避免责任领导的五大雷区

陈昊 助理教授
龚洋冉 博士生
清华经管领导力与组织管理系

克里斯托弗·米思卡 助理教授
维也纳经济大学

过去二十几年，中国公司一直在向国际竞争对手与同行学习如何践行企业责任。然而，这个学习过程仍然缓慢，成果也差强人意。许多中国公司把企业（社会）责任作为一种"沟通的语言"，认为通过学习并运用这种语言可以更好地与利益相关群体（例如地方政府，国际投资者、消费者等）沟通。截至 2017 年底，中国约有四分之一的上市公司根据不同的披露指南与规则发布企业责任报告。而据联合国全球契约（UN Global Compact）2018 年的统计数据，在中国，只有 286 家企业正在响应契约的号召，致力于将企业战略、企业日常运营与人权、劳工、环境保护、反腐败等促进社会可持续发展目标的普遍原则相结合。

企业责任包含很多方面，例如社会可持续发展、生态可持续性等。随着中国企业国际参与程度的逐步加深，在开拓新市场和寻找投资项目的过程之中不可避免地面临一个重大挑战，即：寻求经济增长的同时，将难以无视可能引发的一系列与可持续发展相关的社会、文化、环境问题。然而很多中国企业缺乏应对这一挑战的能力与决心。

跨入以创新，合作，绿色，开放和共同发展为主题的可持续发展新时代，中国企业家将如何摸索出一条能够整合经济、社会、与自然环境的中国企业履责之路？如何避免履责路上可能遇到的雷区？相信"责任领导路径（the Responsible Leadership Approach，简称 RLA）"能为中国商业领袖提供借鉴与启发。

责任领导路径之定义与范式

基于斯塔尔（Stahl）与萨利卢克（Sully de Luque）在 2014 年论文中关于责任领导力的论述，本文作者之一，维也纳经济大学克里斯托弗·米思卡（Christof Miska）教授与合作者修比（Hilbe），梅尔（Mayer），门登霍尔（Mendenhall)在 2014 与 2018 年的论文中将责任领导定义为两个方面："行善"（doing good）和"避害"（avoiding harm）。"行善"意味着企业参与增加社会福祉的活动，例如以高于法律要求的标准支持社区发展；为员工提供友好的工作场所和环境；为残疾人提供工作岗位等；相对而言，"避害"意味着企业要尽量避免任何对利益相关群体和社会产生有害影响的活动，例如消除招聘中的歧视；建立和履行员工（职业）安全保障制度；致力于保护环境、产品安全以及预防腐败等。

责任领导路径有两个关键假设：其一，企业家合法合规管理经营企业；其二，在此基础之上，企业家根据利益相关方的需求"自主"选择符合自身道德价值观的决策，尤其是在缺乏法律规范的情况之下。换句话说，企业家需要明白什么是"正确的事"，并且要有非常坚实的道德体系与价值观来支撑自己的选择，即用心灵的指南针引导自己做"正确的事"。

责任领导路径有着较强的自主性，即每一位企业家对企业责任可能有着自己的理解与诠释，因此践行责任领导路径的目标与过程是丰富多样的。根据"利益相关群体纳入度"与"企业责任范畴"两个维度，我们可以把企业几十年来的企业责任实践分为三大范式，即代理人视角范式、利益相关者视角范式，以及融合视角范式。其中，"利益相关群体纳入度"是指企业在多大程度上考虑其利益相关群体；"企业责任范畴"是指企业在实践中，如何定义其企业责任的外延与内涵（见表一）。责任领导通常既 "行善"又"避害"，基于个人核心价值选择最符合自己伦理道德标准的范式，并决定该范式的应用深度与广度。与此同时，承担行为与选择的后果与潜在挑战。

表一、责任领导路径的三大范式

三大范式	利益相关群体纳入度	企业责任范畴	范式的特征	范式的潜在挑战
"代理人视角"范式	低	狭窄	管理者作为股东代理人，以最大化股东利益为目标	• 可能损害（非股东）利益相关群体的合法利益 • 可能损害企业的长期合法性
"融合视角"范式	中	中等	企业家与管理团队将股东利益最大化和社会、环境目标共同整合到企业战略设计之中	• 企业战略变革或淘汰可引发企业责任关注点的转移，因而影响履责的有效性与合法性 • 管理层变更可导致企业战略变化，引致企业责任重心变化（导致非延续性）
"利益相关者视角"范式	高	宽泛	企业家与管理团队致力于通过承担企业责任来解决实际问题（例如，气候变暖、消除贫穷）从而实现可持续发展	• 实际操作复杂，常常需要考虑超越经济/商业的收益，对企业家和管理团队要求很高 • 企业家需要有很强的伦理道德观；能够清晰辨别受企业直接与非直接影响的利益相关群体；具备必要的技能和胜任能力（例如，自我认同能力、换位思考能力、社会灵活性等）

