
Five Fundamentals for Unlocking Leadership

*“Active, influencing
relationships amongst
leaders and followers that
get results.”*

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1. Introduction

This paper is in two parts. Part one presents a discussion on leadership based on academic research and specifically covers how thinking about leadership has evolved over many years. This has informed how we at Stellar think about leadership and has influenced how we approach it as a subject. As we suggest below, the evolution of leadership from ‘great man’ to ‘engaging’ leader is driven by wider societal changes. Clearly the form of leadership that works best in one era is unlikely to work as well in another. Our concentration then is on discovering current thinking and formulating a model of leadership for the twenty-first century.

In part two, we describe what we believe is a sound and robust model for leadership. We call it Stellar Leadership. This is based on our conclusion that there is leadership potential in all of us. It is a model based on a comprehensive literature review, combined with our experience of working with leaders at all levels and across sectors.

Part One

2. Defining Leadership

Leadership has been defined in different ways at different times and as we shall see, it has evolved in response to societal changes. One way to describe leadership is as, “the process of motivating other people to act in a particular way in order to achieve specific goals” (Hannagan, 2002).

In many definitions, the emphasis is on action because although many leaders may exert influence through inspirational speeches and seemingly natural charisma, they are ultimately judged by others on what they have done and what they have achieved. As the Chinese proverb quoted by John Adair (1989) says,

“Not the cry but the flight of the wild duck leads the flock to fly and follow.”

Gary Yukl (2006) presents a definition that encompasses a more collective approach: -

“Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives.”

This raises the prospect that, to be successful in their role, leaders need to have followers and to share common goals with their followers. It involves other people who, by the degree of their willingness to accept direction, help to define the leader’s status. This makes followers more important and more powerful than you might first imagine.

Leadership requires many competencies, including the ability to learn from the past, anticipate the future, articulate a sense of vision and purpose, formulate strategies, make decisions, communicate effectively, motivate people, organise resources, and make things happen.

All of this (above) seems perfectly plausible and yet as Warren Bennis has observed,

“Always it seems the concept of leadership eludes us or turns up in another form to taunt us again with its slipperiness and complexity. So we have invented an endless proliferation of terms to deal with it...and still the concept is not sufficiently defined.”

3. Leadership and Management

There has been much written about recognising the difference between leadership and management, both of which are considered necessary to an organisation's success. Leadership and management are terms often used interchangeably, but they are two distinctive although complementary processes.

Yukl (1989) notes that

“...the essence of the argument seems to be that managers are oriented towards stability and leaders are oriented towards innovation; managers get people to do things more efficiently, whereas leaders get people to agree about what things should be done.”

House (1997) contrasts levels of leadership and he likens supervisory leadership to management. He says that strategic leadership is about giving purpose, meaning and guidance to organisations whereas supervisory leadership is concerned with guidance, support and corrective feedback on a day-to-day basis using task or people-oriented behaviours as appropriate. Regarding management he says,

“Management consists of implementing the vision and strategy provided by the leaders...”

However, there is a need for both functions and indeed, leaders can become managers and vice versa by virtue of their approach and behaviour. The literature would appear to support the view that managers can become leaders by providing vision, direction and strategy in such a way that inspires others in an organisation.

As Buckingham (2005) states:-

“The core activities of a manager and leader are simply different”.

John Kotter (1990), Konosuke Matsushita Professor of Leadership at Harvard Business School, argues that leadership is different from management, but if either is missing, success in today's competitive environment will be elusive. He maintains that the difference is one of focus - one outwardly focused, the other internally.

Leadership is sometimes quoted as being about people and innovation whilst management is talked about in terms control and predictable results. Unfortunately, management is today regarded by some as being a lesser skill than leadership. The reality is that managers must lead people also and so leadership of a kind is needed at every organisational level. As Kotter argues:

“the real challenge is to combine strong leadership and strong management and use each to balance the other”.

Typically the distinction between leadership and management will be described as follows:

Leadership

“Leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their shared purpose.” (Rost, 1993)

Management

“Attainment of organisational goals in an effective and efficient manner through planning, organising, staffing, directing and controlling organisational resource.” (Daft, 1999)

Yukl (2006) also observed that:

“nobody has proposed that leadership and management are equivalent, but the degree of overlap is a point of sharp disagreement.”

Richard Daft, building principally on the work of Kotter, has produced the following comparison between management and leadership.

Comparing Leadership with Management

	Leadership	Management
Direction	Creating vision and strategy Keeping an eye on the horizon	Planning and budgeting Keeping an eye on the bottom line
Alignment	Creating shared culture and values Helping others grow Reduce boundaries	Organising and staffing Directing and controlling Creating boundaries
Relationships	Focusing on people – inspiring and motivating followers Based on personal power Acting as coach, facilitator, servant	Focusing on objects – producing/selling goods and services Based on a position of power Acting as boss
Personal Qualities	Emotional connections (Heart) Open Mind (Mindfulness) Listening (Communication) Non-conformity (Courage) Insight into self (Integrity)	Emotional distance Expert mind Talking Conformity Insight into organisation
Outcomes	Creates change, often radical change	Maintain stability

Management is about the control process, which ensures that lapses in performance are spotted and corrected through feedback. Managerial processes therefore must be as close as possible to fail-safe and risk-free. The leadership contribution is to motivate, inspire and

energise people by satisfying basic human needs for achievement, a sense of belonging, recognition, self-esteem, control over one’s own life and an ability to live up to one’s ideals.

Adair (2002) emphasises this by pointing out the different meanings of the words. Leading, he says, is about deciding direction, coming as it does from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning the road or path ahead. It is about knowing the next step and then taking others with you to it. Managing, on the other hand, is a later concept, coming from Latin 'manus', meaning hand. This is more associated with handling a system or machine of some kind.

Covey (2004) highlights some clear distinctions between leadership and management drawing on quotes from respected writers on the subject. This is summarised below.

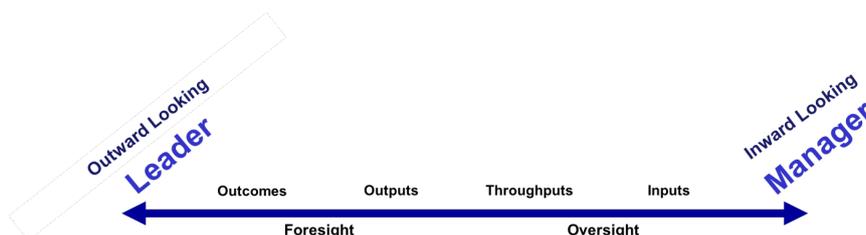
Quotes on Leadership and Management

Author	Leadership	Management
Warren Bennis	“Leaders are people who do the right thing;”	“Managers are people who do things right.”
John Kotter	“Leadership is about coping with change.”	“Management is about coping with complexity.”
James Kouzes and Barry Posner	“Leadership has about it a kinesthetic feel, a sense of movement...”	“Management is about ‘handling’ things, about maintaining order about organisation and control.”
Abraham Zaleznik	“...Leaders are concerned with what things mean to people.”	“Managers are concerned about how things get done.”
John Mariotti	“Leaders are the architects.”	“Managers are the builders.”
George Weathersby	“Leadership focuses on the creation of a common vision.”	“Management is about the design of work...it’s about controlling...”

Mike Hudson (2003) says that truly great senior executives have to rise beyond management and provide leadership. He finds that the boundary is not crystal clear and echoing comments made by Drucker, he asserts that to be over-led and under-managed may be exciting but not effective and to be under-led and over managed, whilst efficient, may lead to obscurity as the outer world passes the organisation by.

