

The Surface and Existing Ways No Longer Hold

There comes a moment in some leaders' journeys that cannot be neatly explained — a moment where everything still works on the surface, but something quietly no longer fits. It is not a breakdown, though it may be felt as disorientation. It is not burnout, though exhaustion might accompany it. It is something far subtler and more profound: a quiet yet persistent dissonance. A felt sense that the strategies and ways of being that have carried us until now can no longer carry us forward.

We call this moment a threshold. In ontological coaching — especially in Latin American traditions — this is known as a *quiebre*, a rupture or interruption in the flow of experience. The term carries a deep respect: not for something broken to be fixed, but for something true to be seen. The identification of a *quiebre* (*identificación del quiebre*) marks a turning point, not because the leader is weak or insufficient, but because a deeper layer of awareness is asking to emerge.

The End of Known Strategies

Most successful leaders are masterful at navigating complexity. They develop reliable ways of moving through challenge — working harder, thinking more, adjusting tone, tightening control, building alliances. These are not mistakes. They are adaptations — intelligent and often effective. Until, quietly, they are not.

What once brought results begins to feel heavy. Thought patterns loop without fresh clarity. Meetings feel performative. Projects advance without resonance. Even rest and recovery fail to restore a sense of vitality. This is not failure. It is feedback.

The most important feedback doesn't always come from others. It often arises from within — as a whisper of unrest, as a hum of dissatisfaction that no promotion, tactic, or external change seems to touch. The surface begins to dissolve.

Insatisfaction as Signal, Not Problem

In the mechanistic worldview, such discomfort would be categorized as a symptom to fix — through productivity hacks, role changes, or even therapy. But from a more truthful perspective, this dissonance is something else entirely.

It is a feedback loop from the deepest system we inhabit: the self. And from the systems we shape and are shaped by. It is not brokenness. It is life requesting our attention. It is our consciousness asking us to look again — not at what we're doing, but at how we're being. And who we are becoming.

This discomfort is not an obstacle. It is an opening. It is, in truth, the first sign of something magnificent attempting to emerge.

To honor this, we must resist the urge to fix it. Instead, we sit with it. We name it. We allow it. We give it dignity.

What is a Quiebre?

In the ontological tradition, especially as developed by thinkers like Rafael Echeverría and Fernando Flores, a quiebre is a break in the flow of our expected world. We wake up and suddenly our understanding, mood, or meaning no longer fits. Our narrative falters. The world no longer behaves as we assumed it would.

But this is not a moment to override. It is a moment to inquire.

Identifying a quiebre is a skill — one that involves attunement to our mood, language, and body. In this lens, the leader becomes an observer of their own observing. Not to judge or correct, but to discover.

At Sincronía, we treat these moments not as mechanical failures, but as ontological invitations. Invitations to cross from the known into the meaningful unknown. From managing outcomes to sensing what really matters.

The Space Between: No Longer and Not Yet

For most, the shift begins not with an answer, but with an unraveling. It is not clear what the next path is — only that the current one no longer carries the energy, clarity, or meaning it once did.

This space can feel destabilizing. Old patterns still operate, but feel misaligned. New possibilities are not yet visible or trustworthy. Leaders often call this time confusing or empty. In truth, it is sacred.

To live in the space between no longer and not yet is a discipline. It requires tolerance for ambiguity and a capacity for stillness. It is the work beneath the work.

It is also where the ground is most fertile.

From Role to Self

In this terrain, roles and identities become translucent. Titles blur. The questions shift:

- Not "How do I get more done?" but "What is this moment asking of me?" - Not "How do I win?" but "What matters most now?" - Not "How do I adapt?" but "What part of me needs to be seen?"

These are not conceptual questions. They are lived. They emerge not from the boardroom, but from the internal room we often bypass in our speed to succeed.

This is where true leadership development begins — not with competencies, but with consciousness.

The Dignity of Dissonance

There is immense courage in pausing long enough to notice that things no longer work the way they did. There is even greater courage in not rushing to solve it.

Dissonance is whole. It carries the seeds of the next truth. When welcomed, it transforms. When bypassed, it calcifies into numbness or burnout.

At Sincronía, we work with leaders who sense this. Who know there is more — not in the form of external expansion, but internal integration. This “more” is not a bonus. It is a necessity.

And the first step is to honor the quiebre — the break that is not a breakdown, but a beginning.

What Comes Next

From here, the path is not to fix, but to observe. Not to control, but to allow. Not to design a new strategy, but to see the current moment with new eyes.

This begins with becoming aware of the observer — the one who sees, the one who reacts, the one who constructs meaning. And it continues by meeting that observer with compassion, clarity, and the willingness to shift.

Not all leaders respond to this moment the same way. Some will resist the dissonance, subtly protecting what is. They will double down on strategies that once worked, guarding their identity and reinforcing their known ways of being. Others will sense the magnitude of the invitation and step into it. They will engage with the rupture, not as something to overcome but as something to evolve through — and from.

That is where the next step in development begins.

But for now, stay here.

Stay with the dignity of dissonance.

Let it speak.

Let it soften you.

Let it lead.