Resilient Leadership for Engaging Teams

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Introduction

In this chapter, we examine how resilient leadership enables teams to stay engaged and productive amid volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA). We frame resilience as a dynamic, multilevel capability: leaders and teams must not only absorb shocks but also bounce forward – reconfiguring work systems so that post-adversity functioning improves rather than merely returning to baseline (Raetze et al., 2022; Hernes et al., 2025).

Building on this framing, it is increasingly recognised that resilience in contemporary organisations is not simply a matter of individual toughness or perseverance but a collective property shaped by interdependent actions, shared sensemaking, and distributed leadership responses. In an environment characterised by rapid technological change, geopolitical uncertainty, and shifting workforce expectations, resilient leadership must operate across temporal horizons – preparing teams before disruption, stabilising them during turbulence, and repositioning them for growth afterward. This dynamic orientation positions resilience as both a protective mechanism and a springboard for innovation, allowing teams not only to withstand challenges but to leverage adversity as a catalyst for transformation.

Three enduring challenges set the stage for this chapter. First, disruptions differ in tempo and scale – from sudden stochastic shocks to protracted probabilistic transformations and systemic tipping points – so leadership requires temporal acumen to guide teams in projecting, reconstituting, and reconfiguring trajectories across event types (Hernes et al., 2025). This means that leaders must cultivate sensitivity to temporal cues – early signals of change, inflection points in unfolding crises, and windows of opportunity in recovery phases – while avoiding the trap of responding too quickly or too slowly. Effective temporal leadership thus hinges on balancing stability-oriented actions with agility-based responses, enabling teams to maintain focus even when events unfold unpredictably. Second, engagement under pressure follows a resource logic: when leaders rebalance job demands and invest in job resources (e.g., autonomy, feedback, social support, learning), teams are more likely to experience vigour, dedication, and absorption; by contrast, unmitigated loss spirals erode energy and identification with work (Bakker et al., 2008; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Resilient leaders therefore play an essential role as "resource stewards," monitoring early signs of depletion, removing structural hindrances, and ensuring that the conditions for sustainable engagement are preserved. This stewardship becomes even more important in contexts marked by persistent change, where demands

can accumulate faster than organisations can replenish resources, making recovery cycles and resource-protection strategies vital components of resilience-building. Third, in hybrid and virtual settings, robust engagement depends on inclusive micro-practices – reflection, emotion regulation, and deliberate inclusion – because digital distance can mute cues unless leaders intentionally surface them (Degbey & Einola, 2020). Such environments amplify the risks of miscommunication, exclusion, and emotional detachment. Resilient leadership must therefore stretch across technological boundaries, using nuanced forms of digital communication, inclusive agenda-setting, and relational check-ins to maintain psychological presence. As hybrid work becomes the norm rather than the exception, leaders must develop digital empathy and craft routines that enable dispersed team members to remain connected, recognised, and aligned.

Following these key issues, this chapter advances three contributions. *First*, we consolidate a temporal, trajectory-based view of resilient leadership explaining how leaders and teams project responses in anticipation, reconstitute during disruption, and reconfigure afterwards – calibrated to the probability and impact of different event types (Hernes et al., 2025). This trajectory-based approach highlights that resilience is never a singular moment of "bounce back" but a continuous journey shaped by anticipatory foresight, crisis navigation, and reflective adaptation. *Second*, we integrate psychological safety, emotional intelligence, and resource-centric design (JD-R and COR) to specify how leaders transform adversity into sustained engagement, preventing resource loss spirals and enabling gain spirals (Edmondson, 1999; Goleman, 1995; Bakker et al., 2008; Hobfoll et al., 2018). These theoretical elements come together to form a relational and emotional fabric that helps teams maintain cohesion and meaning when navigating demanding periods. *Third*, we articulate a digital-era AMO perspective – aligning opportunity (digitalisation), motivation (inclusive climate), and ability (digital literacy; core self-evaluations) – and show how taking-charge behaviours connect these levers to resilient engagement in hybrid/virtual teams (Zahoor et al., 2024; Degbey & Einola, 2020). This provides a useful framework for understanding how individuals mobilise agency in digitally mediated environments, especially when completing interdependent and ambiguous tasks.

We structure the chapter as follows. We first review theoretical foundations of resilient leadership – clarifying its temporal nature and multilevel mechanisms. We then develop practical strategies and managerial implications, before turning to emerging challenges and paradoxes. We conclude with future trajectories for research and practice, with particular attention to hybrid and virtual contexts where resilient leadership for engaging teams is most acutely tested (Degbey & Einola, 2020; Raetze et al., 2022). Taken together, these explorations illustrate that resilient leadership is not merely a desirable individual quality but a strategic organisational imperative that shapes long-term adaptability and team thriving.

