



Insights from ‘The Energy Advantage,’ European Book Roadshow

Top of the House leaders reflect on insights from “The Energy Advantage: How to Go from Managing Your Time to Mastering Your Energy” during various gatherings.

■ By Ricardo Sunderland

“Figuring out who you are, and acting on that understanding, is truly liberating. It’s a hugeweight off your shoulders.”

- extracted from *The Energy Advantage: How to Go from Managing Your Time to Mastering Your Energy*

A “silent” movement has been permeating the ranks of the world’s most senior leaders. It’s not about a new technology or brilliant strategy, but it’s about something more fundamental and powerful: a new way of leading, one that looks to allow emotional and spiritual energy to be integrated to the mental and physical energy at the workplace. It’s a shift that goes from mastering your energy, rather than managing your time.

Thanks to the trust and support of my Egon Zehnder colleagues, I recently

had the privilege of meeting with 250+ leaders, including 35 CEOs, 45 Chief People Officers, and Executive Committee members from leading companies in Berlin, Madrid, Paris, Milan, Zurich, and Basel to discuss insights from my new book, “*The Energy Advantage: How to Go from Managing Your Time to Mastering Your Energy.*”

I am happy to report that these gatherings confirmed what I have observed firsthand over the past decade: Leaders are already on a

journey of self-discovery to become more humane at the workplace. They desire to live happier anytime, anywhere while maintaining successful lives. The question of how to make this leadership shift happen by mastering their energy, rather than optimizing their time, sparked high levels of curiosity and engaging discussions.

Clearly, most of the participants were already beyond the “*why*,” so the questions and dialogue focused on “*how*” to make this mindset shift around energy management happen.

These intimate gatherings created a space for deep emotional connections and open reflections. In this report, you'll get a glimpse of some of the key topics discussed.

Accessing the Energy Within

“Human energy is the creative power within all of us. It is the driving force that creates and animates all the powerful experiences in our lives.”

– *The Energy Advantage: How to Go from Managing Your Time to Mastering Your Energy*

As top leaders acknowledged during our gatherings, maintaining the *status quo* is no longer viable. Mental and physical energy are no longer enough to be successful. Today, cultivating emotional and spiritual energy is essential to live thriving and fulfilling lives. Integrating human energy in a holistic way creates spaces where both leaders and their teams feel safe to challenge each other, grow, and thrive.

As I shared at the gatherings, it takes inner work, and though not simple, it is

possible to achieve a level of energy awareness that fuels creativity as an unlimited resource.

In particular, there was a high level of curiosity on “What holds us back? What gets in the way to connect the thinking and the doing to the feeling and the being?”

Updating Belief Systems

One of the main holdbacks to accessing our energy is our belief system. As adults, most of us carry belief systems that shape our thoughts, actions, and interactions. They may be *conscious*, through statements such as “vulnerability is weakness,” or “work issues should stay separate from home life.” Leaders consistently discussed these as self-limiting and hindering their desire to show up in a more humane way at work. Then there are the *unconscious* beliefs, which are part of a rulebook we carried from childhood into adulthood that govern us silently and influence our behavior.

Attendees asserted the desire to update these beliefs by reflecting on what holds them back and reclaiming control over their emotions. This personal journey, rooted in the pursuit of happiness and fulfillment, is about gaining freedom of choice, and unlocking leaders' full potential.

Integrating Our Fear System to Transcend It

The other main holdback to accessing our energy is our *fear system*, which also took significant airtime at our gatherings—especially leaders' fear to fail. I explained that whenever I ask my clients, “what are you afraid of?” nine out of 10 respond: “Fear of failure.” Then immediately after, they add, “and please don't take it away from me, it is my edge, it is what got me to where I am today!” To put them at ease, I let them know that the intention of our work is not to get rid of the fear of failure, but to be in relationship with it, so they can transcend it. This way, they

can make it a choice when they control and plan for things rather than doing it to avoid failing.

Psychological Safety for Team Success

Our creative power reflects our energy level. Therefore, when entire teams are on the same level of energy, creativity and innovation energy can flow freely. By mastering their energy, leaders not only enhance their personal performance, but they also nurture an environment where team innovation flourishes and cooperation is strengthened.

Today's leaders must bring emotional and spiritual energy to their roles and create a space in which both they and their team members feel safe to challenge each other, grow, and thrive. When leaders are more in tune with their energy, they can create an atmosphere of psychological safety. This not only strengthens the company's social fabric but also enhances employees' resilience and clarity of thought.

There was a strong willingness from leaders at our events to understand how to help themselves or their CEOs on the journey of energy awareness, overcoming emotional compartmentalization for leaders to be their “true selves” anytime, anywhere to unlock team effectiveness. Authenticity breeds freedom of choice. It's time to unlock these compartments so energy can flow freely within and beyond.

Better Leader, Better Spouse, Better Human

This integration across all levels of life is crucial. Living a life of emotional compartmentalization no longer serves leaders, their organizations, or even their families. Imagine a life where they don't have to split themselves between the “invincible warrior” at work and “caring spouse and parent” at home. I encouraged attendees to envision

a reality where they can bring their full selves into any room they step into. To that end, some of the coaching work I conduct involves clients' families—husbands, wives, children—to become a support community for the organization's leader. When sharing this practice during the meetings, many participants expressed great surprise, as they had never heard of anything like it. But it made complete sense to them.

Taking a holistic coaching approach, including a leader's loved ones, not only enhances their effectiveness within their organization but also elevates their entire ecosystem,

including their personal life. Consequently, they can excel as a spouse, parent, and individual.

Achieving Great Feats through Energy Awareness

As the events concluded, it became clear that energy awareness is the next crucial step for leaders who want to not only survive but thrive in our complex world.

When thoughts, emotions, and inspiration harmonize, we can manifest our deepest, most creative visions and transform the world around us. It's the meeting of reason

with passion, guided by the flame of creativity, that propels us to achieve great feats and live with purpose.

My colleagues and I came out of these conversations feeling inspired and hopeful for the future of humanity. All these leaders really get it and are committed to making, through their roles and responsibilities, a better world!

(Note: all proceeds from the book sale will be donated to charity.)

About Egon Zehnder

Egon Zehnder is the world's preeminent leadership advisory firm, inspiring leaders to navigate complex questions with human answers. We help organizations get to the heart of their leadership challenges and offer honest feedback and insights to help leaders realize their true being and purpose.

We are built on a foundation that supports partnership in the truest sense of the word and aligns our interests with the interests of our clients. Our 600 consultants across 65 offices and 36 countries are former industry and functional leaders who collaborate seamlessly across geographies, industries and functions to deliver the full power of the Firm to every client, every time.

We partner closely with public and private corporations, family-owned enterprises, and non-profit and government agencies to provide executive search, leadership solutions, CEO search and succession, board advisory, and diversity, equity & inclusion.

Our services include discovering leaders, developing leadership, advancing governance, shaping successions, and unlocking transformations. We partner with Mobius Executive Leadership to offer highly experiential, personalized and transformational programs for senior leaders.

We believe that together we can transform people, organizations and the world through leadership.

For more information, visit www.egonzehnder.com and follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [X \(former Twitter\)](#).

For more information:



Ricardo Sunderland
San Francisco
ricardo.sunderland@egonzehnder.com