

IEP JOURNAL

ISSUE 07
OCT 2022



Latest research | Current policy priorities | Good operational practice
Dialogue and debate from the employability sector

In this issue

1. Leadership in Employability – **Chris Martin FIEP** | IEP Journal Guest Editor & Operations Manager WHP | Seetec Pluss
2. Am I a Leader? – **Gemma Medicott** | Employment Adviser | Seetec Pluss
3. The Life-changing Role of a Business Manager – **Dan Howard FIEP** | Operations Director – Learning for Work | NCFE
4. Are you a Manager or a Leader? – **Anthony Dandrea** | Regional Supply Chain Manager – JETS West London and Advisory Board Member for the Shaw Trust Foundation
5. Leadership & Management – The Military and the transition to a Civilian World – **Matt Sellick AIEP** | Implementation Analyst | Manpower UK
6. Boutique Leadership – **Liz Sewell FIEP** | Director | Belina Get Ready for Work
7. Leading to Wellness – **Manley Hopkinson** | Founder and Director of The Compassionate Leadership Academy
8. Attract, Retain, and Grow your People to Grow your Impact and the Role of Leaders – **Safaraz Ali FIEP** | Chief Executive | Pathway Group
9. Great Leadership Creating a Circle of Safety – **Debbie Braid FIEP** | Debbie Braid, Head of Development | WISE Ability
10. The Trust Leap – **Andy Milne MIEP** | Head of Better Health Generation UK
11. How to Lead with Purpose – **Chris Blackwell** | CEO | Purpose Led Performance
12. Driving Impact Through Respect and Agility in Leadership – **Rhys Morris** | Managing Partner | Palladium Group
13. Putting Values at the Heart of Leadership – **David Phillips** | Managing Director | City & Guilds
14. Afterword – **David Imber FIEP** | Principal & Founder | The good employability company

Leadership in Employability



Chris Martin FIEP
IEP Journal Guest Editor & Operations Manager WHP
Seetec Pluss

Leadership. It's an emotive word, with many differing opinions on the subject as to exactly what defines leadership and what constitutes a good or bad leader. We in the employability sector are very lucky to have a remit to fit into: a band of coaches, mentors, trainers and engagers who have found themselves working alongside like-minded individuals to make someone else's life that little bit better.

Whilst researching this subject for this edition of the IEP Journal and approaching individuals to contribute to it, it became very apparent that there were definite themes within the articles. Those themes were that thrill of a 'journey', and the need to practice compassion. It also suggested that within the ranks of employability leaders, there is a narrower need for commanding leadership styles as the sector tends to attract coaching and compassionate leaders into its ranks rather than the directive controller. Another theme of the employability sector is that not many of those working in employability ever started out, aspiring to be an employability practitioner!


On my own leadership journey over the last 20 years or so, having spent time through the military as a baby officer in the Royal Navy where the ethos of Naval leadership training was to instil a sense of urgency, decisiveness, and clarity into everything we did, (right down to a fine for dithering at the bar) set me up well to survive 16 years within HM Prison Service (HMPS). There I tracked through

every operational rank where I would see a parallel system of leadership from the prisoners where they had a defined hierarchy of members, and a loose and turbulent 'Management' system of staff which often fuelled daily conflict between the two systems.

Fast forwarding many years of operational job roles within HMPS, a few promotions later and I end up as a Head of Function (a governor in old prison terminology) in charge of suicide prevention and employability where canvassing for skills, empowering staff, and prisoners alike to think and act autonomously in their roles proved to be a powerful new way of operating.

As I soon discovered, taking over the employability function within HMP Channings Wood, that leading in the sector presents opportunities to see the incredible resilience and adaptability of those operating in the Employability world and I witnessed selfless life-changing work on an hourly basis. I'd never really gelled with the autocrat type-A leadership style before but the values of what employability was doing absolutely hooked me! Jumping into mainstream employability for me was a great relief and I found my comfort zone within a sector.

Employability really is leadership at every level. Every role requires leadership skills to some degree; to coach and mentor someone who has low expectations and often profound barriers into



'In my observation of senior sector leaders, there is a wonderful, shared characteristic that presents so often and that is absolute compassion.'

a confident and driven individual: that takes a lot of skill!

Empowerment underpins leadership, especially within employability. Empowering staff to own their target, to carry out their daily roles in developing individuals for the job world with only a routine caseload review or a 1-1 requires the manager of a team to trust the members. Too much and it is seen as micromanaging, too little and it is seen as indifference. It's a tough balance to keep. The 'first line manager' role is the toughest to learn as it means that their character needs to be calm and able to be accessible and visible, so they are on hand to support whenever needed.

It's the same for advisers, where empowering the participant too much can lead to them being overwhelmed and disengaged, too little and they become reliant on the adviser to make every decision for them which is detrimental to the long-term benefit.

Though many frontline advisers don't necessarily recognise it when you ask them, employment advisers are leaders themselves. It is a phenomenal skill to be able to ascertain and triage problems for an individual, diffusing barriers and then thinking up a remedial plan at speed. It requires a rapid thought ability coupled together with empathy and the right tact and diplomacy to convince the participant that this is the right course of action and get ownership of it and engage with the plan!

This lends itself a challenge to the employability leader where leading experienced and creative leaders can be a tricky business. As most leaders within the sector come through the ranks gradually, there is a tipping point where the need to be creative couples with a competitive trait that drives the performance and gets those all-important outcomes. This competitiveness grows with each rank climbed and the quest to beat the other competition and 'Required Number of Outcomes' becomes a monthly goal. Leadership within the employability sector can be a fine balance. Every leader I have spoken to within employability over the years has had to manage getting enough outcomes to feed the 'business' whilst doing the right thing for the participant long-term.

In my observation of senior sector leaders, there is a wonderful, shared characteristic that presents so often and that is absolute compassion. We are all suckers for a good news story, as they present us a personality behind those numbers and describe context. We always love reading and approving a business case for a participant spend request to appreciate how that life will be changed by our adviser's idea and with a little investment.

Within employability, we also have the added complication through a conflict of motivation. With the peculiarities of contracts run within our sector we have a constant churn of staff and expectations within them to achieve results. This conflict comes in two forms and manifests for the leader in motivating staff through necessity, where staff are empowered to make decisions to progress their participants, or motivation through obligation where the outcome numbers are behind the curve meaning the leader has to adopt a more assertive style to 'drive' performance up. For the compassionate leader, that presents an internal conflict.

'It must be foolish to keep at bay those that might have a good idea; employability is a place where literally anyone can develop their skills into a management position.'

As Prof Steve Peters explains in his book - The Chimp Paradox, the ability to control the 'inner chimp' which is full of energy and always on hand to deal with a crisis, is paramount when dealing with a group of people that thrive on positive reinforcement and reel from direction by an assertive commander. The needs of the team, which reflects into the ability of the team to think creatively must therefore be carefully balanced. Rather like in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the base blocks of the pyramid he described must be in place for the creativeness to develop, ultimately complementing the participant journey through any given programme.

In my experience, future leaders within the sector are often easy to spot and thoroughly rewarding to develop. Our open culture at Seetec Pluss means that anyone looking for development can approach any leader for input on how they would manage or lead a situation and will get an engaged response! Though the line manager determines the development trajectory for the individual, the ability to tap into experience is invaluable for learning and development.

Teaching future leaders some basic coaching models such as STEPPA or the OSCAR model builds confidence with being able to challenge values and behaviour, whilst teaching some basics around incident management lends itself to ensuring that every leader has a go-to model to prevent any given situation from escalating. Having seen the ambitions of so many aspiring leaders shattered outside our employability



sector through indifference, weak development strategies or just bullying antics of superiors, it must be foolish to keep at bay those that might have a good idea; employability is a place where literally anyone can develop their skills into a management position.

For this journal, I approached many people at all different levels of experience and hierarchy for their input on leadership. It is quite a request for any leader to put their opinions into this subject to an article as it potentially exposes their vulnerabilities and could give an insight into how differing companies operate, so I am thankful for the responses I had back to bring this Journal to life. We have been very lucky to have some incredible and personal insights from across the sector at all levels for you to enjoy.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Christopher Martin FIEP | Operations Manager
WHP | Seetec Pluss**

Chris Martin FIEP is our guest editor for the latest IEP Journal, which focusses on Leadership as its topic, specifically within employability.

Chris has a wealth of experience of operational leadership through frontline and strategic roles and is an accredited Leadership coach. He is also a Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute (CMI), a Fellow of the Institute of Leadership & Management (ILM) and Fellow and Board Member of the IEP.

Am I a Leader?



Gemma Medicott
Employment Adviser
Seetec Pluss

- gemma.medlicott@seetecpluss.co.uk
- [twitter.com/gemma_medlicott](https://www.linkedin.com/in/gemma-medlicott-729134219)
- [linkedin.com/in/gemma-medlicott-729134219](https://www.linkedin.com/in/gemma-medlicott-729134219)
- seetecpluss.co.uk

What do you think when you hear the word 'Leader'? For me it was always somebody sat in an office, managing a personnel, dealing with budgets, strategy and growth and all things official.

Leadership is one of the most diverse words you can use as it doesn't matter what role you do within a company you can be classed as a leader or have leadership skills.


One of the great leaders John Maxwell said – *"the true measure of leadership is influence, nothing more nothing less. Influence doesn't come from position; influence comes from caring for other*

people. If you don't care for people, you cannot influence them."

I think from that quote you can see position doesn't have to matter to deliver amazing leadership skills. Time and time again we see staff members feel that they don't possess the correct skills to be able to lead or be classed as a leader but when we look deeper into the role that all employability practitioners undertake each day it identifies that the core of what we do at the heart of leadership.

