Leadership:

From the Mission Control Room to the Boardroom

Part 1: Real-Time Morality
Part 2: Management Clouds the Morality
Part 3: Leadership Team Transformation
Part 4: Make It Personal
After more than fifty years, flying people into space atop millions of pounds of fire is still a tough and scary business. In the most challenging phases of spaceflight, not only is the situation becoming more complex and sometimes scarier, but it’s doing so quickly, requiring increasingly rapid data analysis and highly reliable decision making. In those moments, leadership counts more than ever in Mission Control. However, the role of leadership in this dangerous enterprise is not the sole province of the Flight Director in the Mission Control Room. In fact, a key to NASA’s Mission Control legacy of brilliant performance is a particular brand of leadership at all levels, especially at the working level.

This workshop will describe the Mission Control brand of leadership, and how to make the leadership culture your own. It will convey the detailed characteristics that are linked to strong technical performance during the scarier moments of manned spaceflight, and their direct connection to technical skill and leadership development, management practices and strategic change outside of that room and away from the on-going space operations.

This starts with a bottom-up understanding and answer questions like:

- What is considered strong performance in Mission Control during spaceflight?
  - What defines right and wrong, good judgment and bad?
  - What are the resulting leadership values?
- How does the leadership culture manifest itself in individual, team, and leadership performance when the clock is ticking?
  - What challenges do we face in adhering to the leadership values?
  - How do we instill the morality and leadership values at the working level?
- How do the real-time morality and Mission Control trust evolve into deliberate organizational values?

The goal is to then provide similar clarity to deliberately stewarding the organization’s leadership culture from the top-down. This, in turn, hones the leadership values and strengthens the culture through the same deliberate focus Mission Control applies to mission preparation and flying in space.

The second half of the workshop explores this leadership evolution further by answering questions like:

- How do the morality and leadership values influence management practices in all of our work, not just in real-time?
- How do we evolve a leadership team to passionately steward these values and management practices?
- How do we select and prepare the next generation of leaders and managers?
- And ultimately, how do these values and practices then reinforce the alignment and maximize performance in the rocket science?
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The brand of leadership exercised for decades in Mission Control has lessons that can bring similar clarity from the Mission Control Room to the boardroom, outside the world of human spaceflight. This workshop will take you from the ground up in the values that are most critical to highly reliable performance, and then from the top down in applying them as deliberate organizational values and management practices, and reinforcing the performance where it matters most every day.

Today’s business environment can be just as demanding as surviving and succeeding in the space environment. Deliberate, value-based decision-making can make the difference between struggling through hard choices or leading your way to preferred outcomes and innovation.
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About Atlas Executive Consulting

Paul Sean Hill focuses on universal leadership challenges like risk management, critical thinking, and leading change. He is passionate about showing how any organization can leverage the core ideas and leadership values from Mission Control – the same leadership that has defined “steely-eyed missile men and women” and delivered highly reliable performance and “impossible” wins in human spaceflight for decades. Paul will show you what that means from the Mission Control room to the boardroom and how to bring these values to your organization.

With 28 years experience in space operations, Paul has the unique perspective of someone who has led Mission Control during human space flight, and, as the top executive, transformed the leadership culture for the entire high performing organization. Using compelling examples, he describes the leadership values in Mission Control and conveys their critical connection to technical performance, leadership development, management practices, and strategic change at the enterprise level.

Beyond the rocket science and leadership theory, Paul shows how these ideas are the enablers in solving “impossible” problems at all levels. He’ll show you how Mission Control does it, and more importantly, he demonstrates how you can apply the core ideas and leadership values from Mission Control in your organization.

Paul was the Director of Mission Operations at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration’s Johnson Space Center from 2007 through 2014. He was responsible for all of NASA’s human spaceflight mission planning, flight controller and astronaut training, and Mission Control. Before this, he held a number of senior leadership positions, and from 1996 through 2005 Paul served as a Space Shuttle and International Space Station Flight Director, leading the flight control team in flight preparation and execution from Mission Control. He supported 24 missions as a Flight Director, with leadership roles including planning and leading space station construction in orbit, instrumental leadership in the Columbia accident investigation, and returning Shuttle to flight two years later.

