

QUIRKY

Why leaders ought to be more interested in history

Learning from history has never been so relevant as it is today. Historical understanding can help us avoid poor decisions made in the past. Quite simply, there is more certainty in history, because we already know what happened and what the outcomes are. We must understand this complex picture of the past in order to better meet the needs of the future.

By Scott Monty
Communication & Leadership Coach

Leadership is messy. Regardless of the time or situation in which they find themselves, there are choices leaders face that are difficult, outcomes that are unexpected, and interactions that can go sideways.

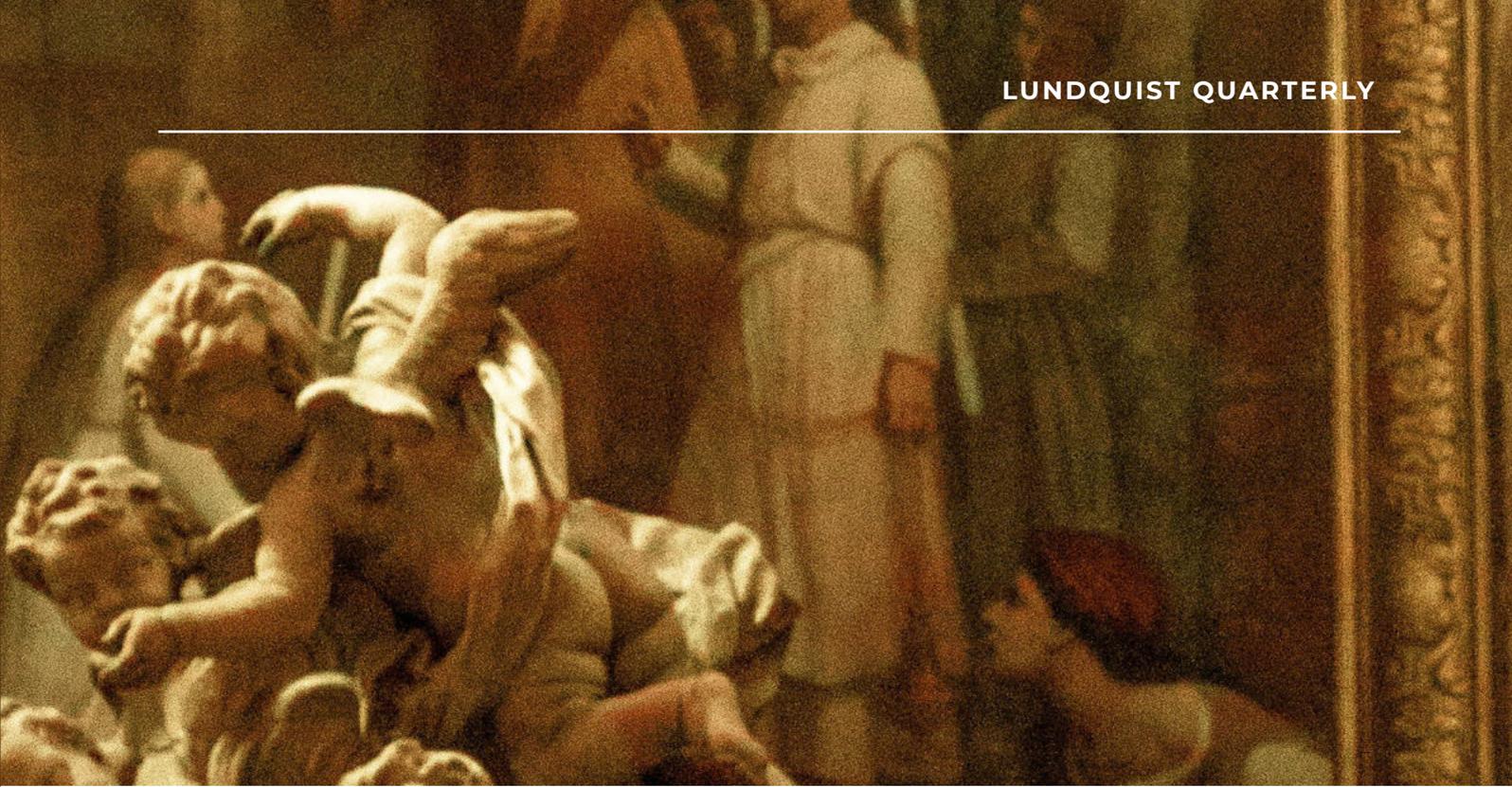
The leader confers with trusted advisors and relies on well-picked team members to make decisions to the best of their ability at the time.

But leadership isn't like choosing ham or tuna for your sandwich. It's much more nuanced and requires weighing forces seen and unseen, to result in an outcome that is, on balance, a net positive.

Part of doing that is not only living in the present, but understanding the past. Taking stock in those whose shoulders on which you stand to help you determine what needs doing now. We fall into the trap of thinking we're unique and never before has someone had to deal with the same issues we have.

When we do this, we struggle as we tackle each obstacle as it occurs.

But what if we didn't have to struggle so much? What if we could anticipate what comes next by recognizing patterns? That could help us avoid traps and jump ahead of the competition.