Continuum of Leadership and Management

One way of looking at this continuum of leader-manager is illustrated below:-



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In summary, it seems clear that leadership and management are different and that an organisation needs both. Sometimes this means a separation of leader and manager and more often, for smaller organisations, the capacity to both lead and manage will have to may to reside in one person.

4. Top Ten Characteristics of Leaders

Building on this theme of leadership as a particular role, it is worth reviewing what research seems to suggest are the main characteristics associated with 'superior' leaders and this is based on feedback from followers. Kouzes and Posner (2007), in the 4th Edition of their classic book, *The Leadership Challenge*, list the top ten characteristics most admired in leaders. These have not changed significantly since the first research in 1987. Leaders are perceived to be exemplar where they are seen as (in rank order):

- Honest
- Forward-looking
- Inspiring
- Competent
- Intelligent
- Fair-minded
- Straightforward
- Broad-minded
- Supportive
- Dependable.

Point to Ponder

He who overcomes others is powerful. He who overcomes himself can lead others.

Taking up the theme of “engaging leadership”, Alimo-Metcalfe’s research (2009) points to a particular set of behaviours that you might now expect to see from a modern, emotionally intelligent and effective leader:

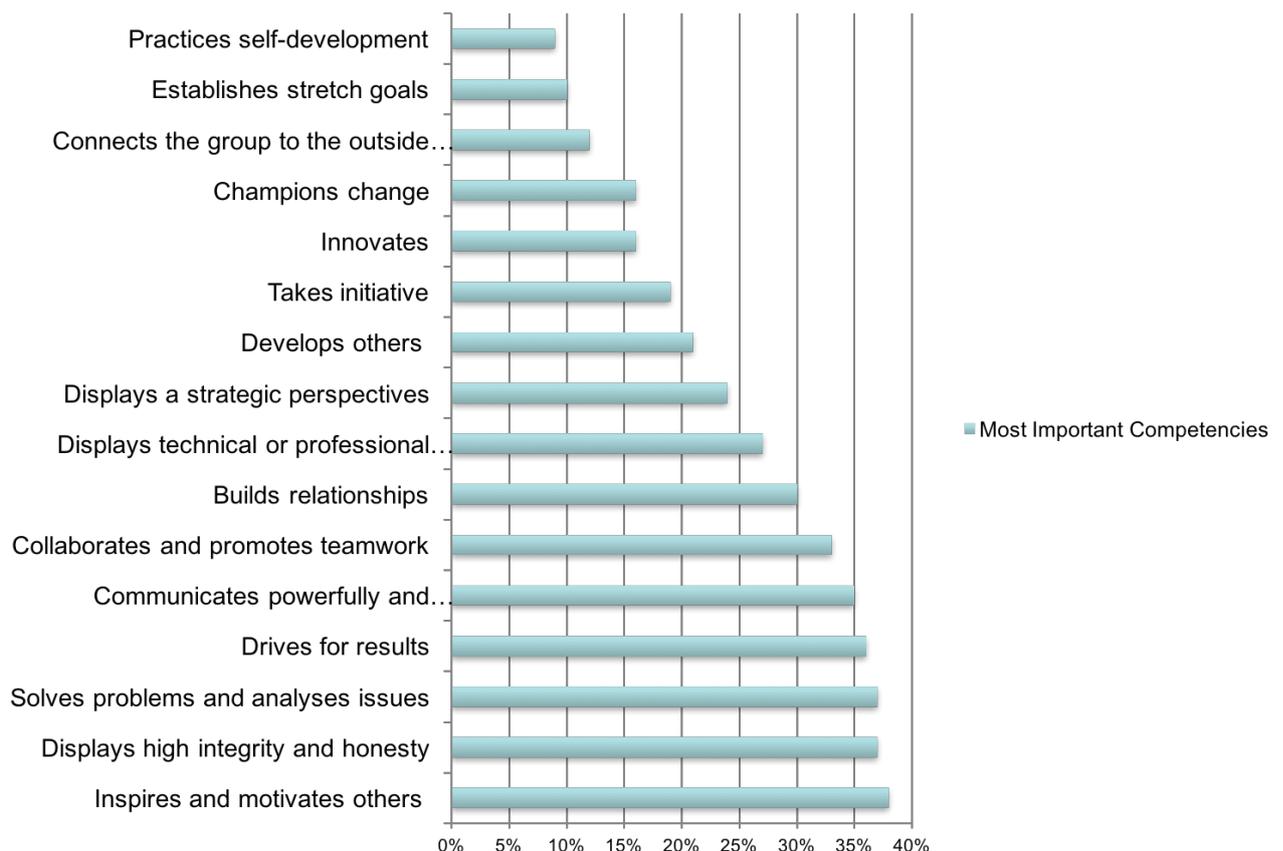
- Showing genuine concern
- Being accessible
- Enabling
- Encouraging questioning
- Inspiring others
- Focusing team effort
- Being decisive

- Supporting a development culture
- Building shared vision
- Networking
- Resolving complex issues
- Facilitating change sensitively
- Acting with integrity
- Being honest and consistent.

The Alimo-Metcalfe research that identified these behaviours suggests that by practicing these behaviours, and getting other managers to do the same, there will be a noticeable and positive impact on: job satisfaction; motivation; commitment; achievement; self confidence; and reduced stress. There is consistent research evidence that engagement pays off.

Most Important Competencies 2014

A more recent 2014 survey of managers across sectors and continents was undertaken by McKinsey. It again highlights the importance attached to integrity whilst placing inspiration and motivation at the top of the list (see illustration below).



5. Leadership Styles

What then makes an effective leader? A review of the principal theories of leadership (Trait, Behavioural, Contingency, Transformational, Engaging) emphasises that there is no single way of being an effective leader. Two different people, with different styles, can be equally effective depending on the context, culture, people and situations they face.

The reality is that our generic default style of leadership can be difficult to overcome. Even good leaders tend to fall back on one or two styles only, regardless of the circumstances. Yet, choosing the right leadership style for any particular situation can get great results. The ideal position is to learn to draw on a repertoire of responses based on the context, situation and people involved.

Participative Leadership

Making decisions is one of the most important functions performed by a leader. Participative leadership involves efforts by a leader to encourage and facilitate the involvement of others in making important decisions. In terms of leadership styles, this is described as a continuum ranging from low/no involvement (autocratic) to high involvement (delegation) in making decisions. There is no agreement on the optimum number of decision-making leadership styles however most theorists agree on some version of the following four (overleaf):

Leadership Style	Approach to Decision-Making	Level of Follower Participation
Autocratic	Leader 'decides and announces	None
Consultative	Leader seeks opinions and then decides	Partial
Participative	Leader involves and joint decision	Equal
Empowering	Leader empowers others to make decision	Full

Autocratic-Democratic Leadership

One decision-making model of leadership styles was developed by Vroom and Yetton and revised and updated by Vroom and Jago. It is a form of contingency or situational approach and is presented as an autocratic-democratic leadership decision-making model. It focuses on the situational factors that influence the choice of leadership style.

It argues that leaders need to consider certain practical considerations before making decisions. These are described as three main 'forces' in determining whether a leader should act alone or involve followers in problem solving. These are:

- Leader maturity (competence and confidence)
- Follower maturity (ability and willingness)
- Situation or context (issues of prevailing task, time available and culture).

