

LEADERSHIP *matters*

LEADERSHIP
SOUTH WEST

UNIVERSITY
of
EXETER

Leadership from all angles

We all know that leadership is the 'new black' when it comes to management talk but its impact and interest is really gaining momentum here in the South West.

We are delighted to be at the heart of regional thinking and want to thank those that are putting leadership at the top of their agenda. We see our partnerships with others as pivotal in making a difference to the practice of management throughout the region.

A couple of very interesting projects have now begun to take shape and will be rolled out throughout 2005. The first

is an innovative cultural leadership programme delivered in partnership with the Centre for Creative Enterprise and Participation at Dartington College of Arts. Further details are listed over, but I wanted to add comment about my delight in seeing partnership work effectively to produce creative leadership solutions. Culture South West led this project and succeeded in bringing a multi-agency approach to creating affordable, credible and relevant solutions to a range of quite specific leadership development needs.

The second is a European project which will start in September 2005 and focus on leading diversity in the boardroom. In a drive to both strengthen the range of skills and perspectives within the region's boards and reduce the under representation of women in director positions, currently only 8% nationally, this

initiative is focussed on creating more diversity within the boardroom.

In line with the Higgs report, which calls for improved diversity within the boardroom and a move away from "far too many directors being

recruited by word of mouth", we seek to improve the rigour of board selection. This project will support women managers in developing the depth and breadth of their leadership skills using an enhanced version of the nationally recognised 'Company Direction Programme'. Increasing the qualifications base of women applicants will

help to remove the barriers to ascension facing many in securing board positions. The project will also positively impact upon the number of women going on to pursue Chartered Director status, the professional board level qualification.

We look forward to working in partnership with the Institute of Directors in the South West and a host of other business networks in promoting the needs of senior female executives. A series of seminars will take place across the region, where we will showcase national and international speakers and, more importantly, offer high level development opportunities. Further details will be available from May 2005.

Keeping on the theme of senior women executives, the School of Psychology here at Exeter, are conducting a host of research into



leadership issues and their 'call for action' is to be found on the back of this newsletter if you wish to get involved.

As ever, we welcome involvement with those researching and practising in the field of leadership across our region. We can be reached on lsw@exeter.ac.uk.

**Jackie Bagnall Programme Manager
Leadership South West**

Creating Cultural Leadership: South West

We are delighted to announce the launch of Creating Cultural Leadership; an innovative cultural sector leadership programme, which seeks to build cross sector collaboration alongside increased leadership effectiveness. The programme is initially being launched as a pilot in the South West, beginning in April 2005.

Commissioned by Culture South West's Regional Cultural Sector Workforce Skills Group, the programme is the result of an eighteen-month consultation process that identified key leadership issues across the six cultural sector domains: Arts; Heritage; Film and Moving Image; Museums; Libraries and Archives; Sport; and Tourism. Each cultural agency has nominated 5 people from their domain to take part in the pilot programme, which covers themes ranging from the culture of leadership to the workplace as an arena for change.

The programme will be delivered through a partnership between the Centre for Creative Enterprise & Participation at Dartington College of Arts and Leadership South West at the University of Exeter.

**For further information, contact
Andy Strong on 01392 262564 or
email A.G.Strong@exeter.ac.uk**

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...the benefits of an open talking environment

"...its literally like running their own show!"

Managing Director of Somar International Ltd, David Bone, believes that the success of his business is dependent on the concept of collective leadership within his workforce. Adopting the Investors in People model and becoming a Beacon Company, have all contributed to an enviable track record and a highly professional management team.



Somar International Ltd, based in Cornwall, is a progressive yet caring company with a fresh clear vision for the future. At the leading edge of energy management, its mission is to deliver innovative yet sharply focussed electronic products, which satisfy the growing demands for reduced energy consumption in commerce and industry.

From its inception in 1992, Somar has developed a range of Intelligent Motor Controllers already generating profit for industry by saving literally billions of electricity units – proving that commercial success need not cost the earth.

With an enviable track record and a highly professional management team, the company is now able to build on more than a decade of practical experience in providing turnkey control solutions. Somar is committed to an ambitious programme of on-going research and development into new areas of technology... tackling head on the problems of pollution – and the unstoppable rise in the cost of energy.

Can you describe the concept of collective leadership?

Collective leadership is when individual employees take ownership of their own part of the business. This has evolved as a result of good practice models being put into place as a consequence of experience and consultation.

What it really means, I suppose, is assuming that everyone in the business is a leader in their own right – they just lead different parts of the business. When we were assessed for our Investors In People (IIP) standard last year, the assessor commented that over half the workforce we had were managers – lots of Chiefs and not enough Indians!. But, it's really very simple. Because we are a small business, "manager" means running a process – it doesn't necessarily mean running a team of people. Some of our managers do manage people, but a lot of them simply lead their own operational area.

We give people definitive responsibility for delivering their own operation with the company – there is nothing autocratic about our company. My role as MD is very much one of co-ordination, taking all the ideas and putting them into a master strategy. So we have clearly defined goals within the organisation of where we want to go. The company is growing very fast, and it is important to us that we set up the right management structure to manage this growth both dynamically and safely.

Do you have any particular strategies for implementing the hierarchies within your organisation?

The way it works is that we set very clear commercial goals – that's where we start – looking at where the business will be next year and in 5 years time, and building the

team to control that business. This means each person controlling their own part of the business. For example: the distribution team will collectively work together and feed back to me improvements of the systems required in their particular area to hit those targets. This gives me the necessary knowledge to make overall decisions, but each person very much has ownership in their own individual field.

The great thing about this strategy is that people know where they fit in, in terms of what we are doing.

The other important strategy we adopt is that we play people very much to their own strengths - an awareness of your own strengths and weaknesses within your own department, means that you are more self-aware.