Theoretical Foundations: From Bouncing Back to Bouncing Forward

Resilience as a Multilevel, Temporal Capability

Contemporary reviews show resilience is distinct, multilevel, and inherently temporal – requiring anticipation, response, and forward reconfiguration (Raetze et al., 2022). A trajectory model explains how resilient actors project ahead, reconstitute mid-event, and reconfigure for the future – especially as probability and impact vary across stochastic events, probabilistic transformations, and tipping points (Hernes et al., 2025).

In extending this understanding, resilience emerges not only at the individual level but also across teams and organisational systems, driven by shared mental models, collective routines, and adaptive infrastructures. When viewed at the team level, resilience includes the capacity to redistribute roles, adjust coordination patterns, and re-establish shared goals in response to changing conditions. At the organisational level, resilience reflects the ability to institutionalise lessons learned, preserve strategic flexibility, and maintain a culture that encourages experimentation rather than avoidance of uncertainty. Thus, resilience unfolds as a nested set of adaptive processes operating across levels of action and timescales.

Moreover, the temporal dimension of resilience underscores that leadership behaviours must be tailored not only to the type of adversity but also to its developmental phase. Pre-adversity behaviours emphasise scanning, preparation, and capability-building. During adversity, leadership focuses on stabilisation, clarity, and emotional containment. Post-adversity efforts turn toward recovery, learning, and renewal. Such differentiated leadership responses contribute to resilience as an ongoing cycle of sensemaking and adaptation rather than a singular response to crisis events.

Leadership Approaches that Enable Resilience

Transformational leadership mobilises meaning, inspiration and learning under adversity (Bass, 1985). Authentic leadership adds self-awareness, relational transparency and an internalised moral perspective that stabilise trust and collective orientation; importantly, a meta-analysis shows that while the two approaches are strongly related, each tends to better predict different outcomes – authentic leadership more so for organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and group/organisational performance, and transformational leadership more for task performance and satisfaction outcomes (Banks et al., 2016; Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Degbey & Samba, 2025).

These distinctions matter for resilience, as different forms of leadership activate different motivational, relational, and cognitive pathways during adversity. Transfor-

mational leaders may strengthen resilience by helping teams construct a compelling narrative about the purpose behind their efforts, fostering courage and collective commitment. Authentic leaders, conversely, amplify resilience by fostering psychological ownership and moral grounding, ensuring that team members feel secure, valued, and empowered even amid uncertainty. By demonstrating integrity and transparency, authentic leaders strengthen interpersonal trust, which becomes a crucial buffer during high-pressure situations. Meanwhile, adaptive leadership contributes to resilience by encouraging experimentation, surfacing unspoken tensions, and enabling distributed problem-solving mechanisms that allow teams to navigate complex or ambiguous challenges.

Collectively, these leadership approaches highlight that resilience is best supported by leaders who can flex between inspirational messaging, emotional attunement, and adaptive improvisation – while building the structural conditions that sustain engagement even when demands escalate.

CAS, Adaptive Leadership, and Resilient Performance (Connector)

Framed through complex adaptive systems (CAS), resilient leadership often works indirectly, shaping identity and interactions so the team stays near the edge of chaos, where learning and adaptation are most likely (Schneider & Somers, 2006). This is complementary to adaptive leadership, which mobilises people to do the adaptive work rather than relying on positional authority alone. Recent evidence on shared leadership shows how this mobilisation unfolds in practice: teams that develop strong transactive memory systems decentralise influence early, later grow leadership density, and allow situationally aligned leaders to step forward as contexts change – patterns that underpin resilient performance (Xu et al., 2022).

The CAS perspective reframes leadership as an emergent, dynamic process arising from ongoing interactions among agents rather than a top-down set of directives. In CAS environments, small leadership behaviours – such as reframing a challenge, inviting marginalised voices, or altering coordination patterns – can create disproportionately large effects as they ripple through the system. Teams that operate near the "edge of chaos" maintain enough structure to preserve identity and coherence but enough flexibility to pivot quickly when required. In such contexts, leadership is less about command and more about crafting conditions – psychological, relational, and structural – that promote distributed problem-solving.

Adaptive leadership reinforces this CAS view by emphasising that many modern challenges are "adaptive" rather than technical; they require changes in values, roles, behaviours, or mental models. Resilient teams must therefore continuously negotiate new ways of operating, and leaders must guide teams through loss, conflict, and uncertainty without prematurely imposing solutions. Shared leadership processes, as described by Xu et al. (2022), emerge naturally in such conditions because the complexity

of challenges demands fluid, situational decision-making. The convergence of CAS, adaptive leadership, and shared leadership perspectives demonstrates that resilient performance arises from collective intelligence, dynamic role-shifting, and ongoing alignment between individual expertise and situational demands.