Here I list the true skills that make each one a true leader:





'If you do not have effective communication skills messages will get lost and sometimes it's not what is being said, it's what isn't being said that needs to be addressed.'

1. Communication

This skill has always been top of every list I would write, if you don't have communication skills you cannot class yourself as a leader, making sure that all forms of communication are used is so important, it's not all about the talking, making sure that you are listening to everything your participant is saying to you, can help and support you in making a decision about how to support them along their journey into employment. When developing leadership skills communication is key to the progress of everyone around you, this can be true at senior leadership level or at base level when you are providing peer to peer support. If you do not have effective communication skills messages will get lost and sometimes it's not what is being said, it's what isn't being said that needs to be addressed.

2. Integrity

The best way to explain integrity is doing the right thing when no one is watching. Having morals that make you an honest person is so important when you are developing leadership skills and they allow you to do right by your participants. Integrity in basic terms is remaining constant whilst you build respect, responsibility, developing trust and helping others, all skills that help us influence participants from entry onto our programmes into employment and beyond.

3. Empathy

Empathy is one of the skills that I can really identify in my leadership skill set. It's the skill

that allows you to build relationships with your participants and all the colleagues you work with. When you are a born leader you have empathy built within you, the patience and passion you have for your work translates into empathy for others. Understanding that to be seen as someone that people want to follow you have to be relatable to them. Each day participants come into our offices and communicate a range of different complex barriers and it is our job to coach and mentor them through this by displaying our empathy towards them to support them through the tough times with solutions that will help.

4. Problem Solving

As a leader you will come across problems that need solving, whether this is within your team at work, or when working with participants. Problem solving should be performed in a calm and step-by-step manner. Participants will enter our offices and have a lot of problems that they want support with, this could be housing issues to include homelessness or needing help sourcing correct training courses and we must have a step-by-step guide as to how to help and overcome their problems. Problem solving can be proactive or reactive depending on the problem in hand, but it is having the skills to be able to solve these at the point they need solving is the key. Team members will look to the leaders in the room to deliver this. We find as an employability practitioner we are depended on to have the solutions that our participants need so they can move forward on their journey with us.

5. Positivity

Positivity is one of the skills I cannot shout about enough, what you say or portray in the office will rub off on all participants you work with. If you showcase positivity, it is going to make your participants want to change their lives for the better through training courses or employment and better their lives. Positivity stretches to the work you do on a day-to-day basis and starts to

'We find as an employability practitioner, we are depended on to have the solutions that our participants need so they can move forward on their journey with us.'

make you more resilient when change is going on around you. If you as a leader remain positive it rubs-off on other team workers and superiors and keeps a good atmosphere in the workplace.

6. Trustworthiness

Being someone that colleagues can trust and rely on is so important within a workplace, it allows colleagues to create a bond that helps deliver the results an organisation requires. When working with participants, having the ability to make participants trust you helps break down barriers and allows you both to work together to move them into employment. Trust is the foundation that all working relationships should be built upon.

As you can see, all of these skills listed above are true of natural leaders but also are so transferable when you start moving up the ladder into management and it's important to remember that we have them at the core of what we do every day. We always speak to our participants, and we remind them that they are brilliant people and start to build the confidence within them through the leadership skills that we all deliver. Through our communication, integrity, empathy, problem solving, positivity and trust, we change participants lives every day by offering the support and guidance they require to change their lives for the better and move into sustainable employment.

When moving forward and thinking about how we can all become great leaders, I think there is really only one quote I can leave you on:

'Great Leaders don't set out to be Leaders, they set out to make a difference.'



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gemma Medicott | Employment Adviser | Seetec Pluss

Gemma is an Employment Adviser working on Restart Scheme, in Plymouth for Seetec Pluss, her main role is supporting Participants back into work through coaching and motivating them to break down barriers to employment. During the next 9 months she will be the lead mentor on our armed forces pilot, where she will be researching data provided.

She is skilled in Communication, Behavioural Change, Teamwork, Public Speaking, and Time Management. Gemma has a love of delivering workshops/presentations which have helped her within the wellness industry. Her main skill is Time Management, which has been highlighted through her various roles since leaving school, which include 8 years in the Royal Navy as an Aircraft Technician followed by managing a team of 5 people in her own Events business.

The life-changing role of a Business Manager



**Dan Howard FIEP
Operations Director -
Learning for Work
NCFE**

✉ daniel@skillsforward.co.uk
in twitter.com/Dan_Howard_NCFE
t twitter.com/NCFE
globe ncfe.org.uk

Starting my career over 12 years ago as an Employment Adviser on a government employability contract, I immediately identified that my amazing Business Manager was the glue that held everything together.

She was someone whom I aspired to be, and I still speak to her regularly to this day. It was at this moment that I truly started to understand what Leadership was, and the impact it can have on people, and certainly the impact it was having on me.

The meticulous attention to detail and understanding of the contract we were delivering was incredible. As a young 20-something just starting out, I often wondered how someone could possibly know and retain all that information. It blew my mind!

Fast forward 2 years and I was starting out as the youngest Business Manager in the country. I was opening a brand-new centre and managing a team of people who had been in the sector far longer than I had, and had come from different providers under TUPE to deliver a new contract.

To say I was petrified was an understatement. I often found myself quite overwhelmed with the responsibility and I did not want to let anyone down - including my new (and first ever!) team, our beneficiaries, and the directors who took a

chance on this young working class lad who was so keen to do well.

Looking back, I can quite honestly say that the Business Manager role was the hardest, yet one of the most rewarding jobs I have ever had! I was the first in the office, the last to leave and had an enormous sense of pride when a participant progressed or found employment! We celebrated every milestone and achievement.

The role wasn't all smiles and celebration, however. The contract was hard, the performance requirements were tough, and we had some real challenges to overcome. I remained upbeat and put on a "front" for my team, yet behind closed doors, I was juggling a lot. I was trying to look after performance, budget management, Health and Safety, quality, compliance and audits, staff wellbeing, and numerous reporting requirements to multiple areas of the business.



'There is no better feeling then when someone thanks you for changing their life. After all, that's why we do it.'

It taught me a lot about mental toughness, resilience, and above all, job satisfaction. Yes, it was really hard at times, but there is no better feeling then when someone thanks you for changing their life. After all, that's why we do it.

If you're currently a Business Manager, or have ever been one, you have my ultimate respect. It is hard, but know you are absolutely making a difference to those around you.

The leadership skills you have undoubtedly shown will have been the best there is; the sector has incredible and authentic leadership in abundance.

If you aspire to become a Business Manager, like I did all those years ago, I say do it. It helped shape my career and it is a moment of my journey I look back on with great fondness.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Daniel Howard FIEP | Operations Director – Learning for Work | NCFE

Dan has worked in the employability and skills sector for over 10 years. Passionate about the life-changing power of education, Dan actively collaborates with key influencers in the skills and employability industry to ensure NCFE offers the best curriculum, products and services to promote and advance learning for all.

As Operations Director - Learning for Work at NCFE, Dan manages delivery of NCFE's learning for work product portfolio which supports individuals to progress and excel in their careers, as well as providing employers with a highly skilled and productive workforce. Dan is also a Fellow of the IEP.



Are you a Manager or a Leader?



Anthony Dandrea
Regional Supply Chain
Manager – JETS West London
and Advisory Board Member
for the Shaw Trust

✉ anthony.dandrea@shaw-trust.org.uk
in [linkedin.com/in/anthony-dandrea-373b134a](https://www.linkedin.com/in/anthony-dandrea-373b134a)
🌐 shawtrust.org.uk

What do you want to be when you grow up? A question asked that most likely no one answered, “An effective leader who is focused on fostering success by nurturing talent, leading by example, and mentoring those with the will to succeed”.


If you did answer the question in this way, then you were well ahead of the curve, and I tip my hat to you. As an employability professional and senior leader, I had to learn through experience and the guidance of others what the difference is between a manager and a leader. I hope that you, the reader, takes the time to pause, reflect, consider your current style and what side of the management/leadership pendulum you find yourself. It’s important to remember there is no one right way to be an effective leader. There are many different styles and arguments in this forum of thought, but this is my experience thus far.

I started my journey to employability leadership over four thousand miles away in the USA. After leaving the military I experimented with different careers but landed in the substance misuse industry. I started in the trenches working in a detoxification unit with those who had often reached the lowest time of their life. In hindsight I am thankful for this experience and the opportunity to build a solid foundation in person centred support.

Without realising it this was my first step into leadership, by understanding the fact “people follow people” not a process, and they do so if they feel valued, appreciated, and trusted.

Over the years as my sector knowledge grew and my professional ambition increased, I was successful in my application to become a Director of Residential Services. In my first senior leadership role I made every mistake possible. Do what I say not what I do; do not ask questions, just follow orders; I need you to get it done and I don’t care how you do it; I pay you to figure things out and use your common sense; did this approach work? “yes” but only short-term, did it create independent, self-sufficient, innovative, successful individuals around me? “no”. This time in my career was another crucial building block for my later foundation of being a leader.

After being in this role for a year, probably the biggest personal curve ball was to arrive – I married a British citizen and moved to the UK to start a family. Unfortunately, my chosen industry was not as prominent in the UK, so I had to start from square one again. I found myself on the front lines of an employability contract in the justice sector working within Her Majesties Prison and Probation Service. Even though the UK and US are similar there were a lot of new things to learn in terms of cultural/societal norms.