We also have a meaningful appraisal system, where people can comment on how they consider other people are developing. What that means is that we have an extremely harmonious workforce and a good working environment – everyone is running their own "department" – and there is good competition because everyone likes to be as good as they can be. We work very closely with Business Link to put together what we consider to be an extremely comprehensive appraisal system via the IIP framework. That's become an incredibly powerful tool for the strategising of the company. For me, as co-ordinator, I need to talk to all the key members of staff and ensure that our aims are real and achievable. If you think about it - **you've only got to have one loose nut on the chassis, and the whole car can fall apart.**

Having moved to a collective leadership model, what advantages have you found for your company?

The first advantage is that we have an incredibly stable organisation - if I walked away tomorrow, the company could stand alone quite easily, although it might move in a different direction. This means we don't rely on a couple of senior managers within the business – it's a complete team effort. Emphasis is placed on the running of a "reserve system" – the understanding of other people's jobs, which is essential so that there is always cover when needed, which is vital in a small organisation.

Secondly, organisations are all about different types of personalities. We run a

"non-egotistical" type of company and this creates a very open talking environment where people don't feel threatened. We give people the opportunity to develop, so that they can directly contribute their own ideas to the growth of the business. This leads to high morale which within a growth environment is an extremely valuable commodity. **An open talking culture enables us to identify strengths and weaknesses very easily.** As a consequence, the turnover of staff is incredibly low which is highly cost effective.

...and what have the challenges been?

The biggest challenge initially was getting people to accept the new culture of being part of a team – explaining what we were doing, why we were doing it and why we were allowing them to move forward in their own departments.

The other challenge was ensuring, particularly in the early days, that we provided training to enable staff to cope with the tasks we were empowering them with. Management training is very important – managing a process is very different from just doing it. You don't take the stabilisers away from a bicycle until you are sure that you can handle the bike properly. Once a culture is installed, like riding the bike, it becomes almost natural.

A further challenge is realising that now everyone is a leader! **Good clear communication is the key**, making sure that from a senior management perspective you are constantly talking, listening, having meetings, asking questions, and then acting on what people are saying. If there are problems, then they are dealt with in a very open way, not behind closed doors.

Finally, what advice can you give to an organisation wishing to adopt this culture?

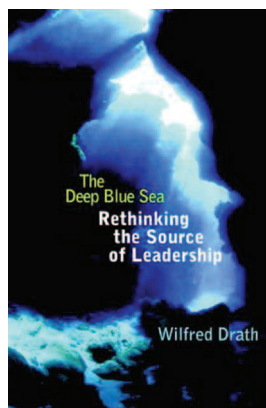
The most important thing is to develop good clear honest communication structures with the staff – there must be open communication.

Secondly, senior management must have the confidence to let go, because if you try to implement this culture in an autocratic way, it just won't work.

The single most important thing that any new company can do, is to become an IIP – it is an ideal foundation for this type of management structure. What it teaches you to do is bring the best out in each member of your team – then you have to trust them to get on with it and do the best job they can!



The Deep Blue Sea: Rethinking the Source of Leadership



By **William Drath: Centre for Creative Leadership**

Pub: **Jossey-Bass 2001**

According to William Drath, the current confusion evident in the realm of leadership studies (does it rest within individuals, is it socially constructed, is it actually anything real at all?) is a result of its 'source' not being as clear 'as it once was'. He argues that the persistence of the myth of leadership as residing within particular individuals, is at the heart of this confusion. Instead, he proposes a view of leadership in which it is an aspect of community, and as such is completely reliant on inter-subjective 'knowledge principles', by which 'individuals' behaviours are recognised as being those of 'the leader'.

Drath offers three 'knowledge principles' which help us to recognise leadership: personal dominance, interpersonal influence, and relational dialogue – the latter being the most sophisticated of the three, which challenges us to 'create and discover new ways of making leadership happen'. The book describes how each is expressed through the key leadership tasks of setting direction, creating and maintaining commitment and facing adaptive change.

Drath illustrates his ideas by reference to the imaginary Zoffner Piano Company, introduced at the point in the firm's history when the charismatic founding father (who clearly demonstrates 'leadership as personal dominance') retires, leaving the Company in the somewhat less charismatic hands of his daughter. This story itself was an enticement to keep me reading! However, even without its unfolding drama, *Deep Blue Sea* presents a compelling view of the possibilities and challenges involved with making leadership happen in our increasingly complex and inter-connected world.

**Dr Donna Ladkin -
MA Programme Director -
Centre for Leadership Studies**

"Effective Strategic Leadership" – By John Adair

Pub: **Macmillan – 2003**

This is a deceptively easy read from a writer many of us have known all our working lives. But don't be deceived! This is fresh and challenging – an excellent book that has its roots in his three-circle model, and its head full of phronesis (practical wisdom).

Now focussing on the domain of strategic leadership, using his familiar style of citing historical examples with military and business leaders' own words, John Adair challenges his readers to review their own effectiveness as strategic leaders.

His focus on the First 100 days is particularly motivating (*You'll never get a second chance to make a first impression*). Not just the first, but also the next 100 days could make all the difference!

Looking at teamwork within the top team, Adair stresses the importance of disagreement within that team, *'The first rule in decision making is that one does not make a decision unless there is disagreement.'* Emphasis is placed on the importance of good 1:1 relationships between top team members, so that everyone in the organisation should *'understand clearly their part in the drama.'*

Adair advocates *'One level up'* thinking – identifying not only the end objective in mind, but also one level up – being clear about the means by which the objective will be achieved, because *'Planning is a process and not a destination'*.

The book also contains lots of *'how to...'* information. This is Adair's skill – he recommends keeping it simple and writes that way himself.

He suggests exercises to try out: for example, in the section on Organisational Culture, the suggestion is to list adjectives that characterise your organisation in 10 years time, and then actively work towards them. Adair reminds us to turn all managers into leaders if you want to change organisational culture.

I had pretty much neglected Adair for more fashionable writers, but reading this eminently sensible and practical book, written by a man with phronesis to spare, has brought me back and offered me the encouragement to write my *'next 100 day'* plan straight away!

**Diane Boston - Boston Hunt Consultancy
www.bostonhunt.co.uk**

A Precursor to Excellence!