Psychological Safety and EI as Mechanisms

Psychological safety underwrites voice, learning and error-management – behaviours essential for resilient adaptation (Edmondson, 1999). Emotional intelligence helps leaders regulate and respond to affect, stabilising attention and motivation during strain (Goleman, 1995).

These two mechanisms interact closely in shaping a resilient social environment. Psychological safety ensures that team members feel comfortable surfacing difficult truths, questioning assumptions, and experimenting with novel approaches – behaviours that are indispensable in uncertain or rapidly evolving situations. Emotional intelligence enhances the leader's ability to model composure, respond empathetically, and regulate the emotional climate of the team. Together, they foster an atmosphere in which people can remain psychologically available and cognitively open, even when external pressures are mounting.

Furthermore, emotionally intelligent leaders are better able to recognise when team members are overwhelmed, disengaged, or hesitant, allowing them to intervene early and prevent relational fractures. By managing emotions well, both their own and those of others, leaders transform discomfort into constructive dialogue and resilience-building opportunities. In this sense, psychological safety and emotional intelligence function as mutually reinforcing pillars that maintain team coherence and adaptability under duress.

The Resource Logic (JD-R and COR)

Leaders sustain engagement by buffering demands with resources – autonomy, feedback, support, learning – activating gain spirals of vigour and dedication (Bakker et al., 2008; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In parallel, COR highlights that losses loom larger than gains and that chronic demands can trigger loss spirals unless organisations invest in protection and replenishment (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

These frameworks show that resilience emerges when resource-enhancing practices outweigh resource-depleting pressures. Leaders play a pivotal role in calibrating this balance by recognising when demands outpace capacities and acting swiftly to restock resource reservoirs. For example, providing timely feedback can clarify priorities and reduce cognitive strain; fostering autonomy enhances intrinsic motivation; and promoting learning opportunities strengthens adaptability and future readiness.

Moreover, resilient leadership entails proactively mitigating loss spirals by acknowledging emotional strain, reducing unnecessary bureaucratic load, and ensuring recovery periods. COR theory's emphasis on resource caravans – bundles of interrelated resources that accumulate together – suggests that resilience can grow cumulatively when teams experience consistent protection, support, and empowerment. Conversely, when resource losses accumulate unchecked, resilient responses become increasingly difficult to sustain. Therefore, resource-sensitive leadership is indispensable for enabling teams to weather prolonged adversity without succumbing to exhaustion or disengagement.

A Digital-Era AMO Perspective for Teams

Evidence indicates digitalisation promotes resilience when inclusive climates (motivation) and abilities (digital literacy; core self-evaluations) are present; taking-charge behaviour links these to resilient outcomes (Zahoor et al., 2024). In hybrid/virtual teams, reflection–emotion–inclusion practices – rebalancing talk time, switching media to fit language proficiency, acknowledging mundane adversities – are core routines that protect cohesion and engagement (Degbey & Einola, 2020).

The AMO perspective underscores that resilience in digital environments arises from the interplay between enabling structures, supportive cultures, and empowered individuals. Digital opportunities – such as asynchronous collaboration, automation, real-time analytics, and AI-enabled tools – provide the structural backbone that allows teams to coordinate effectively despite geographical dispersion. However, these tools only contribute to resilience when team members possess the motivation and ability to use them meaningfully.

Motivation is shaped by inclusive climates where individuals feel their contributions are valued regardless of location or background. Ability is fostered by digital literacy, confidence in navigating virtual platforms, and proactive learning behaviours. Taking-charge behaviour acts as the behavioural engine that translates opportunity, motivation, and ability into resilient action, especially when teams face ambiguity or shifting task demands. By encouraging proactive problem-solving and initiative-taking, leaders harness the full potential of digital technologies and cultivate self-organising team dynamics that remain robust under both routine and crisis conditions.

Putting Resilient Leadership to Work: Strategies and Implications

Strategy 1 – Make Psychological Safety the Default

Engineer safety-first rituals (e.g., speak-up rounds; learning-focused retros) and explicit norms for candour and experimentation because psychological safety supports learning behaviour and, in turn, performance under uncertainty (Edmondson, 1999). In virtual settings, surface "silent signals" (chat check-ins; structured turn-taking) and adapt channels to integrate low-fluency members – micro-practices that preserve resilient processes (Degbey & Einola, 2020). Beyond these practices, resilient leaders intentionally cultivate a climate where dissenting perspectives are welcomed as essential inputs for adaptive functioning rather than treated as distractions or potential threats. This includes legitimising uncertainty by openly acknowledging the limits of one's knowledge, which models intellectual humility and normalises constructive questioning. Leaders who consistently invite alternative viewpoints create psychological latitude for team members to surface weak signals or emerging risks that might otherwise remain invisible. Additionally, resilient leaders translate safety into structured mechanisms that encourage risk-free experimentation. Examples include "safe-to-fail" pilot projects, reflective debriefs after difficult sprints, and rotating facilitation roles that broaden participation. These mechanisms ensure psychological safety is not merely an interpersonal norm but a structural feature of team operations. When teams know that both successes and failures will be treated as learning opportunities, they develop a stronger capacity to remain engaged and innovative under adversity.