‘People follow people, not a process, and they do so if they feel valued, appreciated, and trusted.’

What better place to become acclimatised to British culture than in a prison! All joking aside my experience of working in the prison was another important building block in my journey to becoming an effective leader. In a custody environment teamwork, coordination, consistency, and clear messaging are vital to your success and safety.

Whilst working in the prison I was fortunate enough to get a role within Shaw Trust. The career progression pathway set out by Shaw Trust gave me the opportunity to put myself forward, and through my performance, conduct and behaviours progress quickly within the organisation.

After holding a few operational leadership roles, I ended up in my current role as a supply chain manager. I went from leading a team of internal staff to contract-managing external partnerships which required me to learn how to engage with senior stakeholders, balance a healthy relationship between expectation and high performance, and achieve my goals through influence and motivation instead of direct line management. On reflection, becoming a supply chain manager was one of the best things to happen to me in terms of becoming the leader I aspired to be. When managing external contracts, you handover the direct ability you have when managing internal staff and that immediate power to influence and support an individual is lessened. The success of my role is dependent on others out of my direct line management, testing my skills to influence and gaining buy-in to a shared goal.

The space Shaw Trust gave me in my role, and their embracing of staff to learn and grow, gave

me the opportunity to attend university and achieve a BSc in Business Administration and Management. Don't ever let someone tell you that you cannot pursue your education whilst in full time employment.

Employability can be the most rewarding and challenging of industries to be a part of. The balance between contract needs and the quality of the participant journey is essential but luckily it can be a synergistic relationship by ensuring decisions and actions complement each other and work towards a common goal. It's no secret that quality directly contributes to performance but too much of one and too little of the other inevitably will lead you to tough decisions and even tougher conversations. **YOU MUST HAVE A COMMERCIAL HEAD WITH A CHARITABLE HEART.** Every decision you make whilst in a leadership role in employability must be made with contract performance in mind and the participant at heart. We have a responsibility to uphold our promise to both parties to ensure we have a future, and we are changing people's lives.

The journey I just described to you would have meant absolutely nothing if I did not learn anything along the way. There was a plethora of opportunities for me to learn what makes a leader effective and I am not ashamed to say some of the best ways of working I copied from others and made my own, as a direct result of being surrounded by those I respect and trust. I try my best to always listen to others and ensure they feel heard. I try my best to be a teacher and remain teachable remembering I do not know everything. It's okay to make mistakes as long as I take ownership and learn from them. Most of all I learned that you cannot be successful on your own and success relies on your ability to work collaboratively with others as one cohesive unit.

I have also learned a lot from listening to others' experience and being mentored by a wide variety of different leaders. I firmly believe that mentoring is one of, if not the most, effective

‘Every decision you make whilst in a leadership role in employability must be made with contract performance in mind and the participant at heart.’

ways to be a good leader. When you build a high level of rapport and trust with those you line manage you can have transparent and open communication. Defining your own style is key – being authentic to your values. Once people know that they can trust you and that you will always have their best interests at heart the dividends of relationships become bountiful. Do not confuse what I just said with the idea that you must give people everything they want, or you must always tell them what they want to hear. To the contrary once a mentoring relationship is established you can have rigorously honest conversations with individuals making those tough conversations easier and more conducive to your shared goals.

So, ask yourself are you a manager or a leader? Do you manage the people who work directly for you or empower them to achieve? Do you tell people what to do or do you show them how to do something successfully? Do you give orders, or do you inspire action? Do you have the loyalty of your staff through trust and respect or is it merely through title? These are some tough questions to ask yourself and require a searching and fearless moral inventory. An effective leader nurtures talent by helping those around them to grow and flourish. That same leader also rises to the occasion when they have staff members who are underperforming and sees these individuals as great opportunities for growth. As one of my great mentors taught me underperformance is always a matter of skill or will. Both of which we can act on accordingly on with intent and purpose.

As a closing suggestion I would recommend as a leader you get involved in other aspects of your organisation and community so that you can be exposed to different leadership styles and tactics.



I currently sit as an Advisory Board Member for the Shaw Trust Foundation, an active member of several working groups and several company networks, member of the quarterly appraisal moderation group for the wider organisation, and I am a governor at our local primary school. By increasing your interactions with other leaders, you will expose yourself to new behaviours and tactics that you want to adopt. It is vital to always remain teachable and just as vital that you spread what you learn to those who are on the journey with you. Knowledge is power and influence is the key!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anthony Dandrea AHS BSc | Regional Supply Chain Manager - JETS WLA Advisory Board Member | Shaw Trust Foundation

Anthony has been with Shaw Trust for just over 5 years and is involved in many different aspects of the organisation outside his day job. He is an ally for the LGBTQ+ network, Neurodiversity Peer Support Group Representative, member of the organisation's Equality and Diversity Working Group, and an Advisory Board Member of the Shaw Trust Foundation.

Anthony counts himself lucky to have several knowledgeable mentors both inside and outside his work life who support him to be the best version of himself.

Leadership & Management – The Military and the Transition to the Civilian World



Matt Sellick AIEP
Implementation Analyst
Manpower UK

 matt.sellick@manpower.co.uk

 [linkedin.com/in/mattsellick/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mattsellick/)

 [manpower.co.uk](https://www.manpower.co.uk)

Leadership and management, management, and leadership, it doesn't matter what way around they go, there are transitional skills and mindsets which make them potentially the same on paper but can be fundamentally different in so many ways.

The military and civilian world, the civilian world and the military, there are transitional skills and mindset but it's the transition from military to the civilian world which some struggle with, and those from the outside regularly fail to understand.

From day one of signing the dotted line to protect Queen and country, teamwork, leadership, communication, and many other transferable skills are drilled into you. Looking to lead, inspire and improve yourself and others becomes second nature, but is it enough? It should be right, I mean who wouldn't want someone resourceful, tenacious, motivated, passionate, focused, responsible, punctual, and confident?

I'm not writing this article to go into the transferable technical and hands on skills, as that's a different story altogether and could be an article all by itself, and probably already is. This is about effectively how you are brought up in the military, how you are nurtured and moulded. I joined at 16 and the navy was my mum/dad and family all wrapped up in one. Your character, personality, and how you are as a human being day-to-day heavily relies on your past experiences, what you are

taught, how you are taught and role models you have in your everyday life.

So, the title of this article begins with the words Leadership & Management, so let's focus on these a little more, shall we?

Where most veterans differ from many of their civilian counterparts is in leadership, management, and the level of responsibility that they hold very early in their careers. There are thousands of great civilian leaders but - here's the thing - usually not until much later in their careers do they get to lead lots of people. A Platoon Sergeant might be managing 20-30 people at 25 or 30 years old. A brand new 'one-pip-wonder' gets to command a Troop of people, usually much older and more experienced than they are, as early as the first 1-2 years of their career - they might be only 19 years old. I don't know of any other organisation that happens in at that career stage/age. This can be brought across into the civilian world and make a real contribution.

The best companies have well developed Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging policies - veterans can bring diversity of thought into a business. They are disruptors and innovators - they can add lots of value to any EDIB programme as individuals or in groups.

‘There are roughly 700,000 veterans currently in employment, over half find themselves in routine, low-skilled or low-paid jobs. It is an alarming waste of talent.’

Deloitte have a Military Transition and Talent Programme. Their latest report, launched in collaboration with the Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) and the Officers' Association, highlights some of the challenges faced by UK veterans entering employment and the significant benefits organisations can realise by recruiting from the veteran talent pool.

Across the country, three in ten businesses admit they have not even considered employing veterans. While the majority claim to be more open minded, 60% of businesses rule out recruiting someone if they have no industry specific experience. There are roughly 700,000 veterans currently in employment, over half find themselves in routine, low-skilled or low-paid jobs. It is an alarming waste of talent.

Their key findings:

- Organisations that have employed veterans are very positive about the value they bring – 72% of organisations with active ex-military recruitment programmes would definitely recommend employing veterans
- More than half of organisations that have employed veterans say they tend to be promoted more quickly than their workforce in general
- Many of the skills that veterans possess are in areas where organisations are experiencing gaps – for instance around a third of the medium and large organisations we surveyed have skills gaps in strategic management, managing and motivating staff, team-working, positive attitude and listening skills

- There is a persistent lack of understanding of the key skills that veterans possess – only 66% of large and medium organisations perceive veterans as having good communication skills, whereas this is a key strength highlighted by organisations who have actually employed them
- Veterans still struggle to gain a foothold in civilian employment – although 71% of medium and large organisations say they would consider employing veterans, only 39% would employ someone with no industry experience.

The question is should prospective employers understand the great wealth of transferable skills a military veteran brings, and be excited to hire such great human beings knowing they would likely work harder than anyone else day in day out..YES. But should those in transition think the world owes them something, and because of the traits they bring they are better than anyone else and should be given priority...No. The world owes them nothing, the world owes us nothing, but everyone should have a better understanding at how individuals in transition can become vital employees, who can provide new ideas, new understanding and are already the natural leaders every company requires at every level of the business.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Matt Sellick AIEP | Implementation Analyst | Manpower UK

Matt joined the Navy at 16 as a Weapon & Radar Technician before transferring to Air Traffic Control midway through his Naval career. Until recently the last 9 years were spent as a Recruitment Consultant mainly dealing with Defence and Aerospace companies dealing with many military veterans or those in transition from the military. He now works as an Implementation Analyst for Manpower and also Volunteer as a Petty Officer Uniformed Instructor for Parkstone Sea Cadets.