This model assumes that every leadership situation can be placed somewhere on a continuum between autocratic and democratic decision-making. It suggests that a leader should consider a full range of options before deciding how to act.

In an earlier and classic piece of work (Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 1958), argued for a continuum of leadership styles that in modern terms might be described as: telling-selling - consulting-empowering. This led to the development of their Leadership-Behaviour Continuum as illustrated below.

Leadership-Behaviour Continuum¹

Autocratic.....Democratic					
1	2	3	4	5	6
Leader decides alone and (tells) announces the decision.	Leader decides alone and sells the decision.	Leader presents the issue for discussion and pretends to consult (but has already chosen the preferred decision).	Leader presents the issue and consults before making the decision.	Leader joins others in a (joint) decision making process.	Leader presents the issue or challenge and (delegates) asks others to decide - subject to certain limits or boundaries

The proven benefits of participative leadership were, until recently, inconclusive. However qualitative research does appear to confirm that it results in:

- Improved decision quality
- Better decision acceptance
- Satisfaction with decision-making processes; and
- Development of participants’ skills through the process.

More recent research on levels of employee engagement does appear to show a direct link between high levels of participation and organisational performance.

Situational Leadership

Ken Blanchard’s situational leadership model suggests four broad styles of leadership that can be adopted when working with individuals and teams. The choice of style depends on the competence and commitment of the follower, as described in more detail below. The styles are described as:

- Directive
- Coaching

¹ Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958)

- Supporting
- Delegating

A leader, when choosing an appropriate leadership style to use with an individual, is encouraged to ask:

- How competent is this person? How good are they at their job? How much direction do they need?
- How committed is this person? To what extent do they work willingly and well? How much support and encouragement do they need?

In terms of competence and commitment, each individual team member will fit into one of the four development levels shown below.

<p>Development Level 1</p> <p><i>Low competence</i></p> <p>Inexperienced; needs additional training and development opportunities; needs updating on skills or knowledge; needs supervision</p> <p><i>High commitment</i></p> <p>Enthusiastic, confident, hard-working, eager to learn and develop, highly motivated</p>	<p>Development Level 2</p> <p><i>Some competence:</i></p> <p>Some experience; additional training and development opportunities would be useful and helpful; needs some supervision</p> <p><i>Low commitment</i></p> <p>Not particularly enthusiastic or confident or hard working or eager to learn and develop; not particularly motivated</p>
<p>Development Level 3</p> <p><i>High competence</i></p> <p>Highly skilled, competent and experienced; knows precisely what they are supposed to do and how to do it; capable and competent; can work unsupervised</p> <p><i>Variable commitment</i></p> <p>Sometimes enthusiastic, confident, hard-working, eager to learn and develop, highly motivated - and sometimes not</p>	<p>Development Level 4</p> <p><i>High competence</i></p> <p>Highly skilled, competent and experienced; knows precisely what they are supposed to do and how to do it; capable and competent; can work unsupervised</p> <p><i>High commitment</i></p> <p>Always enthusiastic, confident, hard-working, eager to learn and develop, highly motivated</p>

What is clear from this model is that individuals will have different needs at different times and so it makes sense to lead and manage them in different ways. So, which style to use? Listed below are some pointers:

- People who fall into Development Level 1 (low competence/high commitment) tend to respond best to a directive style of leadership – high on direction, lower on support. Their motivation is high but they need clear direction and some supervision to compensate for their lack of skills and knowledge. The interesting thing is that an experienced employee might fall back into this category when faced with a new role or challenge.
- People who fall into Development Level 2 (some competence/low commitment) tend to respond best to a coaching style of leadership – some direction, high on support. They need some direction and supervision, plus regular praise and encouragement to build motivation.
- People who fall into Development Level 3 (high competence/variable commitment) tend to respond best to a supporting style of leadership – low on direction, higher on support. They know what they are doing, so need little supervision, but they do need a fair amount of encouragement.
- People who fall into Development Level 4 (high competence/high commitment) tend to respond best to a delegating style of leadership – low on both direction and support. Even so, do not just leave Level 4 people to get on with it. They will still need occasional feedback, recognition and encouragement.

The way in which the four main leadership styles (directing, coaching, supporting, delegating) relate to the four categories of competence and commitment is shown below:

Development Level 1 Low competence High commitment		Development Level 2 Some competence Low commitment	
	Style 1: Directing Giving clear instructions	Style 2: Coaching Talking things through	
	Style 4: Delegating Trusting people	Style 3: Supporting Showing interest	
Development Level 4 High competence High commitment		Development Level 3 High competence Variable commitment	

Emotional and Social Intelligence

Leaders with emotional intelligence² are able to adapt their style in that they are able to tune in emotionally to their surroundings and their own feelings. This level of sensitivity and emotional awareness is introduced here with a description of the six leadership styles that are associated with high levels of emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a “two-sided coin” which means being able to manage yourself (emotional) and those around you (social). It is about:

- being able to manage your emotions appropriately in whatever context you find yourself
- being able to manage your relationships with others and control how you deal with others in a variety of situations.

When most people think of intelligence, they think of aspects such as memory, problem-solving and the ability to process ideas, grasp concepts and manage information in a variety of forms. This is the kind of intelligence broadly measured by Intelligent Quotient (IQ) tests.

However, there are many kinds of intelligence not covered by IQ tests that are just as valuable. These include creativity, communication, sensitivity, initiative and interpersonal skills.³ For instance, when predicting job performance, the contribution of IQ has been estimated as low as 4% and no higher than 25%. The more the job requires leadership, the more important emotional intelligence becomes. This is because you are now expected to lead people more and do hands-on, operational tasks less. Doing well as a leader has a lot to do with levels of emotional intelligence.

EI and Leadership

There are four fundamental types of emotional intelligence, that all of us have to a greater or lesser degree. These are described by Goleman as emotional capabilities.⁴ Emotional capabilities are the building-blocks for a more specific set of skills and attributes, called emotional competencies. It is these emotional competencies that can have a real impact on how you perform as a leader. In a study on leadership styles, Goleman identified a set of emotional competencies relating to leadership. He categorised these according to the emotional competencies referred to overleaf.

² Term first coined in 1990 by P Salovey & J Mayer, ‘Emotional Intelligence’, *Imagination, Cognition, and Personality*, 9 (3), pp 185–211. The term received little popular attention until the publication by Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 1996), which quickly became a best-seller.

³ In 1983, Howard Gardner wrote about the idea of ‘multiple intelligence’, arguing that non-cognitive aspects were equally as valuable as cognitive ones. See: Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind* (Basic Books, 1983).

⁴ Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 1996).

Emotional Capabilities and Competencies

Self-Awareness	Self-Management	Social Awareness	Social Skills
Emotional self-awareness Accurate self-assessment Self-confidence	Self-control Trustworthiness Conscientiousness Adaptability Drive to meet internal excellence Initiative	Empathy Organisational awareness Ability to recognise customer needs	Visionary leadership Influence Developing others Communication Change catalyst Conflict management Building bonds Teamwork & collaboration

Different combinations of these competencies result in different styles of leadership; an authoritative leader, for instance, will tend to be strong in the competencies of self-confidence and empathy and as a change catalyst. A good leader will, however, be able to pick and mix between these capabilities at will, and might use several of six identified leadership styles (see below) in any one week. You are unlikely to have the ability or acumen to be able to use all six styles. Most senior leaders, as a result of their own career development will have learned to embrace a range of styles to match the people and situations they face. Some never seem to learn.