Strategy 2 – Orchestrate Demands and Build Resources

Run demand–resource audits at sprint boundaries; trim hindrance demands; and invest in autonomy, feedback, competence cues and recovery to sustain energy and identification (Bakker et al., 2008; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). From a COR stance, prioritise loss prevention (e.g., surge-cover rosters) and resource restoration (e.g., protected recovery windows) to break loss spirals (Hobfoll et al., 2018). An expanded understanding of resilient leadership treats resource orchestration as a dynamic balancing act that requires continual monitoring of workload pressures, emotional strain, and team functioning. Leaders must recognise that even high performers can experience hidden degradation of cognitive, physical, or emotional resources when exposed to extended periods of uncertainty. As such, proactive recalibration – redistributing workloads, extending decision timelines, or simplifying processes – helps prevent chronic overload from crystallising into burnout. Moreover, resource orchestration includes the intentional amplification of "positive resources," such as mean-

ing-making, peer support, and opportunities for skill development. Leaders who frame adversity in ways that connect team efforts to broader organisational purpose help employees re-anchor their work in personally significant narratives. This reframing can buffer the psychological burden of challenging periods and reinforce intrinsic motivation. By crafting clarity amid chaos, resilient leaders create a sense of coherence that helps people channel their energy productively despite external pressures. Finally, resilience is strengthened when leaders build teams' capacity for resource self-regulation, enabling individuals to recognise early signs of strain, articulate support needs, and mobilise peer expertise. Establishing shared language for discussing resource levels – for example, using simple check-in scales – destigmatises conversations about overwhelm and positions resource management as a collective responsibility rather than a private struggle.

Strategy 3 – Lead with Emotional Intelligence in Crisis

Coach affect labelling and regulation; model calm under pressure; use short 1:1s that blend task clarity with empathy – behaviours that stabilise engagement in high-strain episodes (Goleman, 1995; Bakker et al., 2008). In addition, resilient leaders deploy emotional intelligence to stabilise the team's "affective field" – the collective emotional tone that shapes motivation and decision quality. When crises erupt, emotions such as fear, frustration, or confusion tend to spread rapidly through teams, influencing judgment and interpersonal interactions. Leaders who maintain emotional poise interrupt these contagion effects by grounding the group in a posture of composed awareness. Emotionally intelligent leaders also translate empathy into concrete leadership behaviours. This includes validating team members' emotional experiences, setting realistic expectations, and providing clarity about priorities or next steps. By acknowledging emotional strain rather than dismissing it, leaders build a relational foundation that fosters trust and strengthens team members' willingness to remain engaged even during demanding periods. Furthermore, leaders with strong emotional intelligence are skilled at reading subtle cues, especially in hybrid or virtual settings where facial expressions and body language may be muted. They pay close attention to silence, disengagement, or abrupt changes in communication style, using these signals as prompts for timely interventions. Such sensitivity helps prevent small issues from escalating into team-wide disengagement or conflict, reinforcing resilience across the group.

Strategy 4 – Activate a Bounce-Forward Trajectory

Adopt a cadence that mirrors disruption dynamics: project scenarios/roles; reconstitute routines (rapid resource reallocation) during shock; reconfigure systems post-

event (retire obsolete practices; scale better ones) (Hernes et al., 2025). Use adaptive leadership tactics (e.g., regulate distress, protect voices, give work back to people) to keep the system productive under heat. Expanding on this trajectory model, resilient leaders treat disruptions as opportunities to revisit underlying assumptions and reveal hidden capacities within the team. During the projection phase, for example, they facilitate scenario-planning activities that invite team members to imagine multiple possible futures, assess their implications, and develop early response strategies. This cultivates anticipatory resilience by increasing cognitive flexibility and reducing the paralysis that often accompanies sudden change. During the reconstitution phase, leaders enable teams to reorganise roles and workflows quickly by reducing bottlenecks, simplifying approval processes, and empowering frontline decision-making. This accelerates the team's ability to regain momentum while maintaining quality. Leaders also provide "sensemaking scaffolds" such as quick-strike communication routines, clarifying messages, and frequent pulse checks that stabilise the team amid uncertainty. Finally, in the reconfiguration phase, resilient leaders focus on institutionalising lessons learned from disruptions. They engage teams in reflective dialogues that explore what worked, what did not, and how processes can be refined for future challenges. Rather than returning to a pre-disruption equilibrium, leaders encourage selective innovation – adopting new routines, redistributing responsibilities, or introducing technologies that strengthen adaptability. Together, these steps ensure that adversity becomes a catalyst for progressive transformation rather than regression.