Boutique Leadership



Liz Sewell FIEP
Founder & Director
Belina Get Ready for Work

✉ liz.sewell@belinagrow.co.uk
in [linkedin.com/in/lizsewell](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lizsewell)
t twitter.com/BelinaLiz
g getreadyforwork.org

L leading small organisations is about spark, resilience and innovation. It is also about knowing when to stop doing things.

Liz Sewell is the Founder and Director of Belina Consulting, which delivers the award-winning GRoW Get Ready for Work programme. If you are about to give up a well-paid job, set up your own organisation, call it after your children¹ and start doing something completely new, here are some ideas that might be helpful.

1. The spark

This is going to be your working life, so do something you really care about. Something that makes getting up in the morning at 4.45am, saying goodbye to your partner (whilst not waking the children) to drive 120 miles, in the dark, on a November morning to run a training session, an absolute pleasure.

Something that means every time you open your computer you think it is worthwhile. My vision for Belina is that we support women's personal and economic empowerment. That's worth getting out of bed for.

2. If small – specialise

Whilst big organisations deliver programmes with large, experienced teams, deep pockets, and economies of scale, small organisations need to

have something different, and special, that adds value. I realised there was a gap in the support women received after they had children: employability support was only offered to women at the point where they decided they wanted to work, or, if on benefits, when they had to look for work. I believed that it would be better to offer support much earlier; when they had more opportunity to do something about the kind of work they wanted to go back to. My idea was to reach out to children's centres and schools to offer support to women before they had to work. That specialisation has given Belina our space in the world and allowed us to grow our expertise.

3. Be the role model to develop your Brand

As the leader you need to live and breathe your brand so that your funders, your team, and the people who use your service know what to give and what to expect. I want people to think of Belina, and our GRoW programme, as effective, open, diverse, outward looking, expert, fun, focussed, honest and optimistic. You should be able to look at an idea, an event, a social post and tell whether something is, or isn't Belina/GRoW.

¹ Isabel and Nina – hence Belina

'An App was the obvious answer. It took two months to develop and has revolutionised our work.'

We also embody our brand in the way we work. As well as advocating family friendly working, we operate it. We offer part-time, term-time and hybrid working. We work with women who are caring, studying and have other jobs or small businesses – we embrace the fact that work/life balance is different for each person and adapt our approach to meet their needs. By being your Brand, you help to embed your ideas.

4. Innovate

One of the great things about setting up and running a small organisation is that you don't have to ask permission to do things. Our App is a clear example of this. Covid stopped our community-based group sessions - so we needed a new way of building a community. I knew that the women we support use Facebook and Instagram, even if they don't think they have IT skills. So, an App was the obvious answer. It took two months to develop and has revolutionised our work.

5. Punch above your weight

If you want to share your vision you need to get out there and advocate. Join organisations,



attend events, participate, help-out, comment, network, support, talk, and share. Become a member of the IEP, get your organisation to join ERSA. Have your say.

6. Get the right people on the bus and let them drive too

For about 5 years GRoW was me. Then it grew to two, then three, then five, then 10 now 18 women. I employ for attitude and passion; life experience as well as any work experience. I have always looked for people who 'got' what we were doing and could inspire others. Twelve of the team have come through the programme. Others bring specialist skills. This means we are all pulling in the same direction. It also means allowing them to work in the ways that are best for them. We don't do 9-5 we do work/life. And it works. The women working on the programme have a level of creativity and resilience that means they too become leaders and ambassadors for our shared approach.

7. Partner up

Work with others - it makes you and them better.

8. Understand your Prime and be a responsible contractor

When you are small you need to make sure you deliver on your promises. Being a good subcontractor means responding to how each Prime works. They took you on for your expertise, but you work with them because they have the systems in place. You have to respect their expertise if you want them to respect yours.

9. Stop doing things

Some of the best decisions I have taken have been to stop doing things. I ended contracts because we felt we were not being respected. I stopped working in areas where we could not

'When you set up your own organisation you have to have confidence and belief in your own ideas. But you need to listen to others.'

deliver a service as well as we wanted to. You learn so much from problems and both those decisions gave us time and space to deliver better services and go on to expand what we do.

10. Learn from others

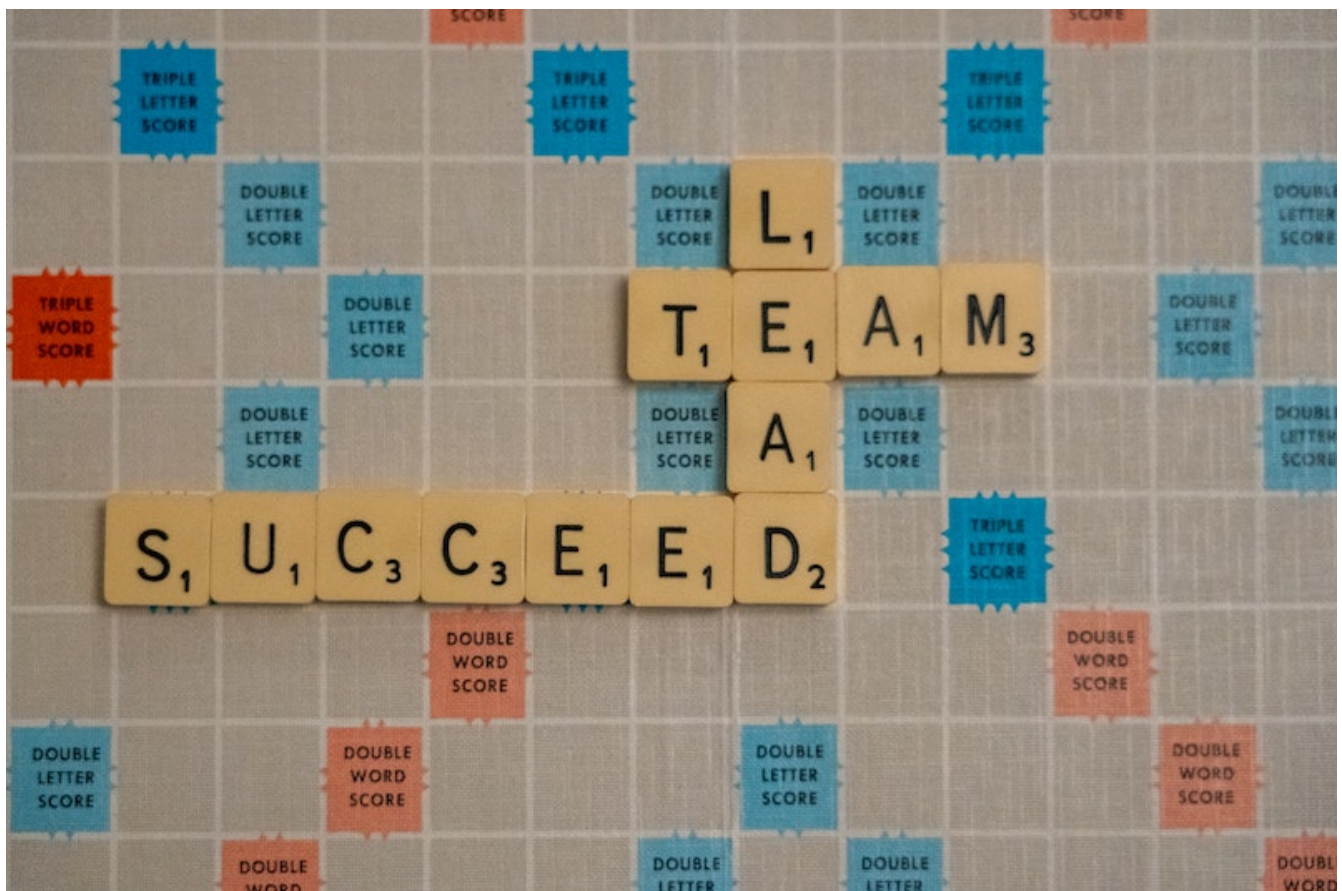
When you set up your own organisation you have to have confidence and belief in your own ideas. But you need to listen to others – I have always asked for advice and acted on it. Someone told me that it was not enough to have a lovely approach that people valued, you also needed figures to show people that you delivered. Another colleague told me that Belina

needed to be bigger if I wanted people to trust that we could deliver. Someone else told me to move from Belina Liz to Team Belina – and we have adopted all those approaches and all of them have made us better and allowed us to achieve more.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Liz Sewell FIEP | Director | Belina Consulting

Liz is Director of Belina Consulting Ltd, which runs the GRoW programme to support women get back to work, and the FLEX programme to support employers become more family friendly. She is on the Mayor of London' Skills for Londoners Board, and the ERSA Board. She is a Former director of the IEP and the single parent charity Gingerbread. Last year the App she developed for Belina won the ERSA Innovation Award. Liz is also a Fellow of the IEP.



Leading to Wellness



Manley Hopkinson
Founder & Director
The Compassionate
Leadership Company

✉ manley@manleytalks.com

in [linkedin.com/in/manleyhopkinson](https://www.linkedin.com/in/manleyhopkinson)

in [linkedin.com/company/10310083](https://www.linkedin.com/company/10310083)

🌐 [manleytalks.com](https://www.manleytalks.com)

We were exhibiting at the Business Revival show in Excel, London in March this year when it dawned on me that we are getting it all wrong; there's no balance and they can't be separated. What can't?

Let me explain.