Take the coaching style: to be effective a leader will need to learn to be empathetic. Can this be learned? By focusing on learning to listen and understand what other people are trying to say leaders actually become more engaged and this can eventually develop into a real sense of empathy – it can be learned! Please note that empathy is not the same as sympathy (we don't have to share the other person's emotions) and we don't have to agree with them. It is about understanding and communicating that you understand things from their perspective – this leaves you open to a wider and more sensitive range of responses.

Six Emotionally Intelligent Leadership Styles

The six emotionally intelligent leadership styles listed by Goleman are:

1. Coercive

The coercive style emanates from the emotional intelligence competencies: drive to achieve, initiative and self-control. The research suggested it is the least effective style in most situations, hitting flexibility particularly hard. It is always appropriate during a genuine emergency, but should be used with great care.

2. Authoritative

The authoritative leader emanates from the emotional intelligence competencies: self-confidence, empathy, and change catalyst. The research indicated that the authoritative style is probably the most effective, having a positive impact on all environmental factors. As a visionary, the authoritative leader is able to maximise commitment to the organisation's goals and strategy.

The approach will work well in almost any business situation, especially when the business is floundering. It works less well, however, for leaders working with a team of experts or peers who are more experienced than they are.

3. Affiliative

This style emanates from the emotional intelligence competencies: empathy, building relationships, communication. The affiliative leader believes 'people come first' and consequently tries to create harmony by building strong emotional bonds. The approach will improve communication, as people will begin to share ideas and this will increase inspiration. Flexibility will also be improved as people are given the freedom to do their jobs in the way which they think is most effective.

The affiliative style makes it a good all-round approach, but it is particularly helpful when trying to build harmony, increase morale, improve communication or repair a breakdown in trust. It is probably best used in conjunction with another style, as its emphasis on praise can fail to address poor performance. This approach can also, on its own, fail to give clear direction.

4. Democratic

This style emanates from the emotional intelligence characteristics: collaboration, team leadership and communication. This approach is based on getting people's ideas and support, and allowing employees a say in decisions. This builds trust and commitment, increases flexibility and maintains high morale. It works best if the leader is uncertain about the future direction and leans on experienced employees for ideas and guidance.

The approach is less likely to work where employees lack the competence, knowledge or experience to offer sound advice. It can be particularly inappropriate in times of crisis.

5. Pace-Setting

This style emanates from the emotional intelligence characteristics: conscientiousness, drive to achieve, and initiative. The pace-setting leader sets high personal performance standards and expects others to meet them also. Those who cannot measure up are likely to find themselves being replaced. The pace-setter does not trust employees to work in their own way or to take the initiative. The result is that the pace-setting style can destroy a positive work environment, as employees feel they will never be good enough and their morale falls. Flexibility and responsibility also disappear.

However, the approach can work well if employees are self-motivated, skilled and only require a minimum of coordination and direction. Teams of accountants, lawyers, researchers and technicians, for example, will often respond well to this style.

6. Coaching

This style emanates from the emotional intelligence competencies: empathy, developing others and self-awareness. Leaders who coach both help employees to identify their strengths and weaknesses and link them to career goals. They also encourage employees to develop a personal development plan. As good delegators, they give employees challenging assignments.

The research suggested that this was the least used of the six styles; possibly most leaders thought it was too time-consuming. However, it can improve results by increasing flexibility and commitment. It works best with employees who are already aware of their strengths and weaknesses and really want to be coached. The approach is best avoided if employees are resistant to change and learning, or the leader lacks the expertise to be a good coach.

Learning to Apply Emotional Intelligence

Many managers may find the range of emotional competencies rather daunting. The good news is that expanding one's repertoire of competencies is entirely possible; in a way that increasing one's IQ is largely not. Adapting your leadership style isn't easy, but it is certainly achievable.

The table below offers a description of the six leadership styles according to the concept of emotional intelligence. You will need to become familiar with the distinctions between these styles so that you can learn how to apply different styles to match different situations.

Applying EI Leadership Styles

EI Leadership Styles	What the leader might say...	EI Competencies
Coercive	"Don't ask questions. Just do it!"	Drive to achieve Initiative Self-control
Authoritative	"This is what I see. I want you to see it too, and I'll need your help to get us there."	Self-confidence Empathy, Catalysing change
Affiliative	"Okay guys, let's work together on this."	Empathy Building relationships Communication
Democratic	"What do you think?"	Collaboration Team leadership Communication
Pace-setting	"Come on, keep up!"	Conscientiousness Drive to achieve Initiative
Coaching	"How about doing it like this?"	Empathy Developing others Self-awareness

Two EI Styles to Use Sparingly

Not all of the six styles actually have a positive impact. Two, in particular, have an important but limited role - the coercive style and the pace-setting style. If over used they both can have a negative impact on performance and morale. The most strongly positive is the authoritative style. This isn't surprising: authoritative leaders are capable of taking people along with them by sharing their vision and encouraging people to move towards it. The least successful, the coercive style, usually results in the opposite, with the leader discouraging, demotivating or alienating his/her people, rather than helping them to improve.

Goleman's work on emotionally intelligent leadership styles concludes the following:

- Leaders who have mastered four or more styles, especially authoritative, democratic, affiliative and coaching, create both the best work environment and the conditions for outstanding business performance.
- The most effective leaders switch flexibly among the leadership styles as needed.
- Leaders who used styles that positively affected the work environment had better financial results than those who did not. The authoritative style had the most positive overall impact, followed by affiliative, democratic and coaching. Pace-setting and coercive styles can have a negative impact if over used.

There are five main points to remember about leadership styles:

- People develop preferred styles in three main ways: by modelling others; through, training; and by learning from personal experience
- Individuals usually prefer the same style whether they are leading and following
- If styles of leader and follower are in conflict, extra consideration is needed, especially in the areas of:
 - decision-making
 - setting objectives
 - communication
- Leaders have been successful with every style. The big issue is whether or not you have one fixed style only – without 'behavioural flexibility' you may only be able to lead in particular circumstances
- There is no universally effective style of leadership. It is widely recognised though that, in a knowledge-based economy, authoritative, visionary, democratic and coaching styles are much preferred over command and control.

6. Twenty-first Century Leadership

Most recent research points to improved performance being correlated with high levels of follower engagement. The implication for leadership is clear: less of the leader alone providing vision and direction and more of the leader involving followers in co-creating a shared vision and strategy.

Leadership doesn't just change as fads fade. What works for leaders genuinely changes in line with what is happening in society, across social, technological, economic and political change. Even a brief history of the way we have viewed leadership in the past shows that it has evolved with societal change. It is inconceivable that the deferential leadership of the feudal and industrial eras would work in today's western, liberated society where people are educated, have guaranteed rights enshrined in law and perhaps most evidently, have more choice than ever before. To put it simply, people can easily walk away if they don't like the way they are led.

Classically leadership was said to be a trait – what is called the "great man' theory (and it was inevitably a man leading). According to this theory you are born a leader or not. This might be going too far, but it can still be argued that every individual is born with predisposed aptitudes a talents and clearly some will find it easier to lead than others.

The important thing is that, as with any talent, it can be developed or squandered. We all know of people who have not lived up to their potential or have worked hard to exceed early expectations. There is general consensus that leadership behaviours can be learned and so anyone who wants to can become a better leader through practice. Although, as John Adair points out in *Great Leaders* (1989),

“The common sense conclusion of this book is that leadership potential can be developed, but it does have to be there in the first place”

Thinking has shifted to a more ‘transformational’ approach and faced with new and unpredicted crises, increased competition and rapid change it has become clear that old, ‘transactional’ methods are no longer working. New forms of leadership are needed. Transformational leadership originally emerged with an emphasis on vision, passion, and charisma. This was about inspiring and motivating people (followers) to excel in meeting new challenges and perform beyond all expectations. This style of leadership is about being charismatic, inspirational, transformational and adaptable.