What do accountants, management consultants, HR specialists and other business professionals have in common? (Please don't send your answers on a postcard!) Quite seriously though, virtually all of them are eligible for membership of a specialised affinity group or community, where they are able to network with like-minded professionals of similar standing, share a code of practice, participate in CPD activities, and have ready access to highly specialised resources when required. A notable exception has been in the specialised area of leadership practice and development, particularly for advanced practitioners. In response to many approaches from leadership consultants and practitioners across the discipline spectrum, the Centre for Leadership Studies recently launched its Affiliation programme.

But the Centre's decision to make provision for, and promote Affiliation was driven by far more than the need to fill a gap in the market, important though this was. An even stronger incentive was the growing realisation that the challenges confronting leadership practitioners are becoming profoundly more acute. Consider just three of these challenges:

First, the paradox of ever-greater regulation in a deregulated world economy impacts upon leadership specialists no less than it does on other organisational or business-based professions. Those of us involved in leadership development have to contend with a raft of issues: statutory and legal requirements, professional and ethical standards, and the prescriptions of related professional bodies, for

example, regulations governing the use of psychological tests. Fully understanding the impact of the regulatory environment on leadership practice is a daunting task for the individual practitioner; resolving problems that arise within their context invariably requires access to specialist resources.

Second, we find ourselves having to cope with more uncertainty and ambiguity than ever before, whether in our role as consultants, leaders, or teachers. Increasingly our choices are not between an unequivocally right or wrong course of action, but rather between right and right, where both options have near-equal legitimacy. At the 'decisive moment' it may no longer be analysis and logic that determines the way forward, but rather the values that underpin our professional discipline. Resolving dilemmas and juggling contradictions have become the order of the day, and it is often the values-driven community of which we are part that lights the way forward, either through wise counsel or through support. Without such support we may be reluctant to open the Pandora's Box, within whose dark recesses so often reside the keys to the resolution of crucial issues of leadership.

Third, the almost unnerving speed of change, especially but not exclusively technological, and the imperative to revise, or at the very least revisit, many of the paradigms that are the bedrock of our discipline, simply add to the range and scope of the challenges we face. We may be specialists, but who would dare to call themselves an expert these days? Many paradigms we took for granted a decade ago

may be fatally flawed, or at best suspect. Separating facts from fallacies, and myths from madness is often more usefully, and invariably more enjoyably undertaken within a collegiate community.

But community is not simply about enjoyable collegiality. I am reminded of a conversation I had a few years ago with Peter Block, author of the definitive "Flawless Consulting." He explained that he was changing the nature of his own consulting practice and working far more with communities and less with individuals, saying that '...we will only achieve anything worthwhile in organisations by forming local communities.' Margaret Wheatley expressed the same sentiment two years ago when telling me about her work with a new generation of leaders in developing countries. It was only recently, as I started working with CLS and exploring the full potential of the Professional Network that I started to understand the real significance of these conversations. As we learned of, and encountered more and more people in the leadership arena grappling with a changing leadership landscape, it became increasingly clear that creating a provision for people to become Affiliates within a CLS community would meet a real need among leadership practitioners.

**For further information contact
Kay.Garbutt@exeter.ac.uk**



Neville Osrin - Director of Professional Network Centre for Leadership Studies

...so whats it like to go through the process

As one of the first Centre of Leadership Studies Affiliates, it gives me great pleasure to comment on the accreditation process, peer review and my reflections so far.

My background as a CEO/MD of diversified UK and overseas industrial groups has given me the opportunity to work in multi-cultural and multi-lingual environments, that have been challenging, daunting and exhilarating (though not necessarily at the same time!).

In my current role, within turnaround, restructuring, change management, interim senior executive or NED situations, my previous experience has contributed enormously to my operations in these fields.

After being introduced, by CLS Fellow Geoffrey Thomas, I then started its accreditation process including CPD. At this point I had to consciously reflect on previous words and actions, open my

mind/view to a new perspective, and approach matters in a rather more analytical way than hitherto, when an intuitive (but as I thought 'considered') response was the previous norm.

These processes were not arduous, but stimulating, as indeed the one area where I knew that my assumptions would be challenged would be within the Peer Review - in my case, with Jonathan Gosling, Alan Hooper and Neville Osrin.

The Peer Review is essentially a presentation of your own choice, subject to approval, during and after which questions are raised, assumptions probed, and perhaps points requiring amplification. Again a stimulating exercise, with an excellent "user friendly" environment.

What has struck me in my dealings with CLS, is the spirit of openness and communication in all

areas, not least that between Fellows and Affiliates. At a recent CPD event I much appreciated the open dialogue and framework within which I was able to participate, and which I found beneficial and encouraging. This communication is certainly a 'two way street' and alternative options and ideas are readily accepted and debated.

The recent CPD programme provided a very eclectic mix of parallel presentations that delegates were able to cherry pick, dependent on personal choice, interest or discipline.

In light of the continuing developments taking place within the CLS I would encourage any potential affiliates to take the step and go "the extra mile"!

**Dr John Halfnight – MBA, PhD
Cordville Limited
www.cordville.com**

Reach!

Reach! is a development programme for emerging and first-time leaders – Kate McKinley, consultant, talks to a delegate – Julia Lowe, director of Iconography.

Kate - What made you choose Reach as a leadership development programme?

Julia - Timing, partly. We've just gone through a merger and increased the team three-fold. Time away to reflect on some of the issues I face as a director of this expanded business was essential.

Kate - What makes Reach different from other leadership development programmes you've attended?

Julia - So much is expected of leaders today and there's a real need for having our thinking stretched. Yes, we need tools but leaders also need a deeper level of self knowledge if we're to make a real and lasting impact in our businesses. Reach was a different experience for me because while it included some great methods, it went further and helped me expand my thinking and gently challenged some perspectives without embarrassment or awkwardness. I rediscovered some freshness and creativity in my leading which, at this time, I really needed.

Kate - What aspects of the programme did you find most helpful?