Strategy 5 – Grow Shared Leadership Deliberately

Build team TMS early (make expertise visible; codify who knows what), which research shows decentralises leadership and later grows density; deliberately enable situationally aligned leadership so the best-placed member leads when the context shifts (Xu et al., 2022). Practically, rotate facilitation, run leader-of-the-day drills, and use consult-then-decide protocols to normalise fluid influence – especially in complex, interdependent tasks (Xu et al., 2022; Schneider & Somers, 2006). Shared leadership, when cultivated intentionally, fosters resilience by distributing cognitive load and decision-making responsibility across the team. This reduces dependence on a single leader's capacity during crises and allows expertise to flow fluidly to where it is most needed. Resilient leaders therefore create an environment where influence is not bound by hierarchy but by situational relevance, ensuring that the person closest to the problem takes the lead in solving it. To support this, leaders make expertise transparent by encouraging team members to share their backgrounds, strengths, and preferences. They also create rituals – for example, cross-training sessions, knowledge-pairing practices, and rotating briefing duties – that help team members build a shared understanding of each other's capabilities. Such relational and cognitive famil-

iarity forms the backbone of effective transactive memory systems. Additionally, shared leadership promotes psychological empowerment, as individuals feel more accountable and engaged when they perceive their contributions as essential to team resilience. This sense of ownership increases their willingness to voice concerns, contribute ideas, and step forward during unpredictable situations. Ultimately, shared leadership shifts resilience from an individual trait to a collective muscle that is strengthened through practice and mutual responsibility.

Strategy 6 – Align AMO Levers in Digital Work

Provide opportunity (interoperable tools; async norms), strengthen motivation (equitable processes; voice), and build ability (digital literacy; core self-evaluations) to convert digitalisation into resilience via taking-charge behaviours (Zahoor et al., 2024). Complement with reflection–inclusion routines (e.g., switch from live video to collaborative docs to integrate low-fluency members) to protect cohesion and engagement (Degbey & Einola, 2020). As digital transformation accelerates, resilient leaders must ensure that the tools and systems provided truly enhance rather than suppress team functioning. This includes thoughtfully selecting collaboration platforms that reduce complexity rather than add friction, ensuring interoperability between systems, and articulating clear norms for digital communication to reduce overwhelm. For instance, establishing expectations around response times, preferred communication channels, and documentation standards helps prevent misalignment and cognitive overload. Motivation is reinforced when leaders design digital workflows that promote fairness and visibility. This involves ensuring that remote and hybrid employees have equal access to information, opportunities, and decision-making spaces, thereby reducing the risk of digital marginalisation. Leaders should proactively rotate meeting times across time zones, embed remote-friendly decision processes, and encourage asynchronous contributions so all voices have equitable influence. Building ability is equally essential; digital literacy is no longer a technical add-on but a foundational capability for resilient performance. Leaders who invest in continuous digital upskilling – through workshops, peer learning circles, or microlearning – equip their teams to respond confidently to technological change. As individuals strengthen their technical abilities and self-efficacy, they become more willing to adopt new tools, propose improvements, and take charge in ambiguous situations. By aligning opportunity, motivation, and ability, resilient leaders unlock the adaptive potential of digital work.

Emerging Challenges and Paradoxes

Despite increasingly sophisticated practices, leaders still face interlocking tensions that complicate resilient engagement.

The burden of resilience on leaders. Organisations expect leaders to be anchors of stability, yet continuous exposure to uncertainty can drain personal resource reservoirs, undermining emotional regulation and judgment (Raetze et al., 2022). Because losses loom larger than gains, repeated demands can trigger loss spirals unless there is intentional investment in resource protection and replenishment (Hobfoll et al., 2018). In many organisations, this burden becomes invisible precisely because effective leaders often project calm, competence, and reliability, masking their own struggles. The pressure to "hold the team together," maintain optimism, and provide clarity during turbulence can create emotional dissonance, where leaders feel compelled to suppress their own anxieties. Over time, such emotional suppression can amplify exhaustion, reduce cognitive flexibility, and lower the leader's capacity to engage in high-quality decision-making. Furthermore, leaders may experience reduced access to social support because hierarchical expectations inhibit them from disclosing vulnerability or asking for help. This paradox – which asks leaders to absorb uncertainty while simultaneously fostering openness and psychological safety for others – creates a structural tension. Leaders may internalise a sense of responsibility that exceeds their personal capacity, particularly during prolonged crises. Thus, organisational resilience requires not only resilient leadership but also resilient systems that provide leaders with structured support, reflective spaces, and psychological resources. Such systemic backing can include peer consultation groups, leadership supervision structures, and realistic workload expectations to prevent silent burnout among leaders.

