



The Human Dimension

THE LEADER WITHIN

April 2008

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"We help both people and productivity flourish by developing a positive culture of shared leadership."

We find improved performance is the reward for investing in your people.

The emphasis in THE LEADER WITHIN is on the changes and growth we make within ourselves, as leadership is basically a personal growth experience over time.

'For things to change first I must change.'

Change at the Personal Level:

Many of us would have initiated, or at least participated in, some form of organisational or business change to structures, systems, roles or processes. What about the individual? It is often the hardest part of change to get shifts in the behaviours of the people.

There is often though a willingness to embrace new initiatives and directions. Not everyone refuses to go along with the new order of things and most of us accept change is here to stay and is frequent enough not to throw us into chaos too much. Change processes are not always done well nor do we always agree with the way they are implemented. However, what we can control is our own response to that change. It helps to have some insight into ways to make change easier.

How do we change our own thinking, behaviour or habits? As leaders we are in the spotlight and we are under scrutiny and what is noticed most is our behaviour. It is what we do which has most effect on others. Being on automatic pilot or expecting others to understand us without us taking responsibility for our own behaviour is not demonstrating effective leadership.

Here are some ways to make personal change easier:

- 1. Be aware of what you focus on and what actions you take as these determine where you end up the end of the day. You will be somewhere but is it where you had thought you would be? Many say "I am too busy, often just have enough energy to react or I only can keep*

just enough balls in the air not to fail'.

2. *If you do make a mistake then think in terms of corrections rather failing. Think 'experimenting' rather than 'perfection'. Accept that it is impossible to know all the answers or to have all of the best information, before deciding. Think in terms of 'on balance this is the way we will go for now.'*
3. *The fastest way to learn new things is to copy what someone else has done and repeat what works. What you learn and observe will need adjustment and tweaking to make it fit your situation, however we can waste time and energy reinventing and not learning from both the successes and mistakes of others.*
4. *Have your own vision and personal purpose clear. In this way you will not be buffeted and pulled around by the needs and expectations of others to the detriment of yourself. At times of change there is a lot of negotiation and rethinking of the status quo. Having your own internal compass will ensure you head in the direction which is important to you and not what someone else wants for you.*

The common barriers we face are often the hidden ones and are to do with ourselves rather than the external processes being used.

Common ways we sabotage ourselves are often to do with such things as:

1. Language: "maybe, ought to, perhaps, try, but..."
2. Thoughts: "that's not me, too hard, this is wrong and won't work, been there - done that ..."
3. Emotions: "frustration, fear, doubts, procrastination..."
4. Adrenaline based leadership where we are already in overload and lack focus, with no time or energy to think and reflect anyway.

Change is all around us and we need the right mental models to both cope as well as contribute. We are entering a time of further paradigm shifts in the way we live, work and lead in our daily lives.

The reliance on others to tell us how to live and think will not serve us to carve out our own creative futures.

Many of the answers are not yet to be found in mainstream media or thinking and societies are struggling to come to grips with the overwhelming challenges we face. Much of our own capacity to thrive and make sense of what is happening is to build our personal resilience and utilise those approaches which build and restore so we are in a much healthier position to respond. Too many leaders are 'running on empty' and are 'beyond stretched' to be able to deal with much more.

In response to this we have developed a program 'Shaping the Future'. The link is here.

<http://www.humandimension.com.au/pages/ourPrograms/shapingTheFuture.html>

Read through from the Australian research and incorporate more of what contributes to our well being– see below in the ‘Call to Action’ section of this newsletter.

Change while personal is a global phenomenon, brought about by the pace of development and consumption on the one hand, and grinding poverty and the will to survive and be part of a healthy future on the other.

The future needs to be one of interdependence and collaboration within time honoured principles and life affirming values that guide our actions.

The leaders of tomorrow will have the interests of others at heart and be able to inspire us to take action for the common good, not because it serves our material needs.

Know your strengths and use them to advantage.

Be clear about how and where you will contribute to a better future, so that your leadership is one which enhances, rather diminishes the lives of others.

Call to Action:

A colleague sent this on yesterday and I thought I would include it here as it adds to what we are highlighting. The Australia Institute set itself the task of defining a role for Government that is beyond the fiscal goals that have dominated the last several decades of Australian Politics and most national governments.

The Institute has put together, an inspiring manifesto that can be viewed at

<http://www.wellbeingmanifesto.net/>

The intro in part reads:

What is wellbeing?

In a world of seemingly endless options, what choices will make us happier?

Studies of happiness show that the following things all enhance our wellbeing:

1. a good marriage
2. the company of friends
3. rewarding work
4. sufficient money
5. a good diet and physical activity
6. sound sleep
7. engaging leisure and
8. religious or spiritual belief and practice.

Optimism, trust, self-respect and autonomy also make us happier. Gratitude and kindness lift our spirits. Having clear goals to work towards, a 'sense of place' and belonging, a coherent and positive view of the world and a belief that we are part of something bigger than ourselves will also foster wellbeing.

So what can you incorporate more of and how will this show up in your behaviours?

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