改编自 Miska，Hilbe，& Mayer （2014）《基于理性视角的责任力道理论重塑》一文

选择"代理人视角"范式的企业家，遵循的是经济学家米尔顿·弗里德曼（Milton Friedman)的经济学逻辑，认为"企业的社会责任就是增加企业利润"。管理者认为自己是股东代理人，企业的唯一目标是实现企业利润和股东价值的最大化。采用这种范式的企业往往将企业社会责任视为公司的额外成本，并倾向于将企业社会责任作为一种公关工具。最近十几年里频频出现的金融机构与大企业丑闻和破产案例（如雷曼兄弟的破产等)，究其根本原因是笃信"股东至上"。纯粹的"代理人视角"范式，容易让企业陷入只关注履行股东利益的困境，当股东利益、经济利益与社会、环境利益相互矛盾时，企业便无法走出这一困境。

相对而言，采用"利益相关者视角"范式的企业家，往往倾向于考虑更为广泛的企业利益相关群体，遵循内心价值与伦理道德标准，构筑企业利益相关群体网络，把他们纳入决策的考量范围之中。采用这一范式的企业家通常致力于亟待

解决的可持续发展相关问题，例如社会民生，气候环境变化等。

君乐宝乳业的创始人魏立华，自 1995 年创办企业以来，专心研发与销售酸奶产品，市场增长稳定，取得了很好的业绩。2008 年的"三聚氰胺事件"让国产奶粉行业遭到了粉碎性打击，面对国人花高价"疯抢"海外奶粉，他下定决心，要让中国消费者再一次信任国产品牌，喝上高品质的国产奶粉。与此同时，他还定下目标，要做就做物美价廉的奶粉，保证质量的同时，绝不要高价。

作为企业的核心人物，魏立华将自己对国家对民族的使命感，对行业对消费者的责任心与道义，化为了企业发展的目标。他说服核心团队成员，顶着巨大的压力与风险，毅然决然进入奶粉行业，四年来默默耕耘，成功打造出世界级品质的君乐宝品牌奶粉，不但获得英国零售商协会（British Retail Consortium，简称 BRC）权威认证，也在国内市场站稳脚跟，取得优秀的市场成绩，还一举打入国际市场。

运用"融合视角"范式的企业家，往往站在前两种范式的折中位置，遵循"好的道德就是好的商业"这一战略思想。他们通常会先识别出企业能够有效解决的关键问题，并在解决问题的过程中构筑企业的最强竞争优势。

这一范式的开创企业之一雀巢（Nestlé）公司在中国的咖啡业务发展，就是一个典型案例。雀巢公司于二十世纪八十年代末期进入云南，免费为当地农民提供咖啡豆种植相关技术，专业培训与咨询服务，并为这些农户提供必要的资金支持。

雀巢公司并未与这些农户建立雇佣关系，而是让农户自由选择其客户，允许他们将咖啡豆卖给其他公司（例如星巴克等），从而获得更多的经济收入。通过采用这种合作共赢的方式，农户的积极性得到了极大的提升，雀巢公司也得以进一步构筑竞争优势（如开发咖啡豆种植技术、建立咖啡豆认证体系等），有效把控咖啡豆的来源与品质。相比购买第三方认证农户（例如公平交易认证农户，Fairtrade）生产的绿色咖啡豆，这种方式也能够让采购价格更为低廉，保障雀巢公司的长期经济利益。

经过几十年的发展，雀巢在云南的模式正面临挑战。关于雀巢咖啡体系是否仍然可持续的讨论已经出现，人们也开始质疑当初雀巢引入的咖啡豆品种单一，给农户带来了潜在风险。雀巢的影响力导致的依存关系正逐渐成为当地可持续发展的阻碍，聚焦企业战略的"融合视角"范式将无法完全解决这一问题。

责任领导路径之三个层面

由于个体在本质上是嵌套在企业，国家，文化和社会环境之中的，尽管企业家能够在很大程度上践行自己的核心价值与伦理道德，但其选择很难完全脱离环境，或多或少会受到公司战略、国家政策以及制度环境的影响甚至是阻碍。例如一位希望选择"利益相关者视角"范式的企业家，可能由于企业资源与发展阶段的限制，无法施展拳脚。与传统的领导力理论与框架不同，责任领导路径理论与框架关注企业家所处的企业环境与外部制度、社会环境，考虑权变情景中企业家与环境因素的交互作用。（见图 1）。