The inclusion–digitalisation dilemma. Digital tools promise flexibility and access yet can magnify inequities (fluency, visibility, network centrality). Evidence shows digitalisation strengthens resilience only when paired with inclusive climates and capabilities; taking-charge behaviour is the critical pathway (Zahoor et al., 2024). Leaders must champion technology while actively mitigating hidden status hierarchies that can fragment teams. At first glance, digital tools appear to democratise work by flattening hierarchies and enabling broad participation. However, digital environments can reinforce existing power imbalances or create new ones. Individuals with higher digital fluency typically dominate discussions, while those who struggle with technology – due to skill gaps, language barriers, or personality differences – can become marginalised. This digital marginalisation may lead to decreased participation, weakened psychological safety, and reduced engagement.

Moreover, virtual work increases reliance on network visibility; those who are more active in digital spaces, communicate frequently, or are located in central time zones can inadvertently accrue disproportionate influence. Meanwhile, remote employees in peripheral roles or time zones risk becoming "digitally invisible," undermining their ability to shape team decisions or demonstrate leadership potential. This

inclusion–digitalisation dilemma challenges leaders to design digital workflows that ensure equitable access to information, participation, and recognition. Resilient leadership therefore demands intentional structuring of digital norms – such as rotating meeting times, mandating asynchronous input opportunities, and actively soliciting perspectives from quieter team members. Leaders must also remain vigilant to subtle digital divides that emerge over time, using data, observation, and feedback to ensure that technological tools fulfil their promise of broadening inclusion rather than narrowing it.

The learning–performance tension. High-stakes contexts push teams to suppress experimentation, voice, and error disclosure. Yet resilient teams depend on continuous learning behaviours, grounded in psychological safety, to adapt effectively (Edmondson, 1999). Leaders must protect learning cycles precisely when external pressures argue for speed and risk minimisation. This tension becomes especially acute during crises, when timelines compress and performance pressures escalate. Teams often default to risk-averse behaviours, avoiding experimentation for fear of making mistakes that might exacerbate the situation. Ironically, such avoidance behaviours undermine the very learning processes that enable teams to navigate complexity and prevent repeated errors. Without reflective conversations, rapid feedback loops, and open dialogue, teams may respond with rigid patterns that reduce adaptability. Resilient leaders navigate this tension by decoupling learning behaviours from punitive consequences. They frame mistakes as data rather than failures, encourage micro-experiments that are low in cost and reversible, and create structures, such as after-action reviews, inquiry sessions, and rapid-learning reports, that embed learning into everyday work. These routines ensure that learning is not a luxury reserved for calm periods but a core capability sustained even during pressure. Importantly, resilient leaders communicate that learning and performance are not mutually exclusive but mutually reinforcing. Teams that learn faster recover faster, anticipate risks more effectively, and ultimately enhance long-term performance. By cultivating an environment where exploration coexists with execution, leaders transform crises into opportunities for accelerated capability-building.

The decentralisation paradox. Research shows decentralisation of leadership is a precursor that enables later density, but density alone does not guarantee healthy distribution of influence (Xu et al., 2022). Over-centralised networks can trap teams in rigid roles; fully egalitarian networks can dilute decisive leadership. The adaptive solution is to tune the network so that decentralisation matures into dense, situationally aligned leadership over time (Xu et al., 2022). This paradox highlights that the benefits of shared leadership are contingent on balance. Excessive decentralisation, where all voices carry equal weight at all times, can lead to decision paralysis, role ambiguity, or fragmented attention. In contrast, excessive centralisation, where influence concentrates around one or two members, stifles agility and discourages team members from stepping forward. Resilient leadership lies not in choosing one structure over the other but in fluidly shifting across configurations depending on situational de-

mands. Teams that cultivate strong transactive memory systems can navigate this paradox more effectively because they possess clarity about each member's expertise, enabling quicker transitions between decentralised and centralised modes. Leaders can support this fluidity by signalling when tasks require broad participation and when they require speed or decisiveness. In moments of uncertainty, broader collaboration may generate richer insights; in moments of urgency, temporary centralisation may accelerate action. By dynamically calibrating leadership distribution, resilient leaders enable teams to retain diversity of thought without sacrificing clarity and momentum. This dynamic calibration is essential for responding to evolving conditions where leadership needs may shift frequently.

