



Kokorozashi: A Japanese Concept for Entrepreneurs and Other Would-Be Warriors

Kokorozashi is a less-known Japanese term than ikigai, however it too carries meaning that can be aspirational as well as descriptive.

The word can be defined in multiple ways, as follows:

1. A desire to aim in a certain direction; a goal or objective set in one's mind.
2. One's way of thinking - principles, beliefs, and ideals.
3. Compassion, or the feeling of caring for others.
4. A gift that expresses feelings of goodwill or gratitude.

The dictionary yields: will; resolution; intention; ambition; aim; goal

It is often used as a core business principle, and includes "leader's mind" as an important component.

The etymology of the word

Kokorozashi is derived from the verb kokorozasu - to plan; to intend; to aspire to; to set aims or sights on.

The verb in turn combines "kokoro", meaning heart or mind, with "sasu", where the heart points.

Kanji construction

The kanji of kokorozashi is made up of two characters:

1. 士 - Warrior or Knight
2. 心 - Heart/Mind/Spirit

The combined meaning is "the heart beneath the warrior", which can be understood as a very hard external layer with a soft core inside, or a determined warrior with a kind and tender soul. This may be defined as the fundamental sincere disposition of the will to find truth and enlightenment.

Business application

At Globis Business School, students are required to formulate their own kokorozashi, a personal mission that unifies the passions and skills of a professional to create positive change in society. It must combine vision, unity and benefit to society.

One of their deans, Tomoya Nakamura, explains kokorozashi thus:

"Imagine kokorozashi as an enjoyable life goal, a passion that occupies your thoughts on the weekend and makes you excited to wake up on Monday morning. Finding it requires imagination, and realizing it requires awareness. As such, developing a self-defined kokorozashi that benefits society is no easy feat."

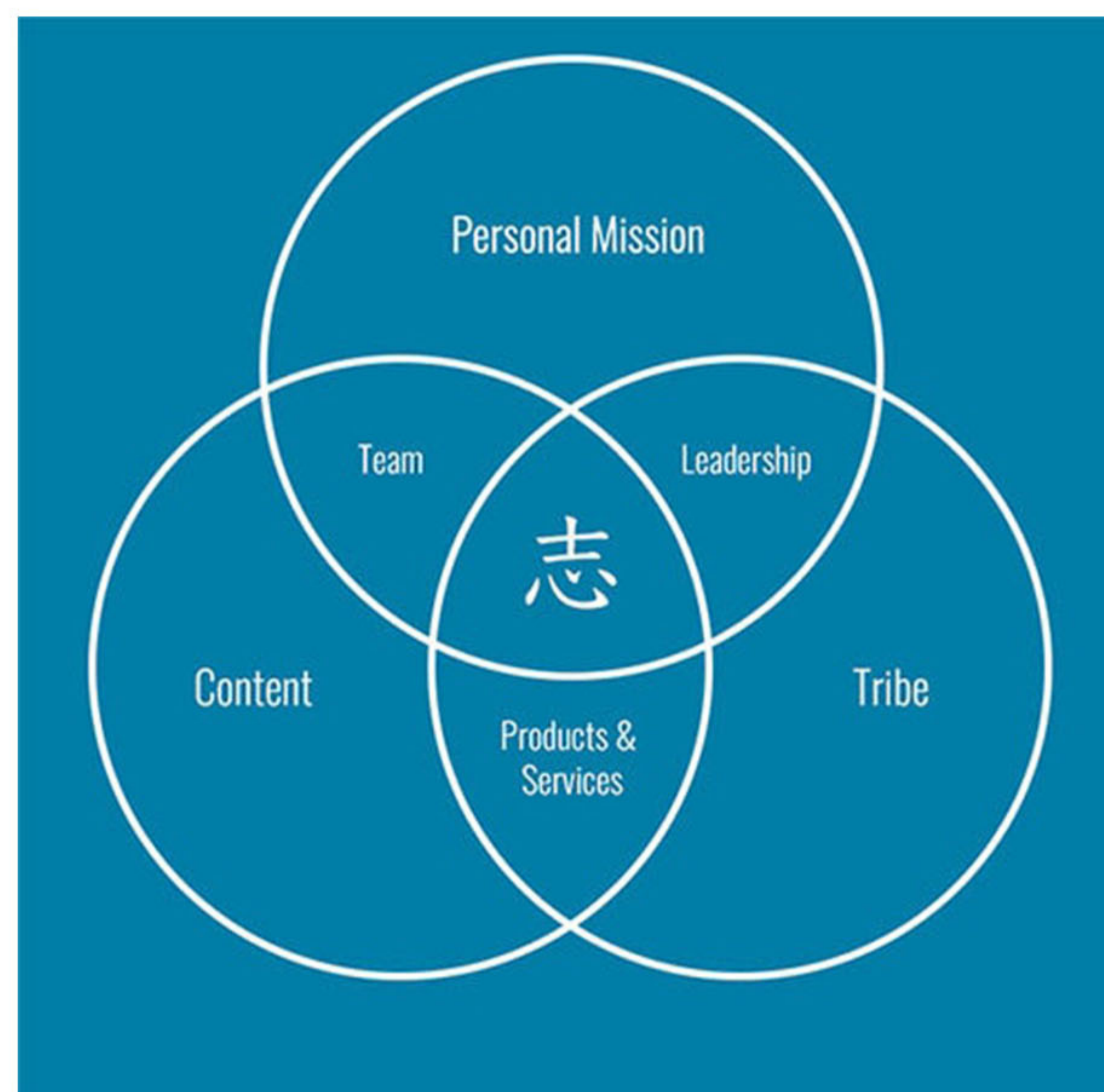
How to develop your kokorozashi

Kokorozashi can be developed using the following pointers:

- Reflect on yourself and recognize the difference that makes you who you are.
- Have a vision, a personal mission, a change you wish to make that will help society.
- Be prepared to lead.
- If you must have a partner, ensure that you are aligned in your core values, vision or mission.
- Take action and adjust along the way.

Visual representation

Kokorozashi is similar to the Western understanding of ikigai. Japanologist Nick Kemp, has, in fact, with the help of research and Japanese entrepreneurs, come up with the following diagram to illustrate it as a concept ideal for entrepreneurs.



Your personal mission is the change you want to make that will benefit society. To the right if that is your tribe, say the idea of having 1000 true fans. The remaining circle is content.

Where personal mission and tribe interconnect is leadership, which can be done in multiple ways, i.e. blog, podcast, video, coaching.

Where personal mission and content intersect, you have your team, because you can't do it all yourself.

And then where content and tribe meet, there are your products and services.

Want help finding your kokorozashi? Design your business and lifestyle inside [SuperFastBusiness membership](#)

Thank you to SuperFastBusiness member Nick Kemp from [IkigaiTribe.com](#) for the podcast conversation