

BRADY PYLE

HR EXECUTIVE @ NASA, HUSBAND, DAD TO 3, LEADERSHIP STUDENT, PRACTITIONER, SPEAKER, AND BLOGGER AT OUTOFTHISWORLDLEADERSHIP.COM



LOOKING IN THE MIRROR

Leadership starts with leading yourself, so your most powerful leadership tool is a mirror. You should know your strengths and weaknesses and be aware of your values all the time. Knowing who you are will help you to select the right people around you to have a good balance and be the best team. The mirror is also a great tool to use when you run into a conflict or when expectations aren't met. Instead of blaming others, start by looking in the mirror at your own actions. How did you contribute to the situation? Were your expectations clear? What could you have done differently to prevent the conflict? Pull out the mirror to be a more effective leader.

CELEBRATE FAILURES

At NASA, we are known as a "Failure is Not an Option" organization. While that served us well in rescuing the crew of Apollo 13, that culture permeated and inhibited innovation. To build a culture of innovation, we initiated a recognition program to celebrate failures. During the development of a new lunar lander, we lost a test vehicle.

NASA's Administrator pointed out that "Failure is part of the price of learning" and recognized the team with a "Lean Forward, Fail Smart" award. The team also widely shared lessons learned from this important development effort, helping build a culture that embraces appropriate risk-taking and the use of test failures to ultimately succeed.

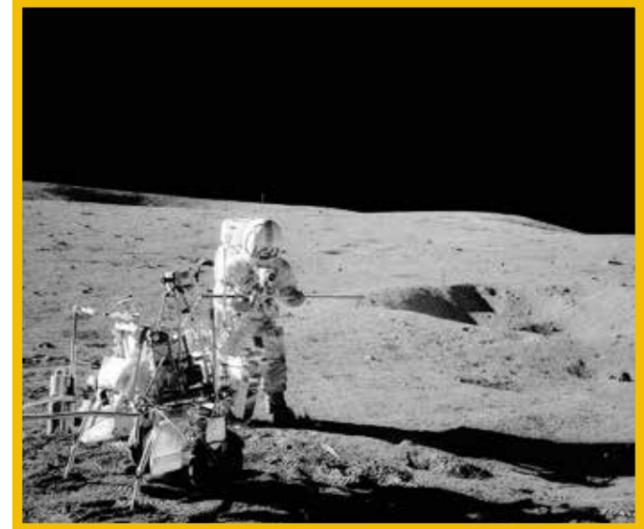
HOUSTON WE HAVE A PROBLEM

Most people will still remember the scene from Apollo 13 where the crew of astronauts and ground-control had to be very creative to solve a big technical failure. At that moment, they had to get rid of the standard procedures to face this crisis.

The solution was derived from a series of inductions, deductions, calculations, simulations, decisions, trials, errors, planning, re-planning, and execution, all driven by on-the-spot creativity, fuzzy logic, and incomplete data. Looking from a different perspective was essential to find a solution. And know, these are the same factors that drive many of our day-to-day innovations--innovations that surface, under pressure, in coping with crisis.

Check out the short videoclip to see this particular scene.

thechangemindset.video/houstonproblem



LEADING FRONT LINE ENGINEERS FOR 9 MONTHS

I had been Deputy HR Director in Houston for 3 years when I read "The Chief HR Officer" and learned that 75% of HR leaders in industry worked outside the HR function. While I had experience outside of NASA, I always worked in different HR functions. So, I took an opportunity to work for several months as a front-line leader of engineers - to get a different perspective about our technical culture and employee engagement. It was a great learning experience.

At the executive level, we have lot of discussions around change. We have very clear reasons why we want to go in a certain direction, but it was almost unbelievable how little information about the 'why' reached the frontline. This explained some resistance because people didn't know why they had to use a new system or follow a different approach. Since I returned to my senior HR position, I spent quite some time with my HR team to translate our plans and actions to all levels of the organization, which increased buy-in to changes we initiated and improved overall engagement levels.