There was a massive area of the show devoted to wellness, with many exhibitors offering a smorgasbord of wellness and mental health solutions. Obviously quite a few on the theme of mindfulness in the workplace, yoga, meditation ranging from pods to apps and everything in-between. There was even a busy stall offering neck and back massages on the spot, "...and we will come to the office too" (assuming you might be there)! There was a sizeable amount of exhibit space given to those working to improve our mental health - and a vital focus too as it is only too clear to us all how mental health issues are on a steep rise. From spiritual healers to a "burn-out coach" (yes that is now a job in demand) it was all covered; a massive effort to heal the un-well, but ... there was something missing. Something absolutely vital to the whole well-being effort. Leadership was absent!

Our Compassionate Leadership Academy stand was the only space devoted to leadership. I scoured the floor plan and went from stand to stand to make sure I had not missed anything, but

no, I could find no other stand focused on developing leaders. But surely, this is the whole point isn't it? Who is it that creates the work environment where mental health and well-being becomes a problem? Who is it that is driving a culture of disengagement and unhappiness? Who is it who has the ability to make a real tangible and lasting difference to our current working practices? The leadership of course.

Yes there are extenuating circumstances out of anyone's control that are all adding to the problem, Covid, for one, a looming recession, horrors in Ukraine - there is a lot of unrest and uncertainty in the world at the moment for sure. Which is why we need people to be working in the mental health and well-being space, but we must not detach it from leadership. This is the point I wish to make.

Yoga is good; personally I find great physical and mental release from practicing yoga (though I'm not very bendy). Mindfulness practices are good. Meditation is excellent. Massage helps and even meditation pods have their place in our lives, but, this is effort spent trying to alleviate the symptoms when we need to also focus on the source - the source that we can influence. We need a more holistic approach that works with source and symptom, developing leadership as well as supporting our well-being. More specifically, developing compassionate leaders.



‘Compassionate Leadership and well-being are inextricably linked; they are hand in glove, yin and yang, intertwined.’

I see leaders spending great effort, and not inconsiderable sums, in bringing onboard resources and support to help their teams cope with the growing mental health and well-being pressures that there are in the world. For some this is a genuine desire to be compassionate, and good on you for that. For others it is a tick-box tactic to say that they have acted, thus deflecting the attention away from themselves, - and shame on them. But, for both groups, let us be more vocal and more active in recognising the link between leadership and wellness. It is an absolute link that cannot be denied.

Working with his Holiness the Dalai Lama’s description of compassion (and he should know), where compassion is “understanding with positive action”. He explains that it is the empathy that provides the understanding but that it is the compassion to work with that knowledge with positive intent. Compassion is the embodiment of positive action. It is not enough just to empathise. When we are compassionate, we act.

We can develop this understanding and so define compassionate leadership as “to secure the best for all”. As a leader, if my intent and effort is designed to secure the best for you, then I am feeding your self-worth, and if I feed your self-worth then I secure your commitment, and with commitment comes engagement, collaboration, ownership, innovation, resilience, happiness, performance, and... well-being.

Clearly, if we developed compassionate leaders throughout our organisations, as well as providing the mental health and well-being support required, we will make a fundamental

and long-term positive difference to all of our lives. Compassionate Leadership and well-being are inextricably linked; they are hand in glove, yin and yang, intertwined.

So, yes, let us provide all the well-being and mental & physical health support that is needed, but let us not do it in isolation. Let’s do both. Let’s bring them together.

Let us “lead to wellness” through compassion.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Manley Hopkinson FRSA FRGS | Founder & Director | The Compassionate Leadership Company

Manley is an Inspirational Keynote Speaker, Author, Senior Leader, Facilitator, Adventurer, Mentor, Founder and Director of The Compassionate Leadership Academy and the leading voice in compassionate leadership.

Manley was schooled on leadership through a mix of practical and academic approaches; as an Officer in the Royal Navy and the Royal Hong Kong Police, a skipper in the BT Global Challenge, the world’s toughest yacht race, and as part of the winning team skiing to the Magnetic North Pole.

Over the last 20 years, Manley has worked with an extraordinary range of organisations globally, within his own consultancy and as a Senior Adviser to McKinsey & Company.

He has held accountable leadership roles as the Director of People & Performance for The Atlas Consortium, Hewlett Packard Defence & Security UK and Ark Data Centres - who recently achieved the Investors in People Platinum award.

Research into the neural physiology that drives the ability to learn, change & perform, was the final part of the leadership jigsaw that led to the publication of Manley’s widely acclaimed book “Compassionate Leadership” (2014, 2nd edition 2022) & the creation of the Compassionate Leadership Academy digital and hybrid programmes. (2019).

Attract, Retain, and Grow your people to grow your impact and the role of leaders



Safaraz Ali FIEP
Chief Executive
Pathway Group

twitter.com/SafarazAli
linkedin.com/in/Safaraz/
facebook.com/SafarazAli/
safaraz.co.uk

In today's post-pandemic world, leaders in businesses must be at the very least be better than average when it comes to people's needs.

One of the biggest effects of the pandemic on the workforce was that it brought attention to work/life choice debates leading to employee's re-evaluation of career and life choices, its effect is the massive resignation in the workplace. This occurrence is now commonly referred to as "the great resignation."

New research by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and University of Birmingham shows that more than 6.5m workers in the UK plan to leave their jobs by 2023. Further information reveals that while better pay and benefits are some of the top reasons, people are also in search of job satisfaction and a better work/life balance. This places a lot of responsibility on leadership as it is no longer enough to focus on offering job quality but addressing employee engagement, prioritising their needs in areas such as personal development, career progression, better work-life balance and increased job satisfaction are no longer negotiable in attracting, retaining and growing a successful team.

Attracting the right set of employees remains one of the driving forces behind any successful business. While recruitment can be a minefield

and getting the right set of people does not usually happen by chance, but with deliberately designed methods organisational leadership can build a strong business culture by defining what they allow and encourage thereby setting the organisation apart.

Some of the ways an organisation can attract people are:

Remote workplace – with the world of work changing with so many employees requesting remote working schedules, employers have been forced into accepting the new way of working. This is vital for the sake of attracting and retaining new hires.

Inclusion & Diversity – building an inclusive work environment is significant as it reflects the willingness and openness of leadership to build a culturally diverse team. Organisations with high-level of racial diversity have been proven to be more innovative and effective as representation is often highlighted to be critical in building a wholesome organisation. In addition, ensuring greater diversity among leadership teams positions the organisation as culturally diverse and accommodating. Despite the importance of having a culturally diverse team, only 66% of black employees said they feel included in their teams compared to 70% of white employees Race at Work Survey 2018¹. Further research has shown that

'When asked why they left their previous employer, one in five people (21%) said 'being unhappy with the leadership of senior management'.'

employees from a BAME (Black Asian Minority Ethnic) group background do not have access to the contacts, networks or prospects required to successfully climb the career ladder. This limitation has led to a lack of significant BAME role models in leadership and management positions.

Flexible recruitment – businesses must be open to having a good mix of staff blend. While experienced hires tend to immediately add value to the organisation and have their impact felt they are also cost effective as the employer saves on training costs. However, a common challenge with experienced hires is adaptability. As a result of exposure to diverse organisational cultures they often find themselves struggling to adapt to the core values of their new organisation, especially if it vastly differs from what they are accustomed to. In addition, they might not be open to innovative ideas and thinking but stick to what they are used to. To create a good balance leaders should explore creative ways of expanding a team such as work experience placements; this involves giving an opportunity to college students to experience the work environment for a short duration. Other options include internships and apprenticeships. While internships are typically offered to university students to supplement their studies, apprenticeships involve having a candidate that will work for 1 – 5 years alongside external study to earn a qualification. The apprenticeship route into the workplace has gained momentum and has witnessed a 14.1% increase from 2020/21.

Building a visible and credible brand - in today's world social media has become integral to building brand visibility and credibility. The internet has become the first point of contact for many in meeting and associating with a brand, this is making it easier for people to relate, connect and build relationships with brands they feel aligns with their values. It is no longer enough to be known but equally important is what your brand represents with regards to Environmental, Social and Governance considerations. According to 2022 Edelman Trust Barometer² 60% of employees say they want their CEO to speak out on controversial issues they care about³. This is indicative of the importance placed on alignment of personal values and type of societal leadership.

Employee retention is a task championed by senior leadership and cascaded from top to bottom to drive effectiveness. This is because leaders set the tone for employees to feel included in a team and these set standards for retention. In a recent survey of over 6000 UK workers conducted by the CIPD Good Work Index⁴, it was discovered that one in five (20%) say it is likely they will leave their current jobs in the next 12 months, compared with 16% in 2021. When asked why they left their previous employer, one in five people (21%) said "being unhappy with the leadership of senior management". This supports the saying that "people don't leave organisations; they leave bad managers." After investing time and resources to attract quality employees to join the team, you must empower, enrich, and keep them engaged.


Kevin Ellis, chairperson, and senior partner at PwC UK, said: "The economic outlook may be uncertain, but it would be premature to call the end of the Great Resignation." Highly skilled

¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/746970/BITC_Race_At_Work_Report.pdf

² https://www.edelman.com/sites/g/files/aatuss191/files/2022-01/Trust%202022_Top10.pdf

³ "The Greater Good - Volume 1, Issue 4 - Benefit Corporations for Good"

⁴ <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/work/trends/goodwork>



'While hard skills are necessary in the workplace, soft skills remain the missing link that can make a difference between good and bad leadership.'

workers are in hot demand and employers can't be complacent. "It's not just about keeping the most talented workers happy - our data highlights the need and opportunity to create new talent and ensure no one gets left behind."⁵

To avoid having high attrition rates, organisations must invest in developing leadership skills and character not only in senior management but across all managers and leadership levels to produce leaders who can provide sense of purpose and strong values that employees need to stay focused. Some of the ways to drive workplace engagement are:

Workplace training - equipping managers and leaders with the necessary tools to identify skill gaps and assist team members to close these gaps. This makes employees feel connected to the organisation which strengthens the leadership and aids retention. It also empowers them to easily identify employees showing signs of fatigue, tiredness or illness and help them through the challenges thereby ultimately saving work lost due to sickness and increasing productivity.