Julia - The programme's theme was leading in complexity. There will always be areas of tension for leaders as we encounter apparently



conflicting truths about the same situation. We were encouraged to take a different perspective on paradox and see it as a doorway into a new way of seeing things and promoting a deeper level of inquiry.

There are some very common leadership paradoxes such as the tensions between control and release, leading and holding back, having ideals and being realistic. There's a real tendency to lead from one or the other. I found it particularly helpful to learn ways of engaging with both sides of these paradoxes and discovering that by doing so they can provoke real and lasting change. There were great practical exercises and challenging discussion so we were learning on every level. And I'm applying some of these new understandings in work and found it's having a really positive impact in my leadership.

Kate - What advice would you give to anyone considering this programme?

Julia - Do it! And be prepared to be stretched. But if we as leaders don't accept the need for change why on earth should we expect those we lead to do so?

For information on other Reach leadership learning events, please call Kate McKinley on 01935 825656 or email: kate.mckinley@btconnect.com

New Diploma in Leadership launched in Dublin

The Centre for Leadership Studies (CLS) has welcomed its first group of 14 students onto its new Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership Studies programme which has been developed specifically for members of IBEC (the Irish CBI). It is designed for people who are in challenging management roles and whose actions have a significant impact on organisational performance. The programme focuses on helping participants to develop fresh insights into their management and leadership dilemmas. This is achieved through a combination of discussion, study, practical activities and personal reflection.

The programme was launched at the Burlington Hotel in Dublin on 11 January with a three-day Workshop entitled 'Leadership and the Learning Process'. This will be followed by three further workshops and a Leadership Exchange where participants will take turns to go to a colleague's workplace to observe how others 'do' leadership.

After all four workshops have been completed, participants will undertake a 3-day consultancy assignment in which teams of 4/5 participants go into an organisation to look at a specific issue relating to leadership. This is designed to develop critical thinking, diagnostic problem solving and influencing skills as well as the understanding of the role of the leader as a change agent.

This is just one of a portfolio of programmes offered by CLS to develop the leadership capability of participants so that they can increase their personal effectiveness and hence make a direct added value contribution to business performance.

For further information on the Diploma or our Certificate or Masters programmes please contact the Programme Administrator, Sue Murch

Tel: 01392 262558
Email: Sue.Murch@exeter.ac.uk
www.leadership-studies.com

Quality South West

Quality South West, a 'not for profit' organisation with headquarters in Gloucester, works in partnership with Leadership South West to promote effective practice in Leadership and Management.

Quality South West's primary role is to help organisations measurably improve their performance by providing a range of assessment services against nationally recognised quality standards.

These assessment services are based on Investors in People (IIP), its associated Models, which include Leadership and Management, ISO and, for legal practices, Lexcel. Joint assessments against two or more Standards can be offered in one review where appropriate, thus saving time, cost and disruption.

With particular reference to Investors in People, a recent 'Impact Assessment' investigated the performance of 1,600 organisations, divided equally between those

recognised as IIP and those not recognised.

The Assessment revealed that organisational changes made by recognised Investors in People organisations are twice as profitable as changes made by unrecognised organisations. Changes made over the last three years by Investors in People recognised organisations increased profit by 7.16% of sales or £505 per employee per year, as opposed to 3.78% of sales or £197 per employee per year for other organisations.

The Assessment commentary stated: "this profit gap of £353 per employee per year can be attributed to the Investors in People Standard. Extrapolating the findings from the sample to all recognised Investors in People organisations in the UK, increased profit of around £756 million may be attributable to Investors in People".

Quality South West can be contacted on 01452 413641 or via their informative website at: www.qualitysouthwest.co.uk.

Why and How to be a Reflective Manager

by Jonathan Gosling and Henry Mintzberg

"Stop all this 'do-do-do' and put in time to reflect"

"Good conversations always have space for reflection. It's part of listening and taking seriously what someone else says"

"A coach or mentor is someone to reflect with"

"A team can call a 'time-out' with a manager, to halt a process which might be lacking reflection"

"Take a moment at the end of meetings to reflect"



Why Reflect?

Managerial work has become unrelenting boot camp. Keep marching, keep driving, and don't slow down. Some management development programmes even promise more boot camp: you won't get a chance to be lazy here, they claim.

No company needs lazy managers. But neither does any need unrelenting boot camp. Boot camps train soldiers to march and obey, not to stop and think. Managers today desperately need to stop and think. They need to step back from the action they live all too pervasively and reflect thoughtfully on the experience.

T.S. Eliot wrote in a poem, "We had the experience, but missed the meaning." Reflection is about getting the meaning. In fact, Saul Alinsky wrote in his book, *Rules for Radicals*, that something becomes an experience only after its meaning has been understood.

We hear a great deal these days about the importance of action in managerial work: managers must be doers. For sure. But they also must be thinkers. All effective managing has to be sandwiched between acting on the ground and reflecting in the abstract. Acting alone is thoughtless—we have seen enough of the consequences of that—just as reflecting alone is passive. Both are critical. But today, one—reflection—gets lost.

On the Nature of Reflection

The Latin origin of the word reflection lends us a nice image; flect is a "fold", so to reflect is to re-fold. When you fold something, the surface comes face-to-face with itself. The thinking mind turns its attention to its own activity. Then when you re-fold it, the outside turns inwards, and the inner part becomes outward facing. Reflection is conversation between my actions and myself as the actor. By considering my actions, I get an outsider's view of myself. So a person who is reflecting is both the subject and the object of reflection, both the giver and the receiver of attention.

Reflecting does not mean musing, and it is not casual. It means wondering, probing, analyzing, synthesizing, connecting. And not just about what you think happened, but why it happened, and how it differs from other happenings.

Every manager today is forced to carry around a great deal of conceptual baggage. There are all those theories and models about managing, and all those heavily promoted techniques—all that "managerial correctness" to subscribe to. In addition, every industry has its own practices—accepted beliefs and procedures about how things are supposed to work there. Put all this and a great deal more together, and you can appreciate why thoughtful reflection is so important in management development.