The timing trap. Move too slowly and loss spirals deepen; move too fast and the system destabilises. A trajectory lens helps pace projection, reconstitution, and reconfiguration to the event's probability, magnitude, and temporal signature (Hernes et al., 2025). Complexity logic adds that resilience emerges when the system is kept near the edge of chaos, not in brittle order or uncontrolled turbulence (Schneider & Somers, 2006). The timing trap reflects a fundamental challenge: resilience is not only about what leaders do but when they do it. Acting too quickly risks making decisions based on incomplete information, creating rework or unintended consequences. Acting too slowly can cause emerging problems to escalate, erode trust, and diminish team morale. Leaders must therefore develop temporal intelligence, the capacity to interpret cues about when to intervene, when to wait, and when to accelerate.

Temporal intelligence includes understanding the life cycle of disruptions, anticipating second-order effects, and pacing interventions in ways that maintain team stability while activating necessary change. Leaders skilled in timing also pay attention to "temporal equity," ensuring that remote and hybrid team members have sufficient time to contribute, prepare, and recover. Misaligned pacing can inadvertently disadvantage certain employees, creating uneven workloads or decision bottlenecks. A system kept at the edge of chaos is one that continuously adjusts pacing based on real-time feedback. Leaders strengthen resilience when they create flexible timelines, incorporate pause points for reflection, and design work rhythms that accommodate the fluctuations inherent in complex environments. By managing timing with precision, leaders guide their teams through uncertainty without causing unnecessary strain or disorder.

Future Trajectories: Digital, Inclusive, and Data-Enabled Resilience

First, a shift from personal grit to systemic support. Resilience is likely to shift from an individualised ideal of personal toughness toward a more systemic responsibility embedded in everyday leadership practice. Organisations will deepen the integration

of well-being infrastructures – including recovery norms, humane pacing, and load balancing – so that resilience is sustained collectively rather than "outsourced" to individual leaders or employees (Raetze et al., 2022). In practical terms, this shift entails redesigning work policies (e.g., meeting-free focus windows, predictable time-off blocks, and surge-capacity pools), equipping line managers to monitor energy and workload using simple team check-ins, and aligning incentives so that leaders are recognised for sustainable pacing, not just short-term throughput. It also requires governance: executive-level oversight that treats well-being metrics (fatigue, psychological safety, recovery) as leading indicators of resilience and performance, with escalation protocols when thresholds are breached. Over time, such systemic supports normalise care as a leadership practice and convert resilience from a personal trait into an organisational capability.

Second, hybrid mastery through micro-routines. The future of hybrid and virtual work will depend on the deliberate cultivation of micro-routines that reinforce reflection, emotional awareness, and inclusion. These small but consistent practices help teams maintain cohesion under time pressure and ambiguity, turning routine frictions and mundane adversities into sources of resilience capacity (Degbey & Einola, 2020). Illustrative routines include 60-second "pulse" openers (energy check + one risk spotted), explicit turn-taking protocols for decision points, and "language of learning" prompts ("What did we learn?" "What surprised us?" "What will we try next?"). Teams can institutionalise these as recurring calendar nudges, meeting templates, and board-level dashboards that track their cadence. Crucially, leaders role-model brevity and focus so micro-routines remain lightweight; the goal is to embed a resilient rhythm, brief reflection, targeted inclusion, quick adjustments, into the grain of daily work without adding bureaucratic drag.

Third, data-enabled and AI-supported resilience – with guardrails. Data-enabled and AI-supported systems will offer new tools for identifying early signs of resource depletion, fragmentation, or disengagement. Workload telemetry, sentiment signals, and behavioural indicators can support timely interventions – but only when paired with inclusive climates and capability building. Equally crucial will be the establishment of ethical guardrails – privacy, transparency, and participatory governance – so digital sensing reinforces rather than undermines psychological safety (Zahoor et al., 2024). Operationalising these guardrails means adopting "privacy-by-design" (collect only what is necessary, aggregate when possible, provide opt-outs), communicating clear use-cases ("we monitor coordination strain, not keystrokes"), and forming representative oversight groups that include employee voice. Leaders should favour dashboards that show team-level trends rather than individual-level traces, and they should couple every analytic flag with a human conversation. Training is equally vital: managers need skills to interpret data responsibly, invite input, and co-create adjustments rather than imposing surveillance-coloured solutions.