It is argued that charismatic leaders⁵ are able, through personal vision and energy, to inspire followers and have a major impact on an organisation. This view of leadership treats it as a mysterious and powerful quality that can be used for good and evil (what Bass calls the ‘dark side’).⁶ Through emotional and symbolic gestures leaders are able to influence followers to make self-sacrifices and subordinate self-interest to serve a higher (organisational) mission.

In analysing the concept of transformational leadership in the corporate world, Bass (1985; 1996) also contrasted transactional and transformational leadership. He suggested that transactional leaders determine what followers need to do to achieve their own and organisational objectives and create the support needed to enable them to act appropriately. This includes contingency or situational leadership approaches.

Transformational leaders motivate people to do better than they would have expected by raising motivation and the importance of the value placed on people’s tasks within the organisation. These leaders go beyond transactional leadership by using their personal vision and energy to inspire their followers.

Taking all of the findings from research in the round, Yukl (2006) offers the following guidelines for leaders who seek to inspire followers towards achieving organisational goals:-

- Articulate a clear and appealing vision
- Explain how the vision can be attained
- Act with confidence and optimism
- Express confidence in followers
- Use dramatic, symbolic actions to emphasise key values
- Lead by example.

⁵ Charisma is a Greek word that means “divinely inspired gift” e.g. the ability to predict the future.

⁶ Bass & Steidlmeier (1999)

As theories, great man, contingency and transformational are sometimes referred to as 'heroic' models of leadership and they dominated the 1980s and 1990s. In many ways transformational leadership was not so far off the original "great man" theory in that it placed much emphasis on the leader position and the idea that the leader (man or woman) has the answers.

Sparking a Re-think

What has sparked a re-think in defining what makes for effective leadership in the twenty-first century has been the dramatic and relentless pace of change and the ability to cope with this. We live and work in a world with less certainty and predictability and every organisation, of whatever size, now needs to guard against competitive disruption. This can come from anywhere around the globe as local markets are opened up to others through increased use of technology. Leading people in this context requires a new form of leadership.

There is also the realisation that the charismatic model has a serious down side that can be destructive – think Enron, Worldcom and banking scandals. Indeed, one study (Tosi et al, 2004) even found that the link between charismatic leadership and performance is not what you might have expected. This study concluded that there is no link between charismatic leadership and company performance but that there is a link between charismatic leadership and the CEO's compensation package!

Around 2001, new thinking began to emerge based on a different set of characteristics for effective leadership.⁷ This work suggested that those companies led by what Jim Collins called Level 5 leaders were more successful at sustaining high growth over time. Level 5 leaders did not seek the limelight and were characterised as humble and dedicated to the company and its stakeholders. They chose service to others over self-aggrandisement and had a deep belief in the company and its potential for long-term sustainability and growth. Collins contrasted this with Level 4 leaders whom he likened to heroes, leading the charge and leading change but moving on to another company once the initial excitement had abated.

Engaging Leadership

So, where does this lead us in seeking an effective model of leadership that is right for today? In the post-heroic period we are living through, it appears that there is a role for charisma, but this needs to be coupled with high levels of engagement.⁸ This type of leadership has also been called 'engaging' and 'emotionally intelligent'. An engaging leader might be defined as:

“...someone who encourages and enables the development of an organisation that is characterised by a culture based on integrity, openness and transparency and the genuine valuing of others and of their contributions.”

⁷ Collins, J. (2001), Good to Great

This incorporates concern for the development and wellbeing of others, uniting stakeholders around a shared vision and delegation that is empowering for others. Engaged leadership enables organisations to cope with change and also to be pro-active in shaping their future. These leaders involve people in co-creating and co-owning shared vision and strategy. The emphasis is on enabling and serving others, as individuals and in teams. This requires deep-rooted, positive, personal values and the desire to move forward and face the future together, as a collective. It is far removed from the autocratic style and different to the authoritative style that dominated in the past. It is as much about followership as leadership.

Modern, engaging and emotionally intelligent leaders are different. They clarify what they expect from people around them. They understand what their role is and value their followers. In this way, all leaders must also be followers. We would summarise the roles as follows:

The **leader's** responsibilities are: delegation, empowerment, support, maximising the potential of followers, sharing as much information as possible, doing what they say they will -you-say-you-will-do-when-you-say-you-will-do-it, involve people in decision making that affects them

The **follower's** responsibilities are: taking personal responsibility, accepting accountability, being self-directed and self-disciplined, showing initiative.

Some traditionalists may see this as weak leadership. They might say, "Aren't I supposed to go out front and lead, and aren't followers supposed to follow?" It is worth pointing out that there is a great deal of evidence that where there is engaging leadership and engaged employees, there is more (not less) leadership at every level in the organisation and this is shown to correlate with higher profit, increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, lower employee turnover and higher employee satisfaction.

Part Two

7. Introduction to Unlocking Leadership

The Unlocking Leadership model is an approach to leadership development that is informed by research and promotes what is commonly considered to be great leadership practice in a modern, developed and largely knowledge-based economy.⁹

At Stellar, we have undertaken a major review and meta-analysis of published leadership studies and our findings show that:

- Although leadership is difficult to define precisely, it can be modelled in a meaningful way to provide guidance on what constitutes good and sometimes great leadership
- Leadership is necessary at all levels in an organisation and there is evidence that it does improve performance for organisations, teams and individuals
- Leadership is different from management although both are necessary for an organisation or a group of people working together to perform well and get results
- Leadership is present only when leaders act to do something that influences others and to do this requires competency in a range of personal and social skills that are associated with what is formally termed “emotional” and “social” intelligence
- Leadership can be learned, but it must come ‘from within’ and this learning is best achieved through a mix of self-awareness, experiential learning and practice
- Leadership development programmes, if properly designed and delivered, with attention given to allowing the transfer of learning from course to workplace, can create new and better leaders.

Unlocking Leadership Defined

Leadership is a complex interaction between people (leaders and followers) and the context in which they find themselves. For Unlocking Leadership, we use the following definition of leadership:

Active, influencing relationships, amongst leaders and followers, that get results.

Having a definition of leadership helps us to understand how it is possible to build leadership capacity in anyone who is serious about his or her development as a leader. It provides a standard that allows us to express whether or not a person is behaving in a way that shows leadership in any particular situation. How can we know if we are leading well unless there is a clear definition of what leadership means in the first place? And ultimately, the best test of leadership is to ask and observe followers’ experience of being led.

⁹ See our Leadership Overview guidance notes for a wider discussion of theories and models that have informed the Stellar Leadership model

Having an agreed definition of leadership also makes it easier for us to recognise it, measure it and plan to improve it. See below for a more detailed explanation of our leadership definition.