Reflecting in a New and Confusing Job

"What happened the day you became a manager?" We have asked that question of many groups of managers, and the answers are usually the same: puzzled looks, a few shrugs, and, basically, "nothing". Here we have a job that is so different from everything else—and so different from what the incumbent did the day before—and rarely is anything done to ease the transition. "Did they at least give you an article to read on managing?" we ask, and get the same response. Managing is treated like sex the first time—you are supposed to figure it out...usually with about the same dire consequences!

So when the manager of a high tech group in Montreal came to one of us recently, concerned about what to do with all his young, confused new managers, we had a ready answer. Why not just get them together to share and reflect on their experiences. He loved the idea—so much better than the usual suggestion, he said, of coaching them one by one. Reflection: so simple, so obvious, so powerful, and so rarely done!

Further information:
Jonathan.Gosling@ex.ac.uk

Directors' ToolKit '05 – Maximise your potential!

The 2005 ToolKit programme consolidates the collective experiences of the 2004 series by focusing on the three essential elements of success for any organisation – **governance, finance and leadership**. Each is dealt with in a supportive, constructive and interactive environment and are delivered in Bristol, Bournemouth, Plymouth and Cornwall. At only £175.00 per workshop they offer excellent value for money and come at a time when eligible businesses can also tap into support funding through their local business link (see page 12).

Practical, relevant and professional, these half-day workshops are also an ideal opportunity to sample the IoD's Director Development programme, which prepares business leaders for the challenges and responsibilities of board directorship. Highlighting some of the key development areas for directors and senior managers – particularly of small and medium companies – the aim of the ToolKit workshops are to build on existing managerial skills, to encourage Directors to challenge their own thinking and to awaken the leader within.

With delegate numbers limited to no more than 15 for each session, the workshops provide an intimate, confidential forum to share and compare challenges with business peers, learn through a process of common discovery and gain exposure to the thoughts and experiences of others.

What they are saying about the programme:

"We found the topics informative and relevant and with a mix of different business delegates attending, we had the opportunity to share and understand other business needs."

Paul Young, Director of Training, Ceuta Healthcare

"The Toolkit programme is informative, relevant and a good opportunity to network. The forums are open and participation is actively encouraged. Sessions are delivered in a relaxed yet professional manner and focus on elements that matter to the audience."

Graeme Ackroyd, Operations Director, Key Industrial Equipment

"Based on my own experience, I will be sending other directors on the course as I believe it will help their development. The more people who get exposed at senior management level the easier it will be to implement change and improvement."

Craig Sillars, Managing Director, Churngold Remediation

"We found the content really stimulating and gave us 'food for thought' in our own organisation – what we need to focus on, and in some cases re-visit our strategic plan in order to further develop and refine it."

Rue Shute, HR Manager, Kit Heath

If you would like further information about these practical, affordable and locally delivered sessions, please email directordev@exeter.ac.uk for a 2005 brochure.

£1,000 to help you grow

If you're in a position of leadership it means that you must have great strengths and have demonstrated your capability. But there is always room to broaden and enhance your skills and knowledge to benefit staff, clients and your business as a whole.

In recognition of the need to support the personal development of today's business leaders, a new government-funded initiative has been launched by Business Link's leadership and management service.

The leadership and management programme from Business Link provides up to £1,000 for directors and senior decision-makers across the South West for personal development. The money can be spent on a choice of education, training, seminars, on-line learning packages, books or coaching - whatever works best for the individual and their business.

Eligible organisations must employ between 20 and 250 people, be in the private or voluntary sector, a social enterprise or charity and have a registered head office in the South West.

For further details and full eligibility criteria, call your local **Business Link on 0845 600 9006**.

Taking matters into my own hands...



Perhaps the main object of embarking on an MBA was to broaden my horizons and opportunities, in addition to broadening my knowledge and skills.

As owner and managing director of Chargot Ashley Ltd, I have a number of years experience in providing civil engineering consultancy services. In 2003, I decided to immerse myself in a fresh environment and enrolled upon the full-time MBA programme at the University of Exeter. This is a high quality AMBA accredited course, offering a wide variety of stimulating and interesting modules. Having a particular interest in management development and leadership, I took the opportunity to spend some time researching this area and used it as the focus of my dissertation.

Building upon the links made, particularly with Leadership South West, the natural development was to further the learning achieved from the MBA and to expand my role in company direction. I have therefore enrolled on the IoD's Director Development/ Company Direction Programme. This is proving to be a very worthwhile and rewarding experience, providing a forum for a wide range of experienced people to discuss real issues and to reflect on practice. It covers the role and requirements of the director and the board, and tackles the strategic issues faced when running a company - providing practical ideas which actually assist in the real implementation of the concepts.

I believe that the learning process never stops, whether it be formally or informally. I am confident that the learning achieved through both programmes of study has added significant personal value and will help equip me to embrace the opportunities of the future.

David Elsdon
Chargot Ashley Ltd

Research News

It's been a busy few months for research at LSW and CLS. In December we ran our first South West H.E. Leadership Think Tank meeting for researchers across the Region. 15 people participated from 10 different Higher Education institutions to share research interests and develop networks. It soon became clear that there is considerable interest and expertise in leadership research within the Region and plenty of opportunities for collaboration. The next meeting is scheduled for March and should you be interested in attending please contact Jackie.Bagnall@exeter.ac.uk.

Also in December CLS hosted the 3rd International Workshop on Studying Leadership. This was a very successful event, bringing together academics and practitioners from as far afield as Australia to share and disseminate the very latest in leadership theory and research. A complete book of abstracts can be downloaded from www.leadership-studies.com/documents/leadership-refrains.pdf and a number of further publications are planned.

On the research front, we are very pleased to announce that we have recently been awarded two significant contracts. The first of these, from the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, will explore the development of collective leadership capability within the sector. The second, from the British Council, will draw together lessons and experiences from a major Pan-African leadership programme – disseminating the learning back into the UK.

For further details on either of these please contact
Richard.Bolden@exeter.ac.uk.