History repeats itself

All one needs to do to appreciate this is to look at the history of Afghanistan. The 20-year war that the United States just concluded was never going to end well.

Alexander the Great arrived in the area of Afghanistan in 330 BC after defeating Darius III of Persia a year earlier at the Battle of Gaugamela. His army faced very strong resistance in the Afghan tribal areas where he is said to have commented that Afghanistan is “easy to march into, hard to march out of.”

For as long as outside forces have been trying to form alliances and cohesiveness in Afghanistan, the internal forces have been fighting and rejecting them.

The opening of “A Study in Pink” — the first episode in the BBC’s Sherlock — concerned an army doctor returning to London after serving in Afghanistan in 2010. He was suffering from PTSD and was looking for someone with whom to share lodgings. This was exactly the scene that opened A Study in Scarlet, the first Sherlock Holmes story, set in 1881. Dr. Watson returned from war, having been

injured at the Battle of Maiwand in Afghanistan during the Second Anglo-Afghan War.

Outside forces that get involved in conflicts in Afghanistan have always left in defeat. Alexander the Great knew it, and the British knew it — twice before they repeated the error in the Third Anglo-Afghan War in 1919.

If we are willing to take the time to more deeply understand the events of the past, whether corporate history, local history, or world history, it will help ground you in what you may need today, tomorrow, or next year. That’s much easier when armed with examples from leaders who have done it before.

“

The leader who is prepared is the leader who observes and reflects, learns and challenges, and imagines and decides.

Extract from Interview with Scott Monty at the 2021 Lundquist Seminar held on 28 September at the Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Tecnologia Leonardo da Vinci, Milan

📌 Scott, you have a unique way of addressing the challenges of modern leadership and communications by drawing from history, art, literature and philosophy. Why do you think history can be a help in addressing the future?

SM So many executives are constantly looking for futurists. We're looking for certainty to help guide us towards where we're going, the decisions and investments we're making, the technology we chose and even the talent we hire. Yet, there's more certainty in history, because we already know what happened, so we know what the outcomes are. That's the beauty of looking backwards.

If you understand patterns and if you understand human behaviour, which is incredibly consistent over the course of recorded history, that will enable you to predict where things are going.

I see so many people forgetting things that have happened, even in recent history, looking back five or ten years, let alone five or ten centuries. We can see these patterns emerge and we can help ourselves avoid mistakes and even leapfrog the competition by becoming smarter about how humans behave and what we can expect.



SCOTT MONTY

Strategic Communications & Leadership Coach

Scott Monty is a strategic communications and leadership coach and advisor who helps the C-suite embrace better communication with timeless and timely advice. A Fortune 10 leader whose background in classics positioned him to see through the shiny objects, Scott can drill down to understand the common human needs from throughout history that still drive us all. He was ranked by The Economist as #1 atop the list 25 Social Business Leaders and Alan Mulally, the CEO of Ford Motor Company, called him "a visionary."

Scott spent six years as an executive at Ford, where he helped turn the company around with an uncanny ability to merge technology with humanity. He served as a strategic adviser across a variety of business functions, leading the company's global social media strategy. He also has another decade and a half of experience in communications and marketing agencies. Scott's clients have included companies such as Walmart, IBM, McDonald's, Coca-Cola, and Google.

He is a trustee of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, a past board member of the American Marketing Association, and has advised a number of tech companies.



He writes the Timeless and Timely newsletter, to help leaders make sense of today with lessons from the past, at TimelessTimely.com. He uses timeless lessons from history, literature and philosophy to help leaders make decisions with empathy, integrity, and wisdom. His knowledge of history, philosophy and literature, together with his ability to trend-spot, shows teams

and audiences that the key to our future is in understanding human nature while focusing on integrity and values. Please feel free to sign up: www.scottmonty.com

EUROLAND IR

Best Practice Investors Relations

Euroland IR is a multinational company dedicated to providing best practice Investor Relations services. We are founded in 1986 and successfully evolved branches in UK, Dubai, Tokyo, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and India. Our customers are across the globe, including Asia, Europe, Middle-East, and the UK.

Investors Relations Solutions

Make Your Data Interactive

Ensure that your stock performance are easily understood by investors with the help of interactive charts, and graphs, and company news and updates are delivered in timely manner.

Provide Timeliness Data and Cloud Technology

Ensure fast and stable presenting and processing of your IR-related data for global users.

Furnish with In-depth Analysis

Ensure investor relations tools not only to capture the attention of the investors but also to give the insight to IROs.



Easy Access to Investor Content

Ensure all audiences, potential and existing investors, can easily access and understand your company proposition.

Offer Multiple Ways to Stay Connected

Ensure that IR tools are designed to be adaptive and suitable for a variety of devices.



Olga Arvidsson
Senior Sales Manager
olga.arvidsson@euroland.com
Direct: +46 70 000 88 52

Euroland IR
Kronhusgatan 2D, 411 13
Gothenburg, Sweden
Switchboard: +46 (0)31 10 56 00
services.euroland.com