Before his work with NASA, Paul served in the USAF in military satellite operations. He earned his bachelor and master of science degrees in aerospace engineering, from Texas A&M University in 1984 and 1985 and was a member of the Corps of Cadets. He married another Texas Aggie, with whom he raised two more extraordinary (fourth generation) Aggie women.
Leadership: From the Mission Control Room to the Boardroom

Learn how you can apply Mission Control's experience – read the book!

"Daring, engrossing and hard to put down... learn how this incredible team thrives in the most high-stakes environment imaginable... and how you can help your team do the same." — Marshall Goldsmith, #1 New York Times bestselling author of Get Ahead: Stop Leadership Traps in the Workplace

LEADERSHIP FROM THE MISSION CONTROL ROOM TO THE BOARDROOM

A GUIDE TO UNLEASHING TEAM PERFORMANCE

PAUL SEAN HILL
FORMER NASA DIRECTOR OF MISSION OPERATIONS

Failure is always an option, and so is choosing to lead your team into an environment that helps them avoid catastrophe and pull off miracles. For more than fifty years, NASA’s Mission Control has done just that.

Take the ultimate insider’s look at the leadership values and culture that made that track record possible. Paul paints a vivid picture, candidly portraying the critical cultural connections in human spaceflight triumphs and failures. By demonstrating how his Mission Control team learned to steward this culture into their management roles, Paul provides a guide for any organization to boost their own performance by leveraging the core ideas and values that have delivered “impossible” wins for decades.

Whether failure means cost and schedule overruns, quality escapes, loss of market share, bankruptcy, or putting people’s lives at risk, how we lead can determine whether even small mistakes snowball out of control and destroy an enterprise.

Discover how to take Leadership from the Mission Control Room to the Boardroom, and enable this leadership environment in your team.

Available now in hard cover, soft-cover, and ebook wherever books are sold online. For help finding it: AtlasExec.com/book/

Explore empowering values and critical ideas:

• The secret to Mission Control’s renowned success has never been rocket science – it is a very deliberate morality that guides every judgment and decision.

• Reflecting the morality in everything we do leads to high-trust in each of us individually, is the key to our remarkable team performance, and is our defining cultural value.

• As we move up as managers, we often lose connection to this key morality, develop dysfunctional management practices, and risk unintentionally leading the team into preventable mistakes and failure.

• The hardest realization for leaders is that we are the problem – it is up to us to do something about our management practices or it is because of us if we do not and the organization continues to decline.

• When we rediscovered the connection as managers, we learned to reflect the same morality in our management practices and created a high-trust leadership team.

• Practicing this morality as managers enhanced performance at all levels, enabling unexpected innovations, dramatic cost savings, and critical strategic wins.

Like the morality, our discovery isn’t rocket science, and you can leverage this empowering culture to boost your team’s performance and develop your next generation of leaders.

"This incredible team’s leadership journey — and development of precise decision-making in the face of unbelievable pressure — are inspiring. Every leader will find parallels to their own organization. A must-have for anyone leading a high-performance team and an invaluable addition to any business library. — Marshall Goldsmith, The author of the #1 New York Times bestseller – Triggers

"Paul Hill tells the true story of the game-changing transformation of Mission Control’s senior leadership team. Ride along as these executives rediscover the core purpose and values that had never left their organization. Hill’s candor and intensity makes this a fascinating read for every leader!" — Ken Blanchard, coauthor of The New One Minute Manager® and Leading at a Higher Level

"This is an arresting work. Paul offers a view from the inside... From there, he shows how the principles and values apply in a far larger arena. No leader or manager can fail to benefit from the lessons captured here." — Michael D. Griffin, NASA Administrator, 2005-09 and Schafer Corporation CEO

"A stunning ‘instructional manual’ for business executives and leaders who want to learn from the best team on the planet.” — Mary Lynne Dittmar, President of the Coalition for Deep Space Exploration

"A cautionary tale that sustaining excellence may be more difficult than attaining it. Leaders from every organization will benefit from these vital lessons.” — Walter E. Natemeyer, Chairman and CEO, North American Training and Development

"Mission Control is the leadership laboratory for those who accept the challenge and the risk of ultimate responsibility. Paul Hill is a select graduate.” — Eugene F. Kranz, former NASA Flight Director and Director of Mission Operations

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