具体来说，责任领导路径需要综合考虑三个层面，即微观（企业家）、中观（企业）与宏观（制度）。其中微观层面聚焦企业家，即企业家的核心价值观、伦理道德、以及相关技能和胜任力；中观层面聚焦企业，例如企业战略，商业模式和企业文化；宏观层面聚焦制度环境，例如法律环境、社会文化、社会倡议如 SDGs（联合国的可持续发展目标）等。

图 1　责任领导路径的三个层面

责任领导的特征与胜任力

责任领导路径意味着企业家以核心价值与伦理道德为行为准则，背后也隐含着受其成长经历与背景，人际关系，个人愿景、以及辨识管理利益相关群体的能力等个体因素影响。其中真诚（authenticity）与担当（accountability）是责任领导的重要特质。如，映马云池的创始人杨华毅在创业的头六年，致力于改善种茶区域（湖北恩施）的土地质量，以确保这片土地生产的有机茶叶零残留。对于一个创业者来说，六年没有任何经营收入是难以想象的，特别是还要确保团队成员的生存与发展，激励团队共同奋斗。但他的真诚与担当打动了追随的团队成员，功夫不负有心人，创业第七年，零残留的有机茶叶产品一经投放市场便一炮而红。随着销售的迅速增长，企业终于获得了盈利，并成功吸引到风投。反思自己的创业之路，杨华毅笃信要创办一个好的企业，企业家必须有担当，对自己真诚，对员工真诚，对事业真诚。

在责任领导的众多关键能力与胜任力中，自我认同能力、换位思考能力与社会灵活性尤为重要。例如，自我认同能力很强的企业家，能够坚守自己的核心价值与道德理念，即使在受到外部利益相关群体的巨大压力时，也能够做出坚守这些核心价值的选择。

企业与制度环境对责任领导的影响

责任领导坚守核心价值，践行伦理道德，培养关键技能和胜任力的同时，还需要将企业与制度环境层面的影响纳入考量。

企业层面，责任领导需要考虑诸如企业文化、企业战略、人力资源管理体系、以及公司治理等各个方面。国内外的企业已经开始责任领导路径的探索，为责任领导提供良好的氛围与环境。

中粮集团于 2008 年成立"忠良书院"，致力于培养德才兼备的企业管理者，并将这一理念贯穿于从人才选拔，任命，培训，绩效考核，到评估和竞升的整个人力资源管理体系之中。

总部设在新加坡的伟创力集团（Flex）把企业文化作为企业可持续发展的核心。在公司首席执行官麦克·麦克纳马拉（Mike McNamara）的带领下，公司围绕企业核心文化"企业社会与环境责任（Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility，简称 CSER）"，建立起一套有着人文关怀的可持续发展人力资

源管理体系。随着科技制造行业中机器人代替技术工人逐渐成为行业发展趋势，伟创力并没有简单粗暴地通过裁员来提升企业核心竞争力，而是致力于为员工提供能够提升技能水平，培养竞争力的企业环境，帮助员工应对技术革新带来的挑战。在全球最大的珠海生产基地，伟创力鼓励与支持中国员工接受培训和再教育，为他们提供提升技能和胜任力的课程与奖学金，并全额资助员工考取更高的学历，实现职业转型。

践行责任领导路径的企业家需要理解与整合所处企业与制度环境，基于自己的核心价值与伦理道德，做出关键决策，并定义"行善"和"避害"两方面的具体内容。如果外部环境无法提供相应的支持，企业家需要发挥创造力，主动寻找解决方案，为这个时代所面临的亟待解决的挑战开辟新路径，发现未来机会，甚至改变现有的游戏规则。

伊利集团的企业责任实践为我们提供了启示。经过十多年的摸索与尝试，伊利逐步建立起配套的公司治理架构和管理体系，支撑其与利益相关群体的合作与健康有序发展，开拓适合自身发展的责任领导路径。伊利关注的利益相关方包括股东与投资者、政府与监管机构、消费者、产业链合作伙伴、员工、社会与环境。2017 年，伊利成为中国第一个加入联合国全球契约（SDGs）的食品行业企业，并对标这一契约中的九个可持续发展目标。

具体而言，伊利的责任领导路径"自上而下，自下而上，由内而外，内外协同"。伊利董事长潘刚为企业注入 "绿色产业链"理念，并把"伊利信条：伊利即品质"这一企业核心价值落到实处。伊利通过打造企业强文化来吸引志同道合的伙伴，并采用物质与文化双管齐下的手段激励管理者和员工。与此同时，各个部门在工作中总结经验，反馈到系统之中，推动整个集团的可持续发展建设。2017年，伊利成立可持续发展委员会，由董事长担任主席，下设秘书处与管理平台，负责协调推进，从产业链共赢、质量与创新、社会公益、营养健康四大方面入手，整合企业内部三十个职能部门（其中包括质量管理部在内的十三个关键核心部门），开展日常可持续发展工作。作为绿色产业链的核心环节，质检部在企业内部串联各事业与职能部门，在产业链中把控合作伙伴产品与服务质量，内外协同打造绿色产业链。2018 年，伊利获邀参与中国乳制品行业企业责任标准设计与制定，并为行业提供优秀案例。