Finally, we are pleased to say that the second of our research reports "What is Leadership Development?" is well under way and should be available in the summer. The first report "What is Leadership?" is still available and can be downloaded, along with other LSW and CLS publications from www.leadership-studies.com/research/publish.asp.

For further details contact:
Richard Bolden
Research Fellow – LSW/CLS

Leading Change in a Complex World

Change management is a nonsense.

Change is most definitely a reality. Some two and a half thousand years ago Heraclitus said, "Nothing endures but change". This was true then and is true now. Change management fails because of its focus on management. The notion that you can manage change is an absurd one. Old models of change such as Lewin's that suggest that you unfreeze a situation, change it and refreeze are wrong, not in their intention – to give control to managers in a changing world – but in their effectiveness. They assume that there is an underlying stability from which you are changing and a new, altered stability to which you aspire. Change management only ever works despite the process and not because of it. Change succeeds or fails because of the people leading it and the people on the receiving end of it, not because of the management of it.

In an ever changing world leaders are essential. But leadership is different to management and leadership is not a science. Leaders are people leading people. People tend to ruin any system that is designed to direct or control them. This is not always intentional. When you are dealing with something as complex as human interaction taking place in a complex organisation existing in an even more complex society affected by a yet more complex world the notion of cause and effect goes out of the window. For any given cause the effect is unpredictable. For any given effect the actual cause is unknowable. For any given leadership action the outcome cannot be predicted. To pretend otherwise has been the folly of most of the management and leadership thinking since Taylorism.

Our brains cannot encompass the complexity of the world we live in and so business thinkers have tended to create simplified models which have been amenable to comprehension and control. This is the error. Yes, we need simplicity. Yes we seek ways of understanding our world. And yes, we really do want to be able to control our world. To pretend that the world is simple in order to think this through is a mistake. Accept the complexity and then think about how to simplify the processes of guiding a complex organisation in a complex world.



The best leaders I have worked for and with have been people of vision. They have stated clearly and unambiguously what they stand for, where they want the organisation to go and have given a simple prescription for getting there. This then guides the organisation. The simple message is often communicated as simple rules that then lead to an element of self-organisation to deliver results. Leaders create and hold simple boundaries within which people can organise themselves. Of course, because of the nature of self-organisation the process is unpredictable and any result is merely a stage in the larger process. The leader places a huge degree of trust in the organisation which needs to merit it.

This leads me to believe that there are three characteristics of leadership through complexity:

- A clear vision
- A simple message and/or simple rules in support of that vision
- A willingness to let go of the way in which the outcome is achieved.

This is change leadership, not change management. After all, change management is a nonsense.

Paul Birch Visionjuice
paul@visionjuice.com

Paul Birch

Paul specialises in change and creativity helping individuals and organisations to solve impossible problems and find new ways of being.



He worked for 18 years at British Airways, has been a visiting lecturer at Henley Management College and Oxford University, and has written nine books on change, creativity, teamwork, leadership and coaching.

A Matter of Continuity...

It seems that not a week can go by without it being used to raise awareness about something. And that is not a bad thing. We all spend so much time focusing on the tasks in hand that we can often forget to make sure everything is in place to enable us to carry out those tasks.

That's why the Chartered Management Institute is teaming up with VERITAS Software and the Continuity Forum. Between 14 - 19 March 2005, the UK will be focusing on Business Continuity Awareness Week and the Institute will be spearheading research to provide in-depth analysis of the business continuity issues that organisations in the South West and throughout the UK face. More than that, the research will also offer insights into UK organisations' preparedness for disaster and track changes in attitudes to the need

for contingency planning.

Have you thought about the impact any form of disruption could have on your business? What about the causes of disruption? The recent poor weather across the region and the country as a whole serves to demonstrate the risks of a lack of preparation, and with our reliance on technology, have you thought of back up plans in case the likes of email or phones are out of service. The message, in other words, is don't take anything for granted.

Remember, business continuity is a key area of concern for all businesses, of all sizes. For too long, the research conducted by the Chartered Management Institute has shown that organisations are failing to make business continuity plans. It's true to say that many managers recognise the

importance of business continuity management, but there is still a huge gulf between awareness and action. So look out for the results in March and see how well the South West is prepared, compared to other areas around the UK.

For more information on the Chartered Management Institute, please contact Joanne Pringle, Regional Manager for the South-West on 01594 861315.



John Adair to receive new lifetime award...

Hewitt Associates, a global human resources services firm, has announced that John Adair, the internationally recognised authority on leadership and management, is to be the first recipient of a new bi-annual award sponsored by the Centre for Leadership Studies, Hewitt Associates, and Honda(UK). Adair will receive the award at a reception at Hewitt's More London office on 23rd February.

The purpose of the award is to honour the recipient for lifetime achievement, and to demonstrate the impact and significance of his, or her, work in the field of leadership studies. In addition to the award ceremony, a number of related activities and events will take place over the following 18 months, including both academic and practitioner-orientated conferences and the publication of a book of academic papers.

The award ceremony will be attended by a mix of people in business and public service, whose work or organisations have adopted Adair's approaches. It will also feature speakers including John Adair, Air Chief Marshal Sir Brian Burridge and Sir John Harvey-Jones.

In sponsoring this award, Hewitt Associates, Honda (UK) and the Centre for Leadership

Studies place a highlight on the importance of work and research in leadership for continued business success.

Jonathan Gosling, director of the Centre for Leadership Studies, said:

"We have always believed that leadership can be the vital factor in all walks of life, and we are sure that with this award we can draw even greater attention to both the subject and to some of the key thinkers in the field".

"We could not have a more worthy first recipient than John Adair. He has gained international acclaim for his work in business, military and civil spheres, and this award and the activities associated with it over the coming year and a half, will provide the perfect opportunity to celebrate his immense contribution"



Operations Management

5-6, & 22 April 2005

Led by Dr Roger Maull, Senior Lecturer in the School of Business and Economics, this innovative module has been developed for CPD by the Exeter Centre for Research in Strategic Processes and Operations (XSPO)

Operations Management lies at the heart of what organisations do, whether they are manufacturers, service organisations, charities or public services. It is the task of the operations manager to make the right decisions about the best use of resources to deliver the product or service.