Unlocking Leadership Definition Explained

Key Words	Importance to Stellar Leadership
...active	<p>A leader has to act with purposeful intent in order to attract and retain followers. This means having a clear vision of a desired future that is compelling to followers.</p> <p>For sustainable leadership, a leader needs to demonstrate that the change they are promoting is meaningful to and in the interests of, followers.</p>
...influencing	<p>The result of a leader's actions must be to influence others to become followers and undertake the various roles and tasks needed to achieve objectives and realise the organisation's vision.</p> <p>This may be influencing how people see and think about things, how they feel and indeed how they act or react.</p>
...relationships	<p>Creating and maintaining relationships is at the heart of leadership. This means having the social skills necessary to develop common bonds, trust and understanding between leaders and followers.</p> <p>It is not possible to lead without followers and usually they can choose whether or not to follow. Think about it - no followers, no leader. Followers determine whether or not you can lead. That makes positive follower interaction important for a leader.</p>
...get results	<p>When all is said and done, leaders need to get results.</p> <p>To sustain follower engagement, a leader needs to show tangible progress towards achieving objectives and outcomes that are meaningful to the people they lead.</p>

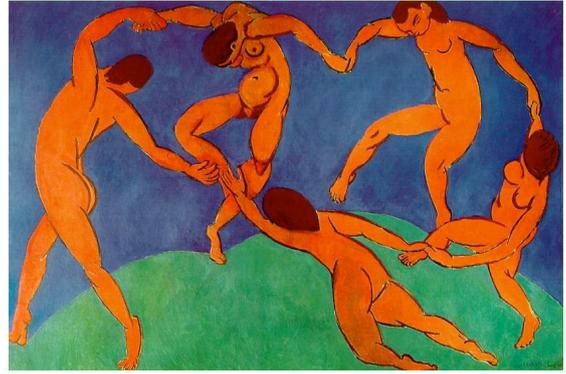
Leadership as a Dance

There are a number of well-known metaphors for leadership. A mountain conjures up an image of people working as a team to reach the peak together. An iceberg might encourage reflection on the importance of knowing what is hidden from view and below the surface.

At Stellar we like the metaphor of a dance.¹⁰ As Warren Bennis has reflected,

¹⁰ Our image of a dance is taken from Henri Matisse. (1910). *Dance (II)*. , Oil on canvas, Displayed in The Hermitage, St Petersburg

"[Leadership] brings to mind the idea of an energetic dance that binds the leader and followers, in which each side is fully present, active and able to shape the other".¹¹



Leadership as a Dance

A leader is entirely dependent on having and retaining followers in order to be a leader. Lose your followers and you no longer lead. This is a touchstone for leadership that research has supported. Studies suggest that the quality of the leader-follower relationship is directly related to levels of performance and employee satisfaction.

The lesson is this: making the effort to develop high quality one-to-one relationships with individuals is as important as encouraging people to work collaboratively, as an effective team. Engagement with followers/employees, of which relationship building is a key part, has been proven time and again to be a key factor in achieving high performance.¹²

No One Best Way

It is important to understand the personal nature of a leadership journey and how much it is tied to context. Such an understanding helps to explain how different people can lead in different ways and yet how each is considered to be, in their own way, highly effective. In truth, **there is no one best way to lead**. Not only is leadership an intensely personal pursuit for the leader; it is equally so for followers.

8. Leadership Characteristics

Whilst each leader will approach the task of leadership differently, there is evidence of effective leadership characteristics held in common. Studies consistently show that good leaders encompass most, although not necessarily all, of the following personal attributes and qualities (listed in alphabetical order):

- **Active and Positive**
Setting personal example, infusing core values and building relationships as the basis of individual and team motivation
- **Authoritative and Visionary**
Inspiring others to commit to transformational change by developing, articulating and communicating a clear sense of purpose expressed enthusiastically as a vision and strategy to be shared and embraced by all who would follow
- **Challenging and Questioning**
Challenging the way things are at present and taking assertive and decisive action to influence and shape how things will be in future – and encouraging others to challenge also

¹¹ Parks, Sharon, D. (2005) Leadership Can Be Taught: A Bold Approach for a Complex World, Harvard Business Press, Boston, MA

¹² MacLeod, D. and Clarke, N. (2009) Engaging for Success

- **Decisive and Dependable**
Exercising good judgement and ensuring follow-through on decisions made
- **Encouraging Collaboration**
Building great teams and recognising the power and potential of people working together to achieve common objectives
- **Integrity**
Acting in a trustworthy, honest and fair way and being seen to be genuinely interested in getting positive outcomes for all stakeholders
- **Intelligent and Competent**
*On three levels: **cognitive** (strategic thinker and problem solver); **social** (networker, communicator, influencer and generally approachable and good with people); **emotional** (self aware, self managed, empathetic, and drawing on a range of leadership styles)*
- **Persistent and Tough-minded**
Dealing with difficult decisions, poor performance, complex problems and disappointments and the fear or anxiety that comes from making big decisions with serious consequences
- **Engaging the Individual**
Engaging people as individuals and in teams, with regular contact, feedback and coaching conversations.

9. Five Fundamentals for Unlocking Leadership

The Unlocking Leadership model aims to provide some form of coherent guidance to support the development of leaders in organisations across all sectors. It is designed as an approach to leadership development that involves five fundamentals that, if addressed, will help those assigned a leadership role to unlock their full potential as a leader.

The German philosopher Hegel once pointed out that one cannot eat fruit – it is only possible, he says, to eat, pears, bananas and so on. Viewed in this way, leadership is seen as a general, descriptive term that offers little help to those who need to know what they must do in order to improve as a leader.



To unlock leadership in ourselves, we need to identify the specific apples and pears of leadership and thereby be able to collect and use them to provide the sustenance needed to grow and maintain good or great leadership practice.

By developing the Unlocking Leadership model, we aim to provide each individual with the fundamentals they need to address to become an effective leader. The five fundamentals for Unlocking Leadership are as follows:

- **Personal Qualities**
Demonstrating integrity, competence, judgement, decisiveness and behavioural flexibility as a leader
- **Purpose**
Articulating clear mission, vision, values and outcomes in a way that will inspire others to follow

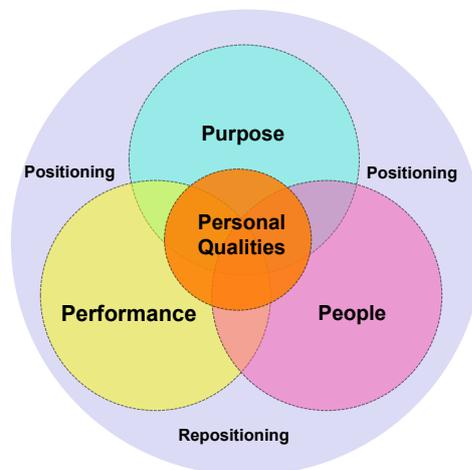
- **Positioning**
Knowing and understanding the context of the internal and external environment and formulating winning (blue ocean) strategies to realise the vision and achieve goals
- **People**
Engaging, motivating, empowering and supporting people to develop in their roles and execute strategies and plans where they have a contribution to make
- **Performance**
Planning, making things happen, reviewing progress and getting results.

These fundamentals are not frozen in a static model - they are in constant motion. They are affected by ever changing environmental forces. We think of the five fundamentals as a checklist against which you can test your leadership practices.



Using another metaphor, keeping faith with the five fundamentals is like the performance act of spinning plates. As each plate is given attention it speeds up and remains stable and afloat. Without attention, the others slow down, wobble and crash. The leadership role requires a great deal of skill and attention to keep all the plates spinning and therefore to maintain the momentum needed to make the whole act a success. This Stellar Leadership interplay is illustrated below.

Five Fundamentals of Stellar Leadership



This next section illustrates the range and complexity of leadership qualities, competencies and behaviours associated with the five fundamentals for Unlocking Leadership. The core challenge it presents is: are you willing to change your leadership practice in order to become a better leader?