责任领导路径之五大雷区

通过探索责任领导路径，企业家可以在日常经营管理实践中找到整合经济、社会和环境责任目标的方法，实现可持续发展。然而，企业家也需要在这一过程中尽量避免以下雷区。

雷区 1 以经济责任为唯一目标

不少企业家认为企业的经济责任与社会、环境责任是硬币的两面，必须做出权衡。然而两者并不是完全对立的关系，本质差异在于前者往往关注短期利益，而后者着眼于长期发展。因此，企业无法为"行善"或"避害"明码标价，也很难合理地为自己承担的社会和环境责任给出量化的评估。

以经济责任为唯一目标的企业家，常以经济效益来考察高层与中层管理人员，并为其提供货币或工具性物质激励。这种传统激励手段，旨在增加或维持企业的经济收入和利润，在支撑企业可持续发展方面则收效甚微。我们建议企业引入非传统性激励，例如对管理人员和员工施与仁爱与关怀，鼓励他们在工作中探索与建立和利益相关群体的健康关系，并为他们的组织公民行为提供支持与协助。传

统与非传统激励方式的有机结合，能够帮助管理者转变固有思维模式，从"代理人视角"逐步转变为"利益相关者视角"。

雷区2　将"行善"和"避害"混为一谈

一般来说，企业倾向于"行善"而忽视"避害"。例如烟草公司会在资助肺癌研究的同时继续销售香烟，矿场会捐款以履行企业责任并继续开采"血钻"。上述履责方式，通常被社会大众和利益相关群体称为"漂绿"（Greenwashing），经常引致外界对企业的负面舆论和抵制行为，破坏企业生存与发展的基础。此外，由于环境的快速变化，以及各方对企业可持续发展的期望不断提升，单靠"行善"并不足以使企业脱颖而出。因此企业需要综合考虑"行善"与"避害"，将这两方面都融入责任领导路径之中。

雷区3　"完全抛弃企业战略"与"以战略指导责任实践"两种极端

企业家还需要注意的是，并非是企业战略使公司变得"负责任"或"可持续"。这种误区源于传统企业社会责任"行善得福"（doing well by doing good）的思想。就可持续发展而言，这一思想的内涵和外延相对较窄，如管中窥豹，仅从企业视角来看更加宏观的社会和环境挑战。事实上，企业战略仅扮演工具的角色，换句话说，企业战略应该成为责任领导路径的支撑而非核心内容。未来商业领袖应发挥企业真正的、积极的、切实的社会和环境影响作用，而非简单地将其归入企业战略。

雷区4　盲从 "标准答案"或"最佳实践"

责任领导路径并没有"标准答案"或"最佳实践"。正如前文所言，责任领导路径在微观，中观和宏观三个层面的结合凸显了该理论框架的复杂性与重要性。因此，企业家应该拒绝做一个标准模式的追随者，在决策过程中，不但需要仔细考虑自己的核心价值和伦理道德，也需要考虑企业所处环境，针对具体情况进行分析，如日常工作场景以及宏观制度和文化环境等，通过探索与开创新方法和新形式来实现责任领导，寻找适合自身发展的有效路径。

雷区5　践行责任领导路径是企业家的"独角戏"

尽管践行责任领导路径的关键要素之一，是企业家及其核心价值与伦理道德，但这并不意味着企业家是路径中的唯一主体。正如我们所讨论的那样，企业家需要考虑来自企业和制度环境的各种影响因素，还需要积极联合那些显性或隐性受到企业"行善"或"避害"行为直接或间接影响的利益相关群体。企业可以邀请利益相关群体代表加入董事会，与他们积极对话；也可以在社会互动中，识别和关注更大范围内的利益相关群体，并将他们纳入考量范围之中。

构筑可持续发展的未来，不能也不应只是企业家的"独角戏"，必须通过政府，民间团体，企业和非政府组织等多方的共同合作才能实现。联合国可持续发展目标中，第十七条"贯彻和强化全球伙伴关系以实现可持续发展"，正好阐述了上述观点。事实上，很多传统行业已经开始采用强化合作伙伴关系的方式，来实现更广泛意义上的可持续发展。例如，由世界二十七家矿业与冶金公司，以及三十多个国家和地区的协会组织，共同发起的国际矿业与冶金理事会（the International Council on Mining and Metals，简称ICMM），通过建立与践行行业公约，推动业界与政府、国际组织、社区代表、本土居民、民间组织和学术界在内的广泛利益相关群体间的持续对话，探索矿业和冶金行业的可持续发展之路。

