

**Purpose:** Emphasize a leader's role in distinguishing reality from perceptions.

**Intended Outcome:** Become more deliberate in weighing your perceptions against reality to enhance your capacity for Reason.

Developing the Reason capacity means being able to better face and interpret reality. The realities we face and create can lend to, or detract from, the fulfillment of our purposes– in business, in relationships, and in our personal goals. From this perspective, Reason is ultimately about action because it allows us to determine which positive actions will produce the positive reactions we want. Reason is about paying attention to the matters that require a response and making a fundamental choice– one that we make repeatedly without realizing it: to engage or avoid reality.

### Reason and Leadership

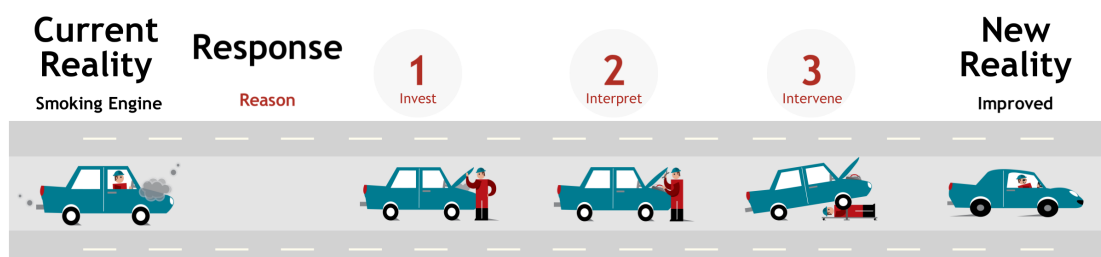
Reason is sometimes ignored in discussions on leadership because of the common misconception that it is not possible to simultaneously practice Reason while being a bold, daring, or imaginative leader. We mistakenly think Reason must be about playing it safe, but that simply is not true. Reason is about closing the gap between reality and absurdity. It often requires bold and daring people with great imaginations to be able to address the absurdity and help others recognize actual reality. Right now in your community, there are challenges that require bold and imaginative leaders who are capable of applying Reason to accurately assess and address the situation.

Incorporating Reason into leadership will also generate a positive response and therefore more positive results. Leadership based merely on authority sounds like this: “Do this...because I said so.” In contrast reasonable leadership is more like this: “Do this...because here are the facts, here are the options and, after evaluating them this will be the wisest course of action. Here is why.”

While authority demands compliance with no explanation, reasonable leadership often invokes other peoples' capacity for Reason. Doing so increases the possibility for reflection, inquiry, and learning during any challenge the community faces.

### Reason Principles

When we choose to view reality through the capacity of Reason, we can use three action steps to reach a new, improved reality for our communities and ourselves.



**Invest:** This is the gathering data phase. You base observations on facts and identify desired outcomes based on the Purpose. You actively seek to learn more about all the angles of a given issue. When you invest in something, you take a problem solving mindset. You have a sense of ownership (as in an “investment”). You choose to be part of the solution, which we also refer to as a “moment of accountability.”

**Interpret:** In this stage, you synthesize the data you gathered. There are various types of data to interpret (metrics, expert opinion, personal observation, conversation, accounting for all perspectives). As you decipher the meaning of data and the potential implications, you can generate possible courses of action and select the best one. From there, you can plan your approach and advocate your chosen course of action to others.

**Intervene:** This is the action stage where you take actions that evoke reactions from others. Evaluate your results and course correct if necessary. Role model Reason for others. Build credibility. Get others involved so they can become advocates for the solution. Follow through to completion.

## Reason Inhibitors

Sometimes we do not respond to our current reality using Reason. Instead we choose the Avoidance response, which often leads to a diminished reality.



**Distance:** Often, without awareness, we immediately resist aspects of reality, especially unpleasant ones. Our first response could be to physically or, more often, emotionally separate ourselves from it. On occasion, we may need to distance ourselves to calm our emotions in order to come back to it later with a possibility of a reasoned response. Most often, however, we avoid out of fear.

**Defer:** The result of distancing is that we remove ourselves from being able to take action. We leave the situation up to someone else, or to chance. Signs of deferring are procrastination or denial. We hope the problem will just go away or that someone else will work out the problem for us.

**Despair:** Sometimes we get lucky and the problem never escalates. Usually, however, a negative reality persists and eventually intensifies. Manageable issues that go unaddressed can magnify to the point that we, or our communities, show signs of wear and tear. The stress eventually reduces the ability to thrive and maybe even survive.