

Grendel snatched at the first Geat
 He came to, ripped him apart, cut
 His body to bits with powerful jaws,
 Drank the blood from his veins and bolted
 Him down, hands and feet; death
 And Grendel's great teeth came together,
 Snapping life shut. Then he stepped to another
 Still body, clutched at Beowulf with his claws,
 Grasped at a strong-hearted wakeful sleeper—
 And was instantly seized himself, claws
 Bent back as Beowulf leaned up on one arm.

That shepherd of evil, guardian of crime,
 Knew at once that nowhere on earth
 Had he met a man whose hands were harder;
 His mind was flooded with fear—but nothing
 Could take his talons and himself from that tight
 Hard grip. ...

... The monster's hatred rose higher,
 But his power had gone. He twisted in pain,
 And the bleeding sinews deep in his shoulder
 Snapped, muscle and bone split
 And broke. The battle was over, Beowulf
 Had been granted new glory: Grendel escaped,
 But wounded as he was could flee to his den,
 His miserable hole at the bottom of the marsh
 Only to die. ...

... Now, with that night's fierce work; the Danes
 Had been served as he'd boasted he'd serve them:

Beowulf,
 A prince of the Geats, had killed Grendel,
 Ended the grief, the sorrow, the suffering
 Forced on Hrothgar's helpless people
 By a bloodthirsty fiend. No Dane doubted
 The victory, for the proof, hanging high
 From the rafters where Beowulf had hung it, was
 the monster's
 Arm, claw and shoulder and all.

The Danes are delighted by Grendel's death and honor Beowulf that night in celebrations. But another monster still threatens them—Grendel's mother. Outraged by her son's death, she attacks Herot that very night. She kills Hrothgar's friend and then returns to her lair at the bottom of the lake. Beowulf bravely follows.



... The beast rose, angry,
Knowing a man had come—and then nothing
But war could have followed. Its breath came first,
A steaming cloud pouring from the stone,
Then the earth itself shook. Beowulf
Swung his shield into place. ...

... The Geats'

Great prince stood firm, unmoving, prepared
Behind his high shield, waiting in his shining
Armor. The monster came quickly toward him,
Pouring out fire and smoke, hurrying
To its fate. Flames beat at the iron
Shield, and for a time it held, protected
Beowulf as he'd planned; then it began to melt,
And for the first time in his life that famous prince
Fought with fate against him, with glory
Denied him. He knew it, but he raised his sword
And struck at the dragon's scaly hide.
The ancient blade broke, bit into
The monster's skin, drew blood, but cracked
And failed him before it went deep enough, helped him
Less than he needed. The dragon leaped
With pain, thrashed and beat at him, spouting
Murderous flames, spreading them everywhere.

All of Beowulf's subjects have fled in terror except Wiglaf,
who fights at Beowulf's side. But though Beowulf manages to
kill the dragon, he receives a fatal wound himself. Gasping, he
reminds Wiglaf to claim the dragon's treasure for the Geats.
He then gives his final instructions.

"... Wiglaf, lead my people,
Help them; my time is gone. Have
The brave Geats build me a tomb,
When the funeral flames have burned me, and build it
Here, at the water's edge, high
On this spit of land, so sailors can see
This tower, and remember my name, and call it
Beowulf's tower. ..."

Then the Geats built the tower, as Beowulf
Had asked, strong and tall, so sailors
Could find it from far and wide; working
For ten long days they made his monument,
Sealed his ashes in walls as straight
And high as wise and willing hands
Could raise them. And the riches he and Wiglaf
Had won from the dragon, rings, necklaces,
Ancient, hammered armor—all
The treasures they'd taken were left there, too,



will damage a leader's trustworthiness and power. Similar problems can arise if a leader and followers are separated by a wide pay gap. Financier J. P. Morgan once observed that the only feature shared by the failing companies he worked with was a tendency to overpay those at the top.

- 21 Another experiment of ours, which we reported in 2004, confirms Morgan's wisdom. We created work teams in which leaders' payment was either equal to, double, or triple that of followers. Varying the payment structure did not affect the leaders' efforts. But team members' efforts shrank greatly under conditions of inequality. As the late Peter F. Drucker, then professor of management at Claremont Graduate University, wrote in his book *The Frontiers of Management*, "Very high salaries at the top ... disrupt the team. They make ... people in the company see their own top management as adversaries rather than as colleagues ... And that quenches any willingness to say 'we' and to exert oneself except in one's own immediate self-interest."