Fourth, integrating temporal and resource models. Future work will benefit from stronger integration between temporal models of adaptation (project–reconstitute–re-

configure) and resource-based theories such as JD-R and COR. This synthesis helps leaders pace change, sequence interventions, and invest in protective resources in ways that allow gain spirals to outpace losses (Hernes et al., 2025; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Hobfoll et al., 2018). A practical way to integrate the two logics is to map each disruption phase to a resource plan: (a) in projection, pre-commit buffers (time, cross-trained coverage, decision rights) and run pre-mortems to anticipate demand spikes; (b) in reconstitution, deploy "rapid-relief" resources (surge staffing, decision simplification, psychological first aid) and protect recovery micro-windows; and (c) in reconfiguration, retire low-value work, scale proven practices, and hard-wire learning assets (playbooks, checklists, scenario libraries). Leaders can monitor the balance with a simple "pacing x resources" scorecard that tracks whether the cadence of change is matched by available energy, clarity, and capability.

Fifth, shared leadership as a designed capability. Shared leadership will become an intentional design capability, not a spontaneous by-product of team dynamics. Leaders will increasingly shape the conditions under which transactive memory systems and situationally aligned leadership emerge, enabling influence to flow to the person best positioned for the task at hand – while allowing others to step back. This adaptive configuration of roles will be essential for navigating complex and fast-changing environments (Xu et al., 2022). Design elements include: (1) a living "who-knows-what" map accessible to the team; (2) "readiness signals" that make it acceptable to propose leadership hand-offs ("I can lead the data angle; can you lead the stakeholder path?"); (3) cross-training sprints that build overlap for critical roles; and (4) periodic role-reset dialogues after major milestones. These mechanisms ensure shared leadership is not left to chance but is scaffolded by rituals and artefacts that make fluid influence normal, equitable, and fast.

Finally, differentiating leadership repertoires. Leadership repertoires will diversify as organisations learn to deploy authentic and transformational leadership levers more strategically. Evidence suggests that authentic leadership – centred on self-awareness, transparency, and moral perspective – is particularly effective for sustaining organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) and collective performance, which are fundamental to resilient engagement. By contrast, transformational leadership may be more effective for driving task performance and clarity under intense time pressures (Banks et al., 2016). To make this actionable, leaders can codify "repertoire cues": when the work demands collective stewardship and values alignment (e.g., culture change, ethical dilemmas), emphasise authentic leadership practices; when the work demands stretch execution under tight deadlines (e.g., launches, escalations), emphasise transformational practices. Teams can rehearse both modes in simulations and reflect on which repertoire moved the needle and why. Over time, this disciplined versatility prevents over-reliance on a single style and keeps engagement resilient across shifting contexts.

Conclusion: A Practical, Temporal Playbook for Engaging Teams

Resilient leadership for engaging teams is a temporal capability – helping teams bounce forward through projection, reconstitution, and reconfiguration (Hernes et al., 2025). Durable engagement emerges when leaders engineer psychological safety, lead with EI, and design for resources (JD-R/COR) that prevent loss spirals and fuel gain spirals (Edmondson, 1999; Goleman, 1995; Bakker et al., 2008; Hobfoll et al., 2018). In complex adaptive systems, leaders also work indirectly, shaping identity and social interactions so the system stays near the edge of chaos where adaptation thrives (Schneider & Somers, 2006). This synthesis implies that resilience is not a static attribute but an ongoing capability that leaders cultivate by aligning timing, resources, and relationships with the reality of changing demands.

In digital contexts, aligning AMO levers – and reinforcing taking-charge behaviours – converts technology into resilient engagement (Zahoor et al., 2024), while shared leadership – grown via TMS and situationally aligned leadership – keeps teams nimble under shifting demands (Xu et al., 2022). For scholars, this suggests a research agenda that examines how temporal pacing and resource portfolios interact to sustain engagement, how micro-routines scale to system-level resilience, and how digital guardrails shape trust. Methodologically, longitudinal and field-experimental designs are especially well-suited to capture the dynamics of gain/loss spirals and the emergence of shared leadership under pressure. For practitioners, the message is clear: resilience arises when leaders build the social, emotional, and structural infrastructure for teams to learn faster than conditions change.

Monday morning actions: run demand–resource audits; codify safety-first rituals; schedule EI-based check-ins; stand up a project–reconstitute–reconfigure rhythm; map team expertise to seed TMS; and implement inclusive digital norms and capability uplift. To accelerate traction, leaders can organise a 90-day resilience sprint: (Weeks 1–2) baseline the team's demands/resources and safety; (Weeks 3–6) pilot two micro-routines and one "safe-to-fail" experiment; (Weeks 7–10) establish TMS visibility and a simple role-reset ritual; (Weeks 11–12) codify lessons into a one-page playbook and agree the next cadence. This keeps the playbook light, learnable, and in motion.

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