结　语

我们如同海中之鱼，失去了健康的海洋，鱼儿们终将无一幸免。

责任领导之路任重而道远。事实上，我们正处责任领导之蓝海，在探索前沿解决方案、创新实践、开发新工具等多个方面都大有可为。展望未来，企业的经济、社会、环境责任将愈发不可分割，都将被视为同一块拼图中不可或缺的组件。责任领导路径从企业家出发，指导企业家综合考量企业与制度环境，鼓励企业家寻找有效整合经济、社会和环境责任的新路径、新方法。相信更多的中国企业家将遵从内心的呼唤，积极探索与创新，为人类创造一个可持续发展的美好未来。

Avoiding the Pitfalls of Responsible Leadership

Hao Chen, Yangran Gong
School of Economics and Management, Tsinghua University
Christof Miska
Vienna University of Economics and Business

Over the past two decades, Chinese companies have been learning from their international counterparts in the global market arena on how to realize corporate responsibility (CR) initiatives. However, the attendant learning process is still rather slow, and results are not always satisfactory. According to the 2018 UN Global Compact statistics, a total of 286 Chinese companies are actively involved in CR initiatives, aligning strategies and operations with universal principles on human rights, labor, the environment, anti-corruption, and actions that advance societal goals.

Many Chinese companies consider CR as a "language" which could be learnt and used to communicate with local governments, international investors, and consumers. While CR has many facets, such as social or ecological sustainability, most Chinese companies usually engage in corporate philanthropy – since for many of which it is quite easy to donate rather than to thoroughly align strategies and operations with longer-term social and environmental sustainability targets. With an increasing number of Chinese companies going abroad, where they hope to find new markets and considerably invest, they as well tend to face an important issue: it is becoming increasingly harder for them to simply ignore their adverse societal, environmental, and also their cultural impacts in both the Chinese domestic as well as in foreign markets as they continue focusing on economic growth only. However, many companies lack the willingness or/and the competencies to do more than simply engage in corporate philanthropy or even to realize "good" corporate philanthropy.

Given the current direction toward the innovative, coordinated, green, open, and shared progress China is aiming for, how could Chinese business leaders play along and help the country proactively achieve the balanced development among economy, society, and the environment? Echoing these developments and shedding light on the question how business leaders can contribute to a sustainable future, we introduce Responsible

Leadership (RL) as an approach which potentially could provide much insight for Chinese business leaders if they avoid a number of pitfalls.

What is the Responsible Leadership Approach?

Christof Miska and colleagues in their RL research (e.g., Miska, Hilbe, & Mayer 2014; Miska & Mendenhall, 2018) tend to conceptualize the phenomenon in terms of two categories, building on Günter Stahl and Mary Sully de Luque's approach (Stahl & Sully de Luque, 2014): "doing good" and "avoiding harm". "Doing good" means engaging in activities that are aimed at enhancing societal welfare, such as going beyond legal requirements to support community development; designing employee-friendly workplaces; employing disabled workers; realizing corporate philanthropy, etc. In contrast, "avoiding harm" means refraining from any activities that have harmful consequences for a company's stakeholders and society, such as strictly enforcing safety regulations for employees; avoiding discrimination in hiring practices; safeguarding environmental protection, ensuring product safety; abolishing corruption; etc.

An approach to RL implies two key assumptions: First, business leaders fully comply with legal regulations and law. Second, they make ethical and discretionary choices in meeting stakeholder requirements, in particular when no laws and regulations exist. In other words, they know what the 'right thing to do is', based on a strong core of personal values and ethical motivations, which are like an inner moral compass.

The discretionary nature of RL from a business leader's point of view can lead to various pathways toward RL and different interpretations of responsibility. These can be explained by the evolvement of business-society relationships over the last few decades. Miska and colleagues (Miska et al., 2014) describe three such perspectives based on the "degree of stakeholder inclusion" and "scope of responsibility" that business leaders take into consideration. The first defines the degree to which business leaders consider different sets of stakeholders. The second describes the bandwidth of diverse types of responsibilities business leaders consider. The three paradigmatic perspectives are: agent, stakeholder, and converging views (See in Table 1).