Personal Qualities

A leader needs to have well developed emotional and social intelligence. This is the ability to determine the requirement for leadership in a particular situation and select an appropriate response. This means being self-aware, self-managed and proficient in the exercise of key social skills such as communication, motivation and influence.



Let's be clear. This is not about being perfect. It is about how you understand, manage and develop yourself so that you can lead enough people (perhaps not all) to willingly work on the tasks you have set them and achieve the results you expect of them. This competency, to manage yourself and motivate others is called respectively, emotional and social intelligence. A leader needs to be sensitive to their own and others' patterns of behaviour and work to exploit strengths whilst making some allowance for individual weaknesses.

A leader needs three levels of intelligence:

- Cognitive
(as a strategic thinker and problem solver)
- Emotional
(being self aware, self managed, empathetic and behaviourally flexible)
- Social
(as a networker, communicator and influencer who is approachable and good with people)

Improving intelligences will require openness to personal change. It will mean being willing to self-disclose about fears and weaknesses and perhaps also embrace full surround - 360 degree - feedback in order to identify any hidden gaps.

It is considered to be a good thing for a leader to have self-belief, strength of conviction, passion and persistence in pursuing a vision. However, there is value also in having enough humility to recognise and deal with personal failings and limitations that may become apparent and affect follower relationships. Most leaders feel fear and anxiety at critical moments – it's how they respond to this that singles them out.

Where action is taken to address personal development needs, the result can be increased emotional and social intelligence and improved follower relationships. In our programmes we help leaders to think differently about people and the critical situations they will face. This is based on reaching a better understanding of personality types and preferred patterns of behaviour at work. Typical diagnostics to assist in this comes from, for example:

- SELF+ Profile
- Stellar Leadership Questionnaire (SLQ)
- Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
- Review of Learning Styles'

In terms of Personal Qualities, a leader needs to:

1. Be enthusiastic and positive about the organisation and its mission
2. Have emotional intelligence with evident self awareness and self control
3. Apply social intelligence and have the range of social skills needed to influence others
4. Take care of his/her own physical and mental health and well-being
5. Work to a strong set of values, especially in relation to integrity and fairness
6. Demonstrate competency and political astuteness¹³ in dealing with difficult and complex situations and issues
7. Identify key influencers and decision-makers and build good relationships with them
8. Adapt to deal with different people and situations and use a variety of leadership styles as required
9. Follow through on decisions made and make sure action is taken and reported on
10. Use feedback to know, develop and manage him or herself as a leader.

Purpose

A leader must have or find a compelling vision and a clear sense of purpose if others are to be inspired. The vision needs to elicit passion if it is to attract followers. A leader should set a small number of important and challenging goals that give meaning to the vision. Studies show that leaders who model positive values gain the commitment of followers towards the organisation's purpose and goals.

A leader must have or develop the ability to capture and articulate a sense of purpose and state this - or somehow demonstrate this - to followers in the form of a shared vision. This could be in the form of words, stories, pictures or seeing-is-believing experience derived from visiting (best-in-class) exemplars elsewhere.

The vision will need to be put in context, with clear guidance on values and realisable goals, if followers are to see the scale of what is required to close the gap between where we are now and where we want to be. Clarity and belief in desired outcomes is a powerful driver for followers. This will require clear communication at all levels, ensuring that the vision is cascaded to and understood by, everyone in the organisation.

Leaders need to establish a healthy organisational culture if they are to create the conditions for an engaging and energising climate. If a leader is taking over where there is a negative climate and poor performing team, they will need to challenge existing and long-held sets of attitudes and behaviours that must change. This will require courage and conviction to see through change.

A leader needs to have a strong moral compass to guide their decision-making and in turn, command respect. People literally "follow the leader" and so establishing a set of core values will help followers understand what type of organisation/team the leader wants it to

¹³ This is the ability to understand what you can and cannot control, when to take action, who is going to resist your agenda and whom you need on your side.

be - “the new way we do things around here”. Most people will look to the leader’s values and behaviours as a guide to their own approach in the workplace. They will soon learn from experience what gets rewarded and what doesn’t.

In many organisations values are written down as ‘core values’ or ‘guiding principles’ but are not talked about. Making frequent references to values in discussion and performance review sessions is a great way of letting people know and understand what attitudes and standards of behaviour are expected of them.

In terms of Purpose a leader needs to:

1. Be positive about the future in a way that gets buy-in and excites others
2. Establish and describe a clear sense of purpose or mission
3. Be able to articulate and share his or her vision and have a version to hand that can be expressed in under two minutes¹⁴
4. Ensure that their team and other stakeholders are informed and appropriately involved in the envisioning process
5. Establish specific outcomes, expressed in a way that is understood and can be acted on by others
6. Cascade a sense of purpose in a way that provides meaning and direction at all levels (organisation, team and individual)
7. Create time and space for others to take in and understand the vision from their position and in their setting
8. Be adaptable and prepared to challenge and change their vision and goals as circumstances change
9. Ensure that strategies are in place that are clearly aligned to vision, values and goals
10. Model a desirable the organisational culture by establishing a set of core values that apply to all, including the leader.

Positioning

A leader must position the organisation within the prevailing context, by monitoring the surrounding situation with reference to both the internal and external environment. Positioning an organisation or team within it means exercising strategic leadership and therefore providing direction for others. This must result in a clear strategy and when necessary a repositioning to cope with disruption and change.

Strategic leaders network, make connections and build social capital so that they are alerted to change and can exploit opportunities that arise. This a major source for innovative ideas and developments. The external focus needs to be balanced with the leader also being seen to be active, accessible and engaged with his/her own team members. It’s hard to build productive relationships if you are never there. Paying attention to the wider external

¹⁴ Commonly referred to as an “elevator speech”

environment at the same time leaving time to lead and manage your own team is a demanding and necessary balancing act – back to those spinning plates.

Intuition will serve a leader well; however, a leader is well advised to periodically use market intelligence and hard data to identify and “confront brutal facts”¹⁵ in order to see new trends that are sometimes hidden from consciousness in a flood of enthusiasm or wishful thinking based on commonly held assumptions. A leader needs to guard against sugar coated reporting.

Seeing the big picture and responding to external trends requires a willingness to gather information, see patterns, make decisions, communicate and act quickly in the face of change. Typically, a leader will seek information and research that helps in making decisions about positioning the organisation in its marketplace. Leaders should involve others in this process so that there is commitment to new strategies and plans.

More than anyone else the leader needs to provide direction, usually in the form of a strategy that is ideally co-created but certainly shared and understood by all. Two popular and effective strategic processes can be used in the form of Blue Ocean Strategy (seeking high value, innovative strategies) and Balanced Scorecard (focusing on translating strategy into action) approaches to strategic planning.

A leader needs to balance a persistent focus on end goals, with the ability to be flexible and adaptable in managing disruption along the journey itself.

In terms of Positioning a leader needs to:

1. Continually scan, assess and help interpret the meaning of events in the wider environment
2. Be open to and bring forward ideas and opportunities for discussion
3. Stay up-to-date by interacting with knowledgeable people and events in the wider environment
4. Network and encourage others to network, so that the team is kept informed about the external environment and market trends
5. Develop a strategy for the organisation/team, preferably co-created using processes and models such as Blue Ocean and Balanced Scorecard
6. Look to the future in a way that raises questions about whether or not the organisation or team will need to change its strategy
7. Challenge the way things are in a constructive and positive manner
8. Be creative and look for ways to innovate by suggesting or accepting new ways of doing things
9. Encourage others to experiment with innovative approaches and take calculated risk
10. Be personally involved in endorsing and cascading the organisation’s strategy so that all stakeholders understand it in a way that has meaning for them.