Healthy environment - prioritising mental health in the workplace by embedding mental wellness as a key part of the organisational culture. This empowers employees to feel open to discuss mental health challenges thereby taking control of their wellbeing. While hard skills are necessary in the workplace, soft skills remain the missing link that can make a difference between good and bad leadership.

The application of soft skills such as communication, conflict resolution and empathy in the workplace helps promote emotional intelligence which contributes towards building a healthy work environment.

Build careers and not just jobs - it is no longer enough to offer jobs but empower employees to build careers. Leaders should get to know their employees, support, and encourage them to attain both professional and personal goals. This lays the foundation for developing or building a solid team which might seem like a huge investment in both time and money but promotes retention. It equally sets the employee up for success.

Recognition and reward system - when people are doing well at work but never get any positive reinforcement, they often feel less encouraged to achieve. Giving constructive and impactful feedback often serves as a major motivation for employees to do more and be more. Rewarding employees who have achieved exceptional achievements and milestones also serves as motivation for others to try to do and be more.

Lastly, growth is an integral part to business sustainability, every successful business knows that lack of growth will lead to business stagnation.

Continuous learning - this is without a doubt a major necessity for business growth but unfortunately is often neglected by employers because of the time and cost involved. However, it can be tailored to suit the specific needs of the individual and in line with the organisation's needs. It encourages internal collaborations and creates a flexible and safe learning environment for employees thereby increasing productivity.

Mentorship - mentorship remains one of the best ways to pass on experience and raise

⁵ <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/employees-work-switch-jobs-b2086277.html>

'People have become the new priority as employers struggle to attract and retain employees to drive business growth.'

performance. It forms a support and development system for both the mentor and mentee where they can constantly learn from each other from their day-to-day tasks. This supports and promotes organisational culture, facilitates continuous improvements, and allows for a cycle of feedback.

Performance management - performance measurement is critical to organisational growth. Using quantitative data to highlight the business performance helps highlight the key performance indicators that are been measured. Sharing this data with the team allows each employee to see how their role feeds into the overall business goals. It is also imperative that the set goals are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound); this allows for objectivity and transparency.

Teamwork - to foster organisational growth, its important clear goals are set, with this the team can come together as one to achieve its goals. The popular saying by Helen Keller, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much" aptly summarises the aim of teamwork. Teamwork is the foundation for organisational growth.

Leadership today requires a lot of introspection and redefinition as the pandemic introduced new expectations for both employers and employees. People have become the new priority as employers struggle to attract and retain employees to drive business growth. As stated by Unilever on their website, "Traditional employer-employee dynamics are no longer fit for either individuals or businesses... We are breaking the employment mold to create new



ways of working that suit our business and our people."

To stay relevant and keep winning many leaders today must leave their comfort zone and alter their perceptions of what leadership is all about. They must refocus on strategies that reflect the new workplace reality to build a winning team.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Safaraz Ali FIEP | Chief Executive | Pathway Group

Safaraz is a social entrepreneur and is the co-founder and CEO of Pathway Group, in addition to being chairman of a domiciliary care company and a foster care enterprise.

After a career in the public and private sectors, working in financial services, Safaraz decided he wanted to go into business and make a difference.

He is founder of the Multicultural Apprenticeship Awards and the Multicultural Apprenticeship Alliance that encourages minority communities that are underrepresented in the take up of apprenticeships, to follow this route into work.

Amongst other responsibilities, Safaraz actively writes "Canny Bites," quick, informative, & impactful bites of business wisdom and has his own Podcast titled 'Canny Conversations'. Safaraz is a Fellow of the IEP and a Board Member of ERSA.

Great Leadership – Creating a Circle of Safety



Debbie Braid FIEP
Head of Development
WISE Ability

✉ debbie.braid@wiseability.co.uk

in [linkedin.com/in/debbie-braid-fiep-0007b720](https://www.linkedin.com/in/debbie-braid-fiep-0007b720)

🌐 [wiseability.co.uk](https://www.wiseability.co.uk)

commute to work. There is nothing better than having that time to reflect on the day, download your thoughts and of course do some all-important people watching!

It fascinates me how many people I see reading literature on Leadership. Heads buried into articles and theories on 'How to be a great Leader', 'The 10 top tips on being a great leader', 'The 5 traits all great leaders must possess' and I wonder, have these people ever experienced great leadership? The answer is probably not. Why? Because when you are led in an inspirational way you learn from the way it makes you feel. There is no magic wand or secret formula, put simply it is about creating a culture where others can thrive and become the best versions of themselves. There is, of course, a place for articles and books on Leadership, I am a self-confessed book worm and I especially enjoy reading about the views of those who lead and their experiences and it's essential to continuously develop and improve, but sometimes I think we place more emphasis on learning the next 'new technique' than simply wanting to empower those around us.

My father was in the Armed Forces and over our mandatory Monday evening ham, eggs, and chips in the local pub, we started talking about his time in the Royal Tank regiment and he spoke of some of the most inspirational people, heroes, leaders, that he had been honoured to

serve with. It occurred to me as I was listening to him talk, that my Dad would have laid down his life for these people, and I asked him why? His answer? "Well, they would have done the same for me" He talked about the trust they had for one another and the feeling of being one team and I realised, great leadership is not about learning a set of techniques but rather creating a trusted environment where we feel safe in which thrive.

So how do we create this culture of trust? After all it's a feeling, not a technique that can be taught, but an emotion that needs to be felt. Let's look at some companies who have nailed it:

Twitter - Workers rave about being part of a company that is doing something that matters in the world, and there is a sense that no one leaves until the work gets done. Employees state they share a common goal with their leaders, and they feel part of the larger purpose.

SquareSpace - This successful start-up is regularly voted as one of the best places to work in New York City. Its company culture is one that is "flat, open and creative" with down-to-earth leaders.

'Without a doubt the single most destructive 'trust terrorist' is fear.'

Adobe - This organisation and its products are synonymous with creativity, and their leaders believe that only through the avoidance of micromanaging are the people who create those products truly free to create. For example, Adobe does not use ratings to establish employee capabilities, feeling that this inhibits creativity and harms how teams work. Leaders take on the role of a coach, more than anything, letting employees set goals and determine how they should be assessed.

There is, in all these organisations a clear theme, that employees feel part of something, that they understand how they fit into the bigger picture and are cared for. They trust in their leaders because their leaders trust in them.

Although the core ingredients of leadership are universal (good judgment, integrity, and people skills), a Harvard Business review deemed that successful leadership requires culture-specific condiments. For example:

The opportunistic leader - Leaders who self-initiate and demonstrate flexibility on how to achieve a goal tend to be more desirable in Germanic and Nordic Europe (Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway), the UK, Western countries on which the UK had substantial cultural influence (the U.S., Australia, and New Zealand), and Asian countries that based their governing and economic institutions on the British model (India, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong).

The synchronised leader - Where follow-through is key to being seen as leadership material in regions such as Northeast Asia (e.g., Mainland China, South Korea, and Japan), Indonesia, Thailand, the UAE, and much of Latin America (Mexico, Brazil, Colombia, Chile).

The straight-shooting leader - In some regions employees expect their leaders to confront issues straightforwardly. In Northeast Asia and countries like the Netherlands, excessive communication is less appealing in the leadership ranks – people just want you to get to the point.

The "kiss up/kick down" leader - When organisations emphasise rank, emerging leaders tend to develop unique coping skills. Though never a good thing, this is tolerated more in countries, such as Western Asia (Turkey, India, UAE), Serbia, Greece, Kenya, and South Korea and finally:

The diplomatic leader - In certain countries communication finesse and careful messaging are important not only to getting along but also to getting ahead. In places like New Zealand, Sweden, Canada, and much of Latin America, business is kept to conversations that are friendly and pleasant.

So, what can prevent us, as leaders from creating these safe environments? Well without a doubt the single most destructive 'trust terrorist' is fear. As social animals we feel secure and safe when we are part of a 'tribe'. As earlier homo sapiens we looked after each other, we knew that when we fell asleep another member of the tribe would look out for danger, we trusted in the circle of safety. Great leaders create this circle of safety within their organisations, their employees do not spend all their time feeling that they must protect themselves, instead they are able to think freely, be creative and go above and beyond in their roles. They look out for each other and feel like they belong, this is when remarkable things happen.

Being a leader myself and coaching others, the most common misconception about leadership is that you must be 'born with it' or at least the traits that make us great leaders.

'People call people they work for leaders because they take risks, go first, sacrifice things, so that other can gain.'

Well, I have great news, you do not. It can, and is often, 'learned'. If we want to study leadership, we can access many books worth a read such as 'Good to be Great' by Jim Collins, 'Primal Leadership' by Daniel Goleman and a personal favourite of mine 'Start with Why' by Simon Sinek. We can understand and practice techniques such as the Contingency Theory, situational leadership, transformational leadership, and transactional and behavioural theories. All of which undoubtedly help us to evolve as leaders, however, before this evolution can take place we must ensure 'our tribe' are secure in the notion that they are heard and feel empowered. A team will fail if it is constantly occupied by their own insecurities.