Table 1. Three Paradigmatic Perspectives

Paradigmatic Perspective	Degree of Stakeholder Inclusion	Scope of Responsibility	Characteristics	Potential challenges
Agent View	Low	Narrow	Managers act as agents for shareholders, with the key goal to maximize shareholder value	• might violate the legitimate interests of non-shareholding stakeholders • could jeopardize a company's long-term legitimacy
Converging View	Medium	Medium	Business leaders design strategies aimed to reconcile shareholder-value maximization with societal and environmental targets	• strategy changes may shift a company's responsibility focus, possibly affecting its credibility and legitimacy • changes in a company's management could result in inconsistent strategies and variably changing responsibility foci over time
Stakeholder View	High	Broad	Business leaders attempt to contribute to sustainable societal and environmental developments by taking true responsibility for pressing problems like poverty or climate change	• involves considerable complexity beyond 'business as usual' and can be demanding for business leaders • requires that business leaders have strong ethical values, clearly understand the various stakeholders a company affects directly and indirectly, and that they have the necessary skills and competencies

				(e.g., perspective-taking abilities, self-identity, social flexibility)

Adapted from Miska, Hilbe, & Mayer (2014).

Business leaders who adopt any of these three generic perspectives on RL usually engage in both "doing good" and "avoiding harm"– to varying degrees and in various forms though, since each perspective implies a different understanding of responsibility. Ultimately, business leaders need to choose the approach that is most appropriate to them, depending on how they define for themselves their discretionary choices and based on their personal core values and ethical motivations. At the same time, they need to face the corresponding consequences and potential challenges.

Business leaders who assume an agent view are often driven by Milton Friedman's understanding of responsibility in that 'the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits'. Following such a purely economic-focused logic, business leaders are agents of shareholders and solely responsible to maximize profits and shareholder value. Currently, this approach appears to be one of the most prevalent among business leaders in China. It also explains why many Chinese companies consider CR as a public-relations tool and an extra cost to the company. Following a pure shareholder-primacy mentality may, to some extent at least, explain some of the large-scale scandals and ironically as well bankruptcies of the last few years – such as the case of Lehman Brothers' insolvency. A fully focused agent-view exempts shareholders and other stakeholders from requesting other types of responsibility, and it could create unsolvable paradoxes among economic, social, and environment targets.

In contrast, business leaders who assume a stakeholder view tend to consider broad stakeholder networks through an ethical lens. Such leaders attempt to contribute to sustainable development by assuming responsibility for pressing problems, such as poverty, climate change, or epidemic diseases. For example, Wei Lihua, founder of Junlebao, established the brand in 1995 by producing and selling yogurt products. When

the "Melamine Crisis" in 2008 crushed the baby-milk-powder market in China, he was deeply shocked and filled with pity to see a "milk rush" among Chinese consumers. After the crisis, the majority of Chinese consumers lost faith in Made-in-China milk products and tried in all ways possible to purchase international brands, in foreign markets, at extremely high prices. Wei Lihua was determined to address the issue, despite the market's novelty and risks it imposed for him and his company, believing that it was his duty to rebuild trust in the Chinese milk industry not only as an honest business man but also as a Chinese. He also made it clear that Julebao would not overcharge since he believes it's not ethical to do so. After four years of hard work, Julebao's baby milk powder has won the A+ certification of the British Retail Consortium and gained consumer trust in China.

Converging views on RL can be considered a hybrid approach between the agent and the stakeholder perspectives. Business leaders who assume a converging view tend to follow strategic considerations along the lines of 'good ethics is good business'. They identify the issues their companies can resolve most effectively and from which they gain the greatest competitive advantage. Companies like Nestlé and other international players have developed such approaches. The NESCAFÉ plant in China is a good example of how a company by focusing on its strengths addresses social and environment issues and gains strategic advantages. Instead of purchasing green coffee beans directly from available certified farmers (e.g., Fairtrade), Nestlé spent years in the Yunnan Province in China working closely with local farmers, providing them with technology, professional training and consulting services, and financial supports to help them develop better farming practices. As a result, the company was able to purchase high-quality, certified standard coffee beans from local farmers at reasonable prices; in turn, local farmers were able to improve their farming capabilities and sell their coffee beans to other companies such as Starbucks, helping improve their quality of life. However, after about three decades of development, Nestlé is being challenged. Questions have been raised about whether such a model is truly sustainable; whether a single breed of coffee beans is a risk to local growers; whether the reliance on Nestlé might be too strong for local farmers to seek alternative opportunities.

Micro, Meso, and Macro Influences as relevant for RL

Business leaders are naturally embedded in companies, countries, cultures, and societies as Stahl and Sully de Luque (2014) underline. While a business leader my be convinced that, for example, the stakeholder perspective is the only right way to follow, company strategies and policies as well as the institutional environment may not be supportive. RL theory acknowledges such contingencies stemming from the immediate company context and the external environment, which clearly differentiates it from traditional leadership concepts (See in figure 1).

