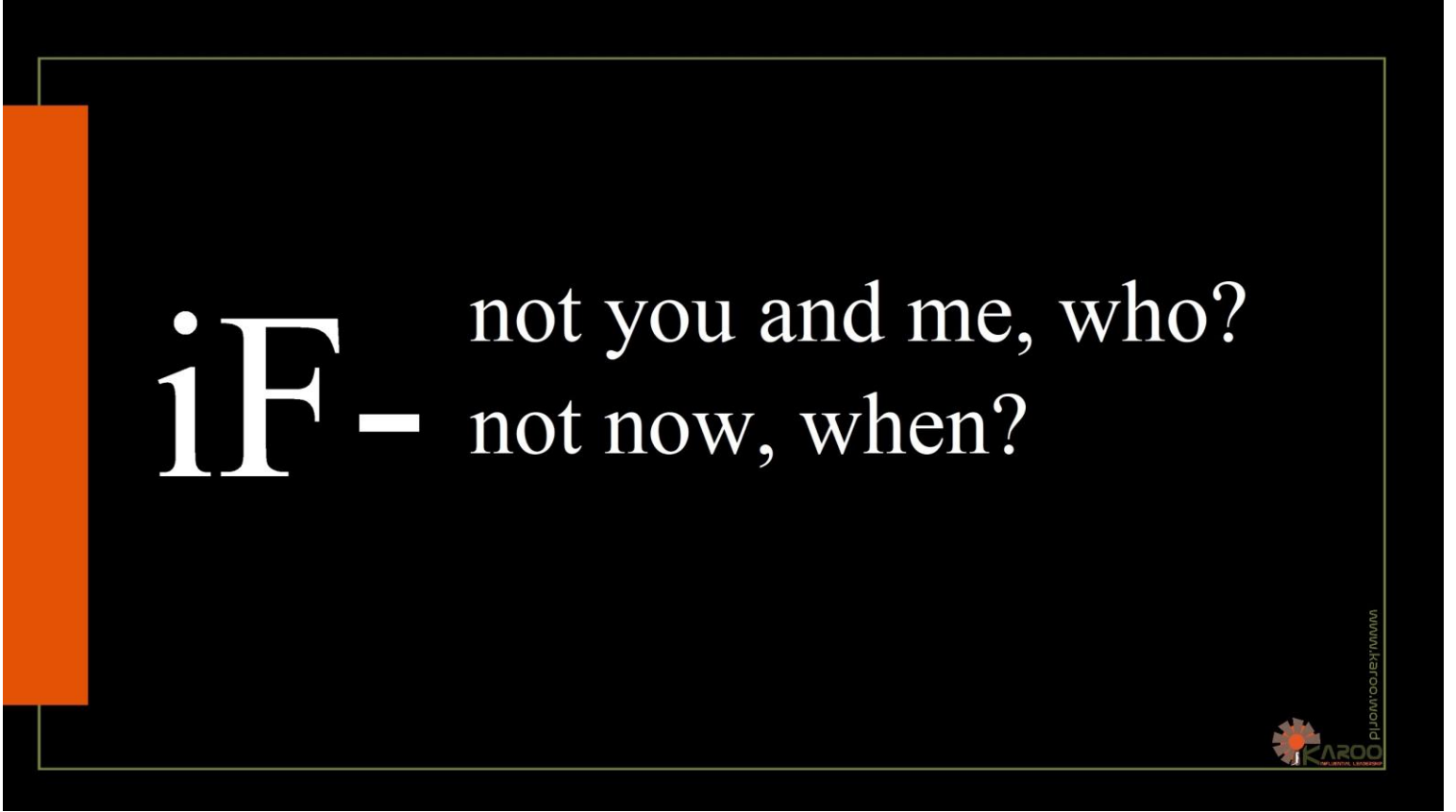


iF we do, **why** don't we do it?



iF – not you and me, who?
not now, when?



Recap

Our Leadership canvas for the previous (1026) and current (1126) editions of *On Leadership* is Rudyard Kipling's poem, *If*.