A great leader is sensitive to the problems of the individuals they lead, we must strive to connect with each person and make an extra effort to understand what 'makes them tick' with the use of empathy. A relationship forged through transparency and without hidden agenda is essential if we are to help our employees reach their full potential. We should be passionate about developing the emerging leaders around us, and constantly work to improve our own emotional intelligence. Having one to one meetings that deal with more than just work, can show your team that you are genuinely interested in them. Be willing to always listen, leaders are not dictators, and we should be prepared to deal with any conflict with a mindset of creating amicable solutions. 'Treat others as you wish to be treated' is a mantra I believe all leaders should adhere to, in general when individuals feel their opinions are respected and considered mutual agreement can often be achieved.

Before I tell you to put this article down and do some all-important people watching I wanted to

share two quotes that for me sum up beautifully what true leadership is:

"Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want to be done because he wants to do it." – Dwight Eisenhower.

"A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves." – LAO TZU

People call people they work for leaders because they take risks, go first, sacrifice things, so that other can gain. In response their teams will give their blood sweat and tears to see that their leaders vision comes to life and when someone asks them, why would you do that? Why would you go above and beyond every single time for your leader? They will simply say "because they would do it for me".

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Debbie Braid FIEP | Head of Development | WISE Ability

Debbie is a dynamic agile leader who has worked for over two decades in both the public and private sector with large complex organisations and SMEs. She has successfully developed, delivered and managed a diverse range of complex skills, employment and health related services.

Her lived experience, and passion for reducing disadvantage led her to this industry. Debbie describes herself as determined with a supportive motivating and malleable management style. Driven by a desire to help unlock the unique abilities of people with disability and other disadvantages and support them to achieve success in life, she has collaboratively cultivated several comprehensive models of support for people with mental health issues, and ex-prisoners with multiple needs. Debbie is a Fellow of the IEP.

The Trust Leap



Andy Milne MIEP
Head of The Better Health
Generation UK

✉ andy.milne@betterhealthgen.co.uk
in www.linkedin.com/in/andy-milne-47bb9968
t twitter.com/TheBetterHealt2
globe thebetterhealthgeneration.co.uk

We are in the middle of a recruitment crisis. Recent research from the British Chamber of Commerce shows that as a specialist health provider within the sector, we are constantly challenged by difficult issues that require appropriate leadership, whether that be managing psychological distress, implementing new technology or navigating emotional and professional challenges.

Throw in the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing aftershock, we are still experiencing an unprecedented period in time, negotiating our way through change and disruption.

As a former athlete, having spent 16 years of my life surrounded by or directly within professional sport, an ever-changing landscape has become somewhat the norm. It is natural for me to draw comparisons between the constant competition, adjustments, and change within professional sport and the sectors I am now immersed in.

As a leader within professional sport or the employability and health sector, you are entrusted daily with many challenging responsibilities, whilst aspiring to drive change and transformation.

On my journey it has become evident from the outset that the lessons learnt from sports are often directly transferable to leading a health

team through a pandemic and beyond. So, what is my key reflection between leadership across business, the world of employability and professional sport? Trust

Trust

Personally, the best relationships I have had with Managers, Coaches, CEO's, Directors, Clinicians and Colleagues across business and sport are ones that are fundamentally based on trust which has been earned as part of an ongoing process. Having said that, the ability to build trust is a vital skill for a leader, but not necessarily an easy one, or at times something that can come naturally. More than ever, trust seems to be a valuable commodity in our everyday lives, and it is common for people to argue



'The ability to build trust is a vital skill for a leader, but not necessarily an easy one, or at times something that can come naturally.'

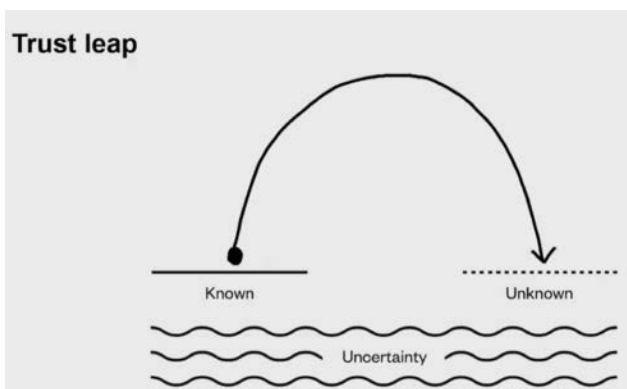
that within society there seems to be less of it than ever before.

Rachel Botsman is a trust expert, author, and lecturer at Oxford University who believes that leaders need to learn how to foster trust within their organisation. Botsman identifies that a positive company culture breeds confidence for individuals to learn how to trust one another.

Trust isn't just about believing that the Clinical Quality and Excellence Team have quality assured a clinician's work correctly, or our relationships with others, or believing something that we read or hear, it is also around learning to trust ourselves and becoming comfortable with discomfort.

As leaders implementing transformation and change within the sector, we can often find ourselves asking our colleagues to take what Botsman calls a 'trust leap' into the unknown. This can often result in comments such as:

"The old system we used was easier to navigate"
"I don't have time to learn this new process"



Doubt in decisions before people 'leap' can be a common obstacle for leaders to overcome, so it is of paramount importance that we communicate the reason for making the change very clearly whilst providing a sense of purpose and belonging.

We may easily underestimate how challenging it can be to bring people on the journey with us, but as I draw my experience back to sport, nothing can be achieved without the team.

As leaders, it is our role to ensure each player is given the opportunity to use their skills, which is especially critical in today's remote and hybrid work culture. Failure to do so could result in a decrease of talent retention and performance, along with affecting organisational culture. Ultimately, we must earn trust from others through consistent actions over time, showing humility and addressing relationships through a non-transactional lens.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andy Milne MIEP | Head of The Better Health Generation UK | The Better Health Generation UK

Accustomed to managing multiple delivery projects and contracts, Andy's people-centric leadership style – and pride in delivery high-quality, innovative health services – consistently drives high standards throughout The Better Health Generation UK team.

A dynamic leader, Andy is passionate about improving health and wellbeing across a variety of sectors. Andy has a proven ability to develop and nurture strategic stakeholder relationships to generate new business, improve performance and deliver on ambitious targets.

How to Lead with Purpose



Chris Blackwell
CEO
Purpose Led Performance

✉ chris@plpconsult.co.uk
in [linkedin.com/in/chrisblackwell/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/chrisblackwell/)
t twitter.com/ChrisPLP1
globe plpconsult.co.uk

It was a dreary Winter day in early 2003. I was sat near the front of a bus full of high school students. An egg whizzed past my ear and cracked on the head of young student sat two rows in front of me. The whole bus erupted in laughter and jeers. 'What have I let myself in for?'

I was working as a supply teacher covering schools across Sheffield, Barnsley, Doncaster, and Rotherham. The school that week was in an ex-mining community. It was an area of disadvantage and deprivation. In the staff room the mood was downbeat. The teachers looked tired. The morning meeting was short and cursory. "Just do your best" I was told "we are glad you are here". I felt bad for the students – they were being let down. I later found out that it was ranked among the 20 worst schools in the country.

The next week I got a new assignment – my heart sank when I saw the area I was travelling to. It was more deprived and had an even worse reputation. I expected a similar experience to the week before but was pleasantly surprised. The corridors and playground were orderly rather than chaotic. The students were lively but respectful. The staff room was friendly and welcoming, and the morning meeting was upbeat and detailed. The difference between the two schools was huge – despite the fact the second school was dealing with a more disadvantaged cohort.

This is the first time I truly witnessed the transformative impact of strong purpose-led leadership. The leadership team at that second school was positive and upbeat. They were purpose-driven to make a difference in the lives of their students. They communicated well and provided clarity for pupils and the teaching team. Their positivity and passion flowed down into every aspect of the school. I left teaching shortly afterwards to embark on a new career as an Employment Adviser, but that experience of leadership has stayed with me. Over the next sixteen years I worked in the employability sector working at every leadership level from Business Manager up to CEO.

Take a moment to reflect on the following questions: Who is the best leader you have ever worked with? What made them such a great leader? Can you pinpoint specific qualities they had, or areas they focused on? This leads on to additional questions. How do you become a great leader? Can you learn it or is it innate? In my view leadership is a set of skills that can be developed and improved – but you really need to understand the 'what' and the 'how' of leadership.

People often overcomplicate leadership! My friend and colleague, Alastair James has a wonderful habit of cutting right to the heart of the matter. Alastair has devised a model for leadership, that, in my humble opinion, is better than anything else I have seen. I met Alastair back in 2011 when I was Deputy CEO of Ingeus.



‘In my view leadership is a set of skills that can be developed and improved – but you really need to understand the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of leadership.’

Deloitte had just become a 50% shareholder in Ingeus, and Alastair was the Deloitte Partner seconded across to work alongside the Ingeus leadership team.