Ultimately, either of the three generic perspectives on RL—agent, stakeholder, and converging views—is subject not only to the individual business leader and his or her characteristics (micro) including core values, ethical motivations, and skills and competencies necessary to enact RL, but needs as well to be reflected upon in connection with organizational aspects (meso), such as corporate strategy, the business model, and corporate cultures, as well as institutional and societal influences (macro) including laws, regulations, governmental policies, and supranational initiatives like the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Figure 1. RLA

Business leaders' characteristics and competencies

RL means that business leaders act on the basis of their core values and ethical motivations, which implies also the consideration of their history, relationship with others, and aspirations as well as the necessary skillset to understand and manage the

various relationships with diverse stakeholders. In this regard, authenticity and accountability are important aspects. As one example, Yang Huayi, founder of YingMaYunChi (映马云池), spent the first six years of his business dedicated to changing the quality of the land in Enshi, Hubei Province in order to ensure that the land is safe to grow and produce zero-residue organic tea. Clearly, it is troublesome for an entrepreneur to run a business without any income during the first six years. However, what kept him going was his true heart (初心). He believes that in order to make business work, one should be truthful to oneself, to the employees, and to the business.

Numerous skills and competencies have been suggested to be important for RL including, among many others, perspective-taking abilities, social flexibility, and self-identity competencies. A clear understanding of one's identity, for instance, as suggested by the self-identify concept is important since business leaders need to maintain their core ethical values independent of external pressures from various global and local stakeholders with diverse agendas and expectations.

Organizational and institutional influences on RL

In addition to strong core values, ethical motivations, and the necessary skills and competencies to enact RL, business leaders need to consider as well influences and contingencies stemming from the organizational context and the broader institutional and cultural environment. With regard to company influences, business leaders need to consider, for example, corporate strategy, HRM systems, corporate culture, and corporate governance mechanisms. Several companies have put considerable efforts into safeguarding the organizational context's support of RL. For example, COFCO, one of the leading suppliers of agricultural products in China, has been actively training leaders who are professionally capable and ethically accountable. From management selection, staffing, training, performance appraisal to evaluation and promotion, COFCO has been paying great attention to the development of responsible leaders. Based on best practices, the COFCO Leadership Development Center (忠良书院) designs specifically dedicated courses and programs focusing on two key aspects—" Zhong (忠), with integrity and

high ethical standards" and "Liang (良), with competency and capabilities", supported by scholars from top Chinese business schools including Tsinghua SEM.

Mike McNamara, CEO of Flex, a world-famous Sketch-to-Scale® solutions provider, believes that corporate culture is one of the most important assets to determine its sustainable future. He and his team have been building a strong corporate culture around *Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility* (CSER) and a matching HRM system well-aligned with corporate values and culture. This is as well reflected in the recent developments toward artificial intelligence and robots. While due to these technological advancements more and more jobs are being cut, the company has been paying close attention to employee development rather than laying off people, which is what many competitors tend to do. In their Zhuhai manufacturing facilities, one of the largest worldwide, Flex has been supporting local Chinese employees to improve their competencies and skills in meeting the future technological challenges. Employees can even pursue university degrees sponsored fully by Flex Zhuhai through the Employee Education Assistance Program.

Business leaders need to understand and integrate the organizational context and institutional environments into their decision making, based on strong foundations of personal core values and ethical motivations, in order to determine what specifically constitutes "doing good" and "avoiding harm". When support from the organization and institutions are hard to seek, business leaders need to proactively find creative ways to address the pressing challenges of our time and identify new opportunities, or even develop new rules of the game.

Yili is certainly among the pioneers in China. Around the core company value of "Nourish for Life", Yili has been gradually building corporate governance mechanisms and management systems to facilitate RL. In addition, after joining the UN Global Compact in 2017, the company refined its CR framework and related programs and integrated nine SDGs into its daily operations. This is a result of more than a decade of persistence and efforts in exploring and innovating. However, still the key question is how Yili manages to continually integrate RL in its strategies and operations. The answer

lies in all levels—the Chairman, the team, the company as a whole, stakeholders including suppliers, employees, communities, the government, NGOs, universities, the environment—all of which are considered with regard to RL. Following the "Yili Principle", the management team is given important roles in achieving CR outcomes, motivated not only by monetary incentives but also supported by corporate culture and values. For example, "high quality (高品质)" is the core of the quality-control department. Their daily job is not only to ensure high quality of their products, but also to make efforts in meeting high environmental standards.