¹⁵ A phrase used by Jim Collins in Good to Great

People

A leader must understand others and how they view the world around them. A leader needs to build high quality relationships with followers, as individuals, as well as in groups and teams. This requires high levels of engagement.

Although we live in a highly logistical and electronic age, we are all emotional, human beings and good leaders understand this. They use technology and quality systems to accelerate performance but they know that it is people who flick the switches and press the buttons. Performance, productivity and employee satisfaction are all affected by the level of employee engagement in an organisation.

Recent studies show that high levels of engagement results in employees having a set of positive attitudes and behaviours that are aligned to an organisation's mission, vision and values. It is usually evident where people are seen to be motivated and wanting to connect with the organisation and where people really care about doing a good job. It results in people using discretionary effort at work. Unfortunately, this same research suggests that only 30% of employees are fully engaged and this applies across all sectors. What is clear is that the actions of a leader can affect this, one way or the other. To achieve high engagement requires:

- Active leadership with attention to vision, values and culture
- Managers and team leaders who engage
 - Offering clarity or role and goal
 - Appreciating effort and contribution
 - Ensuring people feel valued and supported
- Employees with a voice i.e. where challenge is welcomed, people feel listened to and where opinions count
- Leader and organisational integrity in that the leaders are seen to live up to the values they espouse and follow through on promises made.

A leader must be able to communicate and build rapport with individuals. Understanding people's patterns of behaviour, preferred roles, motivational fuses and changing circumstances, is crucial to maintaining interest and performance. It is hard to get the best from people if you do not get to know or understand them. One way of looking at this, expressed from a follower perspective, is that, "my leader should: know me; inspire me; focus me; and care about me.

An emotionally and socially intelligent leader will keep people aligned and engaged by using appropriate styles of leadership based on the needs of the individual, the context they are in and the situations they face. This can only be achieved if there are good leader-follower relations. Good relationships result in good communication, knowledge sharing, responsibility sharing and commitment to organisational and/or team goals. People need to know and understand what is expected of them if they are to perform well.

There is no one best way to lead. In uncertain times a leader needs to be more transformational than transactional and this requires clarity of vision coupled with adaptability and openness to a change. On the other hand, where there is a high degree of

day-to-day certainty and routine, a transactional approach is more acceptable, which means laying down clear pathways for teams and individuals to follow. What people universally appear to find de-motivating is a laissez-faire (disengaged) approach to leadership.

People operate individually and as groups and so leadership competencies are required at both of these levels. Engaging with people, communicating with them, recognising their contribution and being seen to care about them are all proven factors in creating a healthy organisational climate resulting in high performance and satisfaction. Pushing for performance outputs without regard to the satisfaction of people is unlikely to be sustainable. Push people too hard and they will eventually push back or simply give up – in that case the organisation will be short-changed on discretionary effort.

Just to note: not all individuals, at all times, can be fully and emotionally engaged in their work. Things happen to upset their equilibrium and routine - both in and out of the work environment. This can create what the literature refers to an “in group” (those who are fully engaged and are willing and able to stay late and help sort problems) and an “out group” (those who have other obligations or interests and can only work to contract). There is an important point in this for a leader.

A leader should understand this dynamic and respect those who fulfil their contractual obligations only and get their job done efficiently and effectively. A leader may want more signs of engagement but in these circumstances he/she must at least ensure that those individuals are treated fairly and are recognised for the contribution they make. The ideal is that everyone moves into an expanding “in group” and this is worth striving for.

In terms of People a leader needs to:

1. Act as a positive role model to others – lead by example in matters of interpersonal relations
2. Make sure others know and act in line with agreed values, attitudes and behaviours
3. Energise people by creating an atmosphere and environment they find enabling and empowering
4. Make sure that individuals know what is expected of them in their role
5. Build appropriate, high quality relationships with individual team members
6. Foster collaboration, mutual trust and cooperation across the team
7. Create a sense of common identity, commitment and optimism in the team
8. Take time out to support, develop and recognise people as individuals
9. Give people a voice – show that their opinions count – and that it is ok to challenge and speak out
10. Find ways to celebrate success e.g. small wins such as project milestones.

Performance

A leader needs to make sure that plans and resources are in place to enable people to translate strategy into action. This is about delivery. People need to know what is expected of them if they are to work energetically and collaboratively towards a common purpose. A leader should seek to enable and empower people (in teams and as individuals) if they are to be able to participate and indeed innovate, in helping to achieve results. In terms of

performance improvement, the leader must also ensure that feedback is given on performance.

Leadership without action planning and the execution of those plans will not get the results that are the ultimate test of success. Without activity and results people become sceptical of vision, strategy and plans. If vision is to become a reality then a leader must ensure that action is taken based on clear objectives, processes, outputs and outcomes. This also means making sure that people have the resources necessary to fulfil the role asked of them.

This can be termed “modelling the way”¹⁶ and should include attention to small wins to encourage, motivate and energise people as plans unfold towards the shared vision. People - stakeholders and employees - should be involved in the planning process. It is important that they know and understand the organisation’s plans and their role in implementing them.

A leader needs to be able to express, in practical terms, what they expect of people. This means discussing and agreeing with followers (in teams and as individuals) a set of appropriate and challenging objectives, leaving them scope to act on the basis of their talent. One organisation terms this, “task, trust and tend”.

People will also want to give and receive feedback on a regular basis. Acting as a performance coach is one of the most important roles that a leader can adopt. Most people will find this to be a positive approach. What they object to most is seeing poor performance and bad attitude unchallenged – and where this persists, it’s the leader’s job to make the challenge.

To achieve high performance through others, a leader must enable and empower people to act. This will require the leader to understand their motivation, provide resources, support personal development and follow up with feedback through regular performance conversations. It is better to have frequent interaction through conversations than occasional and very formal performance appraisal although doing both can serve well.

Although we know from studies that leadership is primarily about relationships, with all the complexity this entails, it also has a very practical, results-oriented side. Leaders quite rightly expect people to work to a plan, achieve agreed outputs and eventually, desired outcomes.

One way of describing a leader’s main role is to see it as connecting people with purpose. To do this a leader must:

- Clarify **purpose** and articulate a clear vision
- Ensure that the organisation is strategically well **positioned**
- Engage, enable and support **people** in their roles
- Establish a **performance** pathway that positively encourages innovation, action and results.

¹⁶ A phrase used by Kouzes and Posner in The Leadership Challenge

Connecting People and Purpose



In terms of Performance a leader needs to:

1. Make sure that SMART plans are in place for individuals and teams
2. Ensure that policies, processes and resources are in place to support plans
3. Know how plans will be achieved by ensuring everyone operates to some form of 'plan-do-review' cycle
4. Get people to talk about plans and progress made against them on a regular basis
5. Focus on getting results through people by supporting them and recognising their contribution
6. Ensure that activities are assigned to 'responsible owners' who are held accountable for performance
7. Track performance and give people feedback on their performance, with special attention to positive feedback
8. Be prepared to challenge poor performance and coach for improved performance at individual and team levels
9. Offer support and guidance to individuals through regular one-to-one review sessions that incorporate personal development planning
10. Make a point of periodically reporting back to people on the overall performance of their team and the organisation.