terms of the values underpinning it and thus the leadership processes it demands. The model also then provides a basis for developing appropriate managerial processes and leadership communication protocols to support and enhance the entrepreneurial culture.

The paper will be of interest to small business owners interested in understanding the psychological tensions that exist within firms, corporate managers wishing to evoke a more entrepreneurial culture and academics who teach and research in the fields of entrepreneurship and leadership.

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