Five Pitfalls to Avoid

Following a RL approach, business leaders have the opportunity to reconcile economic, social, and environmental targets, and in this way achieve sustainable development. Therefore, business leaders have both the privilege as well as the obligation to enact RL. However, some important pitfalls should be avoided.

No.1 Do not always focus on economic indicators only.

It is a recurring theme that business leaders tend to perceive trade-offs between economic responsibilities on the one hand and social and environmental responsibilities on the other hand. Oftentimes, companies find it hard to put a price tag on "doing good" or "avoiding harm". Also, it is not always feasible, possible, or sensible to measure social and environmental impacts in the same way as economic gains are measured. Therefore, business leaders need to accept that a sole focus on economic indicators most likely results in constant difficulties to reconcile economic with social and environmental responsibilities. This is not because of actual trade-offs but because CR and sustainability require longer-term perspectives, whereas a sole focus on economic indicators could simply work well with a short-term lens.

Business leaders who prioritize economic goals often tend to mainly adopt monetary and instrumental incentives that directly or indirectly aim at increasing or maintaining companies' economic gains. These are rarely appropriate to achieve social or environmental sustainability goals. Instead, companies should also introduce non-monetary and non-instrumental incentives for stakeholder engagement that go beyond

and complement economic targets. Therefore, demonstrated sense of care and duty of assistance or personal corporate citizenship are potential attributes that could be used in addition to traditional monetary criteria as part of business leaders' and managers' performance evaluations.

No.2 Do not consider "doing good" and "avoiding harm" as the same categories.

Frequently, companies tend to engage in "doing good" activities only and neglect the "avoiding harm" category, such as in the cases of tobacco companies donating money to do research on curing lung cancer or mining companies spending millions of dollars on CR intiatives while they keep importing blood diamonds. Often, such approaches might be perceived as greenwashing by various stakeholders with fatal consequences for companies including boycotts or negative press worldwide. In addition, due to the fast changing institutional environment and increased expectations for companies to emphasize sustainable development, "doing good" alone is not sufficient to make a true difference.

No.3 Do not throw company strategy out of the window but neither let strategy dictate responsibility.

Business leaders need to keep in mind that it is not strategy that makes a company responsible or sustainable. Instead, corporate strategy should be used as a tool rather than the means to realize RL. Ultimately, strategy needs to be the fundamental base that supports RL. Companies have been long exposed to the idea of 'doing well by doing good', which is not a very new concept and in the light of sustainable development is a rather limited approach toward achieving sustainable development, since it focuses on grand societal and environment challenges only from the narrow perspective of the company. For business leaders, and in particular for new millennials to be the future leaders, it is imperative to achieve true, positive, and tangible societal and environmental impacts, rather than simply making them part of corporate strategy.

No.4 Do not believe that it is a "one-size-fits-all" approach.

A prototypical, standard approach toward RL does not exist. As we discussed above, the combination of micro, meso, and macro aspects makes RL rather complex, yet important.

Therefore, business leaders need to carefully make "case-by-case" decisions, which might involve the need for creative and innovative solutions. Business leaders might need to develop new rules of the game and become standard setters rather than standard followers. However, in defining such new standards, they need to carefully consider their personal core values and ethical motivations, the organizational environments in which they work as well as the broader institutional and cultural context. In fact, there are many different routes and many forms for business leaders and their companies to realize RL.

No.5 Do not believe that RL is a single-player approach.

While business leaders' core values and ethical motivations are a key element of RL, this does not imply that a single business leader alone should enact RL. Instead, as we discussed, they need to consider organizational and institutional influences and reach out to stakeholders directly and indirectly as well as obviously and unobviously affected by "doing good" and "avoiding harm". In addition, building a sustainable future can only be successfully achieved through collaboration among governments, the civil society, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations. This is particularly exemplified in SDG #17: "Partnerships for the goals". In fact, some of the rather traditional industries have already taken initiatives toward increased partnerships. For example, the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) was initiated by major mining and metal companies in the world. Currently, the ICMM brings together 27 mining and metal companies and over 30 national and reginal associations. This collaboration is supported by continuous dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders including governments, international organizations, representatives of communities, and indigenous peoples, civil society, and academia.

Epilogue

Business leaders are like fish in the ocean. Without a healthy ocean, all fish will eventually die.

Looking into the future, it is becoming less and less "valid" for companies to separate their economic responsibilities from social and environmental targets. Therefore, the imperative for RL requires that business leaders consider economic, social, and

environmental objectives as inseparable pieces of the same puzzle. RL, based on sound core values and ethical motivations on the part of business leaders, therefore encourages future leaders to explore creative, yet meaningful routes to safeguard a sustainable future – not only for businesses but also for society as a whole.