Favoring Fairness

- 22 Another reason not to overpay those at the top is that followers are likely to see such financial inequality as unfair. Followers generally respect fairness in leaders. But what fairness means can depend on the followers. Ways to be fair as a leader include avoiding helping yourself and making sacrifices for the group. Gandhi won people over by wearing an Indian villager's dress, which symbolized his refusal of luxuries. Aung San Suu Kyi similarly attracted supporters with her willingness to suffer ongoing house arrest to support shared resistance to military rule in Myanmar (Burma).
- 23 Successful leaders can also display fairness in the way they solve disagreements among group members. Favoritism, or even the appearance of it, is the royal road to civil war in organizations, political parties, and countries alike. In some cases, however, leaders should favor those who support their own group (the in-group) over those who support another group (the out-group).
- 24 In a 1997 study conducted by one of us (Platow) in New Zealand, people supported the leadership of a health board CEO who split time on a kidney dialysis machine equally between two fellow New Zealanders. Yet when the CEO had to split the time between a New Zealander and a foreigner, people liked the leader who gave more time to the in-group member. And in a 2001 study we asked Australian undergraduates about their support for a student leader named Chris. Chris had distributed rewards between student council members who were known to either support or oppose core student positions (regarding cuts to university funding, for example). Chris was more popular to the extent that he showed a preference for the council members who supported the in-group position. And when Chris showed such favoritism, the undergraduates were more likely to back him and arrive at ways to make his proposed projects succeed.



“And to show that this is no empty boasting for the present occasion, but real tangible fact, you have only to consider the power which our city possesses and which has been won by those very qualities which I have mentioned. Athens, alone of the states we know, comes to her testing time in a greatness that surpasses what was imagined of her. In her case, and in her case alone, no invading enemy is ashamed at being defeated, and no subject can complain of being governed by people unfit for their responsibilities. Mighty indeed are the marks and monuments of our empire which we have left. Future ages will wonder at us, as the present age wonders at us now. We do not need the praises of a Homer, or of anyone else whose words may delight us for the moment, but whose estimation of facts will fall short of what is really true. For our adventurous spirit has forced an entry into every sea and into every land; and everywhere we have left behind us everlasting memorials of good done to our friends or suffering inflicted on our enemies.”

Pericles declares that this is the kind of city for which the Athenian soldiers have fought and died. He encourages his audience to continue to be willing to suffer hardships in service of Athens. Though he has spent much of the speech praising the city, Pericles credits the courage of the dead soldiers and others like them for Athens’ splendor.

The soldiers demonstrate to Pericles what it means to be a man. If they had faults, their bravery has made up for them. None of them let his private desires stop him from facing the enemy. They accepted the risk. They put their trust in themselves, and they thought it more honorable to stand their ground and die than to surrender and live. Pericles urges everyone present to show the same spirit.

“What I would prefer is that you should fix your eyes every day on the greatness of Athens as she really is, and should fall in love with her. When you realize her greatness, then reflect that what made her great was men with a spirit of adventure, men who knew their duty, men who were ashamed to fall below a certain standard.”

These men won glory that is eternal, Pericles says, because it lives on in men’s minds and hearts, not only in Athens but in foreign lands as well. The whole earth is their memorial. He urges his listeners to try to be like the soldiers. The listeners must understand that there is no happiness without freedom, and freedom depends on courage. Pericles warns the Athenians not to relax their guard. It is those who have the most to lose, he explains, who should fear death the most intensely.

“For these reasons I shall not commiserate with those parents of the dead, who are present here. Instead I shall try to comfort them. They are well aware that they have grown up in a world where there are many changes and chances. But this is good fortune—for men to end their lives with honor, as these have done, and for you honorably to lament them: Their life was set to a measure where death and happiness went hand in hand. I know that it is difficult to convince you of this. When you see other people happy you will often be reminded of what used to make you happy too. One does not feel sad at not having some good thing which is outside one’s experience: Real grief is felt at the loss of something which one is used to.”