Last week the **context for a Leadership reflection** of the poem was set up.

This week we draw out the poem's themes and strands into the Leadership architecture.

But, before we get there, let us revisit two Leadership Lessons from last week.

Leadership Lesson #1

The pivotal Leadership lesson from Kipling's *If* is that it is a **clarion call**—not a whisper—to each person; to all of us. The poem behaves less like a letter to a son and more like an **ethical manifesto** to humanity:

- α **Sets ethical standards** rather than offering emotional reassurance.
- α **Addresses humanity under pressure** — failure, success, deceit, loss, power.
- α **Demands self-leadership** in a chaotic world, which is the core of personal and collective virtue.

It reads as a public summons to decency, restraint, courage, integrity, and a meaningful life—and while Kipling advised these virtues for a particular individual, they pertain no less to all of us.

Leadership Lesson #2

Multitudes of people who have been exposed to the poem feel it tugging at their deepest emotions, such as:

- α Ethical and moral aspiration. Calm, principled and resilient.
- α Steadfast resolve—endurance and perseverance.
- α Calm in turbulence—steadiness and thoughtfulness.
- α Self-awareness and accountability—*Can I do this? Do I live this way?*
- α Dignity and self-respect—the final reward is ethical adulthood and master of oneself—not wealth or praise.

If's Influential Leadership Themes

In the table below the lefthand-side column sets out the poem, and on the right the themes and strands as seen through the Influential Leadership lense.

Verse (Kipling)	iLeadership Lense
If you can keep your head when all about you Are losing theirs and blaming it on you; If you can trust yourself when all doubt you, But make allowance for their doubting too; If you can wait and not be tired by waiting, Or being lied about, don't deal in lies, Or being hated don't give way to hating, And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;	- α Emotional regulation; response over reaction; internal locus of control. - α Self-efficacy without defensiveness; perspective taking; humility under scrutiny. - α Principled restraint; moral agency; credibility over performance; humility as strength. <i>Reflective question: When pressure rises, what governs my response—impulse, image, or principle?</i>
If you can dream—and not make dreams your master If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim, If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster And treat those two impostors just the same If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools, Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken, And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools;	- α Vision without delusion; judgement that leads to action, not paralysis. - α Equanimity under outcome volatility; identity not tied to results. - α Integrity under misrepresentation; courage to stand by truth without control. - α Strategic resilience; purposeful rebuilding; agency beyond ideal conditions. <i>Reflective question: Do I let outcomes define me, or do I let judgement guide my next action?</i>
If you can make one heap of all your winnings And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss, And lose, and start again at your beginnings And never breathe a word about your loss: If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew To serve your turn long after they are gone, And so hold on when there is nothing in you	- α Courageous commitment; willingness to stake comfort for purpose. - α Dignity in failure; internal validation; non-instrumental suffering. - α Endurance beyond motivation; disciplined will. - α Purpose-anchored resolve; agency when resources are depleted.

Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'	<i>Reflective question: When momentum is gone, what am I actually drawing on to continue?</i>
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue, Or walk with Kings and Queens—nor lose the common touch, If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you, If all people count with you, but none too much: If you can fill the unforgiving minute With sixty seconds' worth of distance run— Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, And—which is more—you'll have earned the right to Lead!	- α Relational agency; equality of dignity; grounded authority. - α Proportional attachment; independence from approval or hostility. - α Time stewardship; disciplined execution; earned outcomes. - α Leadership as consequence, not aspiration; influence earned through conduct. <i>Reflective question: Am I using my time and position to earn the capability to practise leadership?</i>

Recognised and Respected: If we do, why don't we do it?

Most people who read *IF* are deeply moved by its clarion call—but few respond beyond their immediate emotions. Each of us can choose to do...
If not you and me, who?
If not now, when?

Regards,
Colin

The Influential Leadership System™ — Lead, live better.
Architecture to shape productive outcomes.

A practical leadership system to intentionally shape the events we face, the conditions we create, and the circumstances we inherit—for the betterment of our own and others' lived lives.

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