These 3 days are for people who want to:

- Understand and apply the strategic frameworks of operations management
- Analyse their own operations using systems principles
- Integrate operations management concepts to solve problems

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www.ex.ac.uk/cpd

Leadership and

Richard Bolden
Leadership South West

Richard Bolden is an experienced researcher and educator in the fields of leadership and organisational psychology. He has worked at the Centre for Leadership Studies for five years and is currently Research Fellow for Leadership South West.



Effective leadership and management are widely heralded as a key priority for national and regional development, yet the processes by which they are enhanced by training and development and how they impact upon performance remain poorly understood. There is a lack of reliable data to link management and leadership development (MLD) with management and leadership capability (MLC) and individual and organisational performance, and the evidence suggests a more complex relationship between them than we often assume.

Levels of effect

It is possible to identify a number of levels of effect when considering the impact of MLD and MLC. Firstly, there is the individual level: i.e. how effective is the individual manager/leader? This may be revealed through "hard" measures, such as enhanced productivity, technical competence and/or knowledge, but is often demonstrated through softer measures, such as improved self-awareness, communication and strategic thinking.

Secondly, there is the group level, where an individual's behaviour begins to impact on

their colleagues and subordinates. Again this change may be revealed in hard measures, yet is more likely to be exhibited, at least initially, through improved communication, motivation, morale and team working. It can also lead to decreased absenteeism and staff turnover, increased willingness to work overtime, and enhanced participation, accountability and feedback.

A third level of effect can be seen at an organisational level. Indeed, improving organisational effectiveness is often the key driver behind investment in MLD. The aim is to develop a critical mass of leadership so that the organisation as a whole becomes more successful. Such impacts can again be revealed in hard measures such as improved profit, turnover and share value, yet a wide array of other measures could be considered, including customer satisfaction, relationship with suppliers, organisational culture and innovation.

Most consideration of the impact of MLD stops at the organisational level. Yet the commitment of national and regional government to enhance MLC indicates that the potential impact of effective leadership can cross organisational boundaries. By building the capability and performance of organisations within a specific geographic area - regional, national or international - much larger scale impacts are possible.

The problem in demonstrating the relationship between management and leadership development, capability and performance stems from the difficulty in untangling a series of inter-woven debates, including the appropriateness of MLD (does it address the right skills? for the right people?) and its impact (does it increase capability? performance? other qualities?). Attention must also be paid to the level at which any effect occurs, situational context and the range of factors on which they impact.

Reviewing the evidence

The difficulty in effectively measuring the impact of MLD on MLC and performance means, unsurprisingly, that reliable research evidence is in short supply. In a recent review, Burgoyne, Hirsh and Williams (2004)

draw together what evidence there is, and their key findings can be summarised under three headings: developing individuals, organisational performance and the national picture.

1. Developing individuals

Managers are sent on development programmes on the assumption that this will improve their management and leadership capability and resultant performance. Yet the evidence is less clear.

Two key factors do, however, seem to increase the impact of MLD on individual capability and performance: (1) the inclusion of opportunities for receiving and discussing individual feedback; and (2) the quality of management processes preceding, supporting and reinforcing development activities. It appears that providing MLD alone is insufficient to ensure an increase in individual capability and performance, rather it needs to incorporate appropriate opportunities for feedback and discussion, and be accompanied by supportive management processes.

2. Organisational performance

At an organisational level there is slightly more evidence of a link between MLC and performance. Recent research suggests that management and leadership practices have a far greater impact on business performance than any specific business technique or tool. The evidence also suggests that MLD can have a positive impact on organisational performance.

In a study of leadership in UK organisations, Horne and Stedman Jones (2001) concluded that where systematic implementation of leadership development existed there was a strong relationship to the perceived quality of leadership in that organisation and organisational performance. A recent international study for the Chartered Management Institute reached a similar conclusion and stated: "there is strong statistical evidence that management development leads to superior organisational performance across companies of all sizes, sectors and national location" (Mabey and Ramirez, 2004, p9). At this level, what is

Performance

most important is to ensure that individuals are encouraged and supported in contributing towards a collective leadership culture within the organisation.

3. The national picture

So, in general, the evidence supports a relationship between MLD, capability and performance at an individual and organisational level – but is the same true at regional and national levels?

For a number of years the UK government has believed that effective management and leadership is the key to unlocking national productivity and a series of reports have consistently argued that poor national performance is directly associated with a deficit of good managers and leaders. Yet a recent report co-authored by Michael Porter questions both whether the UK's economic performance is poor and whether management is one of the main determinants of economic performance. It concludes that while "there is always room for improvement... efforts to upgrade management will not however be sufficient to achieve a sustained improvement in UK competitiveness" (Porter and Ketels, 2003, p6).

Research into whether or not there is a national deficit in management skills tends to point more strongly to a qualitative shortfall (i.e. a perception of poor management and leadership within organisations) rather than a large-scale quantitative absence of management skills per se. Both the National Skills Taskforce (DfEE, 2000) and Skills in England (Campbell et al., 2001) reports indicated that skills shortages are more prevalent within technical, generic, intermediate, ICT and numeric skills areas than management, even though this was noted as an area of concern. So despite evidence of a management and leadership skills gap in the UK, it is hard to prove that if the gap were closed this would enhance competitiveness and economic performance. The best we can do is to say that the organisational evidence suggests that a region where effective leadership and management are prevalent is likely to outperform the others on a

range of indicators.

Leadership is a "key ingredient"

The complexity of variables contributing towards individual, organisational and national performance makes it difficult to obtain conclusive evidence linking management and leadership to economic success. What evidence there is does imply a relationship, but one which is mediated by a range of factors.

Firstly, with regards to human resource management (HRM) and other business initiatives, it's not so much what you do as how you do it that's important. An integrated approach aligned with the strategic objectives of the organisation is more likely to be effective than any number of isolated initiatives. Secondly, with regard to MLC, it is the leader's influence upon employee motivation and commitment that appears to have the greatest impact, rather than any specific characteristic or behaviour of the leader. And thirdly, with MLD, the development of skills and knowledge alone is not sufficient to improve performance - it requires the provision of constructive feedback, appropriate support and encouragement to take on management and leadership responsibilities.

These findings demonstrate the importance of considering leadership in the wider context of the organisation. In isolation, there is no guarantee that leadership development and/or capability will enhance individual or organisational performance, however, if considered as a key enabler within wider organisational and HRM processes its impact becomes evident. Equally, the presence of effective leadership and management processes within an organisation increases the likelihood of further training and development being successful. Without a sense of vision, inspiration and direction, HRM and MLD initiatives will not be integrated with business objectives and employees will lack the motivation and commitment to work towards shared organisational goals.

There is a pressing need for more extensive research into the relationship between

leadership and management development, capability and performance. It is particularly important to improve our understanding of the manner in which these (and other) elements interact to make them effective within certain situations but not others. All organisations should seek to find ways of evaluating their management and leadership capability and development processes, not in a simplistic linear fashion, but as part of a holistic integrated organisational strategy.

So in conclusion, it can be said that despite the absence of definitive empirical evidence, effective management and leadership are now widely recognised as key ingredients in the effective performance of individuals, groups, organisations, regions and nation states. Yet the difficulty in measuring this relationship in simple economic terms indicates the need for more elaborate measures that consider performance in its widest sense and that take account of the interplay of a diverse range of inter-related factors.

Fuller explanation of these arguments and details of the evidence on which they are based can be found in "What is Leadership?", a research report from Leadership South West, available at: www.leadershipsouthwest.com

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Call to Action!

The School of Psychology at the University of Exeter has also received an European grant for their research into Women and Leadership issues. As part of this research, Mette Hersby and Dr. Michelle Ryan are examining Gender and Mentoring. This research focuses on women's (and men's!) experiences with, and perceptions of, mentoring and the functions it should provide. If you or your organization would like to find out more about this mentoring research or would like to participate in our ongoing research program then please email Mette Hersby at M.D.Hersby@exeter.ac.uk. Or if you have 15 minutes to spare you can go directly to <http://psy.ex.ac.uk:9006/survey/entry.jsp?id=1098794802429> where a survey about mentoring is open and accessible.

South West of England Regional Development Agency,

As ever, it's been a busy start to the year for the RDA's skill team.

The end of 2004 saw the RDA and HERDA-SW launch a joint partnership plan. Its aim was to officially strengthen the relationship between the two organisations and build on the successes of past joint working.

This means that over the next 6 months both organisations will be working closely with the region's higher education institutions to develop an action plan designed to develop an action plan covering joint and complementary activities by the RDA and HERDA-SW and pinpoint future projects.

We hope that this approach will help us deliver regional skills priorities – one of which is raising demand for, and developing management and leadership skills – as well as the aims of the region's higher education institutes.

Working with our colleagues in the RDA's 7 area teams, you can be sure that the strategic thinking behind the action plan will also be reflected in projects on the ground.



Business West & The Royal Bank of Scotland 2005 Spring Seminar Series

Date: 11th March 2005

Venue: Business West, Leigh Court, Bristol

Business West and The Royal Bank of Scotland are running a series of keynote business seminars for SME business leaders across the West of England. The spring seminar programme provides a rare opportunity to hear from influential speakers, discover personal development opportunities and explore new ideas and approaches that address the key imperatives of running a business. Delegates will benefit from learning a high level view of leadership, its effect on management and a practical service overview from RBS.

To book your complementary place contact Ian Robins on 01275 373 373 or email ian.robins@businesswest.co.uk

Stimulating Leaders- Developing Manufacturing Leadership Skills

What does it take to make a great leader? Are they born or made? What role does life, education or training play in developing today's leaders? How much is learned at work? What skills and abilities are they developing? How are leaders in manufacturing today learning to face the many unpredictable challenges that make running a business such a 'roller-coaster ride'? How do some bounce back from failure to become more successful than ever? And what are they learning in the process?

The Leadership Trust Foundation and the Manufacturing Foundation have conducted a research project into how manufacturing leaders learn to lead. Our findings offer a fascinating insight into the wide range of triggers impacting on leadership development in the sector.

If you would like a copy of the report or would like to come to the launch of the report on Wednesday 16 March at the Marriott Forest of Arden Hotel please

contact Katie Gregory, Research Centre Administrator on 01989 760705 or e-mail: katiegregory@leadership.co.uk

SWAIN launch in south of the region in March 2005.

Have you ever considered venturing into the "Dragon's Den" or even becoming a dragon yourself? The BBC series has certainly stimulated interest in business angels even if the "dragons" are playing up to the camera and the majority of businesses are clearly not "investor ready". More to the point the South West Angel and Investor Network (SWAIN) got there first.

SWAIN is a South West Regional Development Agency initiative, which until now has focussed on the north of the South West region. The recent appointment of Bruce Colley as SWAIN Network Manager for the south of the region, means that there will now be an even greater focus on Somerset, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall.

Bruce Colley, said: "The South West has a substantial number of innovative businesses with the ambition and potential to grow. It also has a significant number of potential investors who regard this region as home and are looking for local investment opportunities. At SWAIN we open the door to successful investment in new and growing businesses by providing low cost, professional and informal support to companies and investors". The deals we have completed have ranged from £50,000 to £300,000.

SWAIN's main aim is to connect businesses seeking finance (entrepreneurs) to private investors (business angels). This involves working with professional partners to ensure that that business is both investment attractive and investment ready. The business angels are then given access to the entrepreneurs via investment forums and also via our website (www.swain.org.uk) and regular news updates.

For further information on the launch contact Nicola Prosser Network Co-ordinator on 08700 60 65 60 or nicola.prosser@swain.org.uk

A black & white version of this newsletter is available on our website

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