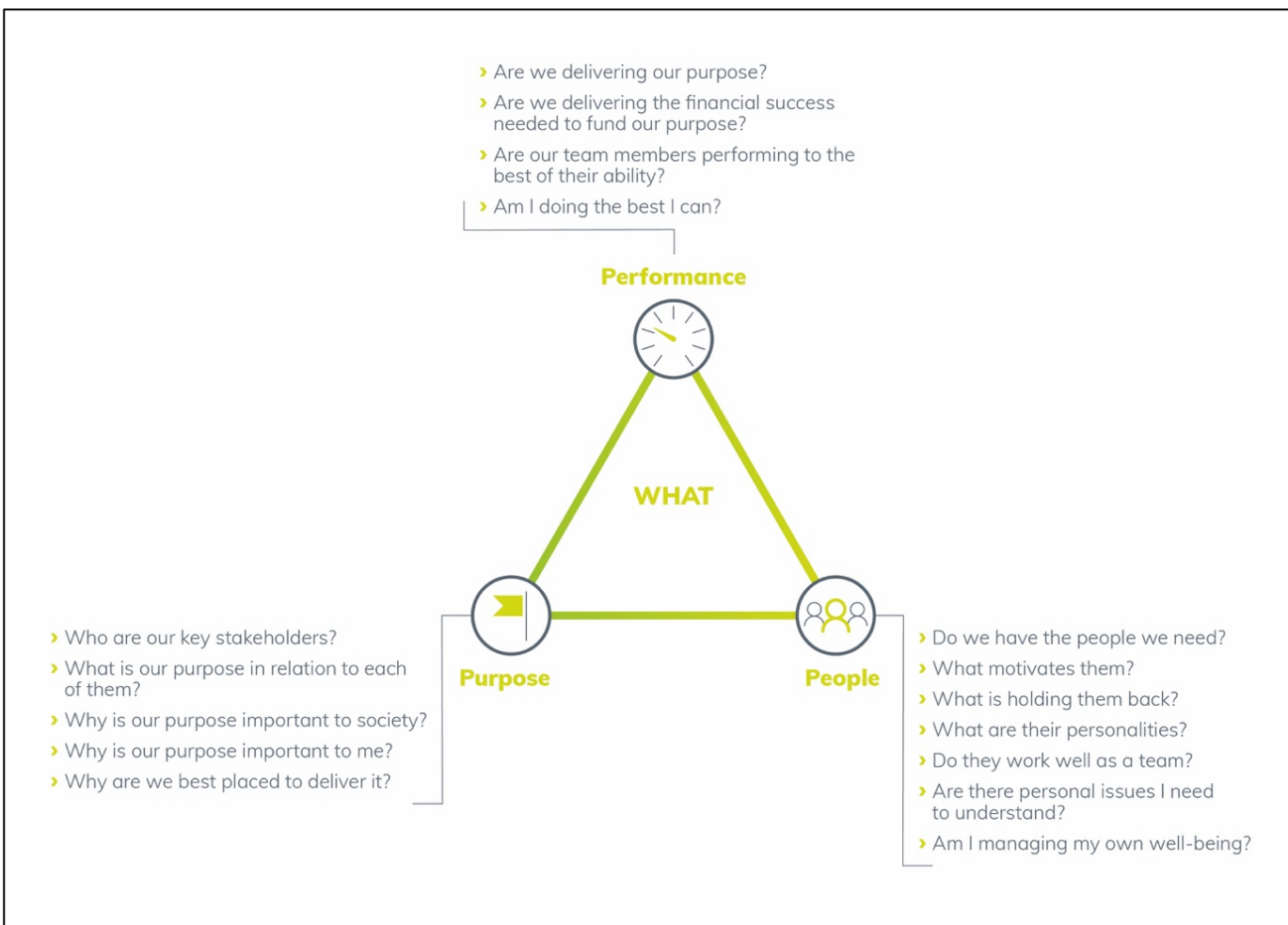
Alastair founded and led Deloitte’s Operational Excellence consulting practice which grew to be their largest consulting practice in the UK. Ingeus had just been awarded a £750m Work Programme contract which doubled the size of the company in just three months. Alastair worked alongside me and the Ingeus leadership team during that period of exceptional growth. I learned a lot about leadership working alongside him. I took those


lessons into my next leadership role as the UK Managing Director of MAXIMUS, during a period in which MAXIMUS UK grew from a team of 250 to 4,000 people.

Alastair based his leadership model on his learnings over many years of senior leadership experience first at Deloitte, subsequently working in Global leadership as the Global Head of Risk and Audit at G4S, and more recently working as a leadership coach and facilitator.

What you lead: performance, people and purpose

Alastair's first insight is that great leadership relates to both what you lead and how you lead. His model highlights three areas that leaders need to focus on; the three P's cover the 'what' of leadership: purpose, performance and people.





‘The great leaders shared some common qualities. These qualities are: Courage, Care, Curiosity, Candour, Consistency and Collaboration.’

How you lead: The 6 Essential Qualities of Purpose Led Leaders

Leadership is just about ‘what’ you lead. How you go about it is vitally important. When Alastair started to work as a leadership coach, he reflected on the best leaders he had ever worked with (and the worst too) and came to realise that the great leaders shared some common qualities. These qualities are: **Courage, Care, Curiosity, Candour, Consistency and Collaboration.**

Leadership takes **COURAGE**. Courage to keep going when the going gets tough, and to walk towards trouble not away from it. Working in the employability sector as a Business Manager trouble may come in the form of performance issues or challenges. As a senior leader trouble may be an impending recession. No matter the level and the nature of the problem the best leaders face into them and take control of the situation. Courage also involves making and justify difficult decisions and taking risks and failing. Leaders need to show courage to be vulnerable with their colleagues and to ask for and hear feedback on your own performance.

Courage without **CARE** can lead to macho leadership in which the leader is the hero. Great leaders care about their people as human beings and about helping them to be their best. They also care about profit and performance, and care about their stakeholders and their impact on them. Do you believe there is a conflict between profit and purpose? In employability this perceived conflict can come into sharp focus. Members of your team may say “It is only about hitting targets.” I faced this challenge

many times over my leadership career in employability. My response was always that targets relate to getting people into work – that was our true purpose and by being great at that we would ensure we hit our targets. Leaders that truly care dissolve that perceived conflict and focus on delivering high performance and profits while staying true to purpose.

CURIOSITY is essential for growth and development. The world is changing at a faster rate than ever before and leaders that lack curiosity will be left behind. Great leaders are curious about the root causes of under-performance, about leadership theory and practice, about their people as human beings, and about the opinions and insights of others. My advice is to be just as curious about strong performance, as you are about under-performance. At Ingeus and MAXIMUS I was always interested in understanding what the highest performing employment consultants and teams were doing, so that we could apply those lessons elsewhere in the business.

As a leader **CANDOUR** takes both courage and care. Courage to say the difficult things sometimes and to be straight with people. Care to ensure that you are constructive and sensitive when giving difficult messages. Candour also involves being transparent and open and sharing about the challenges your organisation or team is facing or about mistakes you make. Everyone makes mistakes and your people respect you more when you own yours.

CONSISTENCY matters in leadership. We have all suffered under erratic leaders who change their direction with the wind! Consistency of communication, direction and action is vitally important. Consistency in your pursuit of purpose is essential - purpose is not something to be shelved at

'Leaders that truly care dissolve that perceived conflict and focus on delivering high performance and profits while staying true to purpose.'

the first sight of a challenge. Consistency doesn't mean it is not possible to change your mind or change direction. The environment you work in often changes, and your need to adapt and change your approach accordingly. The key when you do change direction or reverse a decision is communicated the rationale and being consistent in your communication for any future changes.

COLLABORATION is required to solve problems and make decisions in an increasingly complex world. Collaboration with your team ensures you leverage the best that all your people have to offer. Collaboration with other teams in your organisation to ensure you are aligned toward achieving the same goals. Command and control leadership is not fit for the 21st century!

There is one further area of leadership that you need to apply the six qualities of leadership to: **self-management** - Leadership involves

effectively managing yourself to ensure that you perform at your best. **Caring** for your mental and physical health to ensure you don't burn out. Being **candid** with yourself about your performance and areas you can improve. **Collaborating** with colleagues and team to deliver the purpose and results for your business. Being true and **consistent** to your values. Showing the **courage** to make and learn from mistakes. And finally, always being **curious** about how you can do things better and learn from others. If you do this, you will improve as a leader.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chris Blackwell | CEO | Purpose Led Performance

Chris Blackwell spent the first fourteen years of his leadership career in Employability. He is the Founder and CEO of Purpose Led Performance, a specialist consultancy that brings purpose to business by working with leaders and leadership teams. He is also the Co-Founder of the Purpose Collective, an international network of business leaders that wants to create a buzz about making work meaningful.



Leading with Respect and Agility to Create Impact



Rhys Morris
Managing Partner
Palladium

✉ rhys.morris@thepalladiumgroup.com
in [linkedin.com/in/rhys-morris-32301232/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/rhys-morris-32301232/)
t twitter.com/Palladiumimpact
globe [thepalladiumgroup.com](https://www.thepalladiumgroup.com)

After nearly 60 years of working globally to tackle some of the world's most pressing problems, and with operations in over 90 countries, Palladium entered the UK Employability sector in 2018. We saw it as an opportunity to not only assist those further from the job market to access decent jobs, but a chance to deliver positive impact close to home in our own communities.

We knew that armed with decades of experience across so many sectors, our complementary skills could be exactly what was needed – a belief that's been borne out by our success so far. While we continue to learn and iterate on that experience, we believe that leadership in Employability, as it is in all of our work, has the following three characteristics:

- Founded in Respect – primarily for the ultimate beneficiary of the work but also for the commissioners and for the sector
- Driven by Agility – the flexibility to solve developing and complicated problems
- Supercharged by Impact – maintaining positive impact at the core of all we do.

Founded in Respect

Respect underpins everything Palladium does, from our initial approach through to the final delivery.

We work with organisations to become a trusted partner, to deliver a contract with integrity, and a focus on positive impact with results. In the context of delivering an employability contract, leading through respect means committing to fair, open, and equitable treatment throughout the complete 'supply chain'.

The most basic, and perhaps obvious step is that we look for respect, both in the staff we recruit and in the treatment of the individual jobseeker. That respect is a core aspect of our recruitment processes. We do this by exploring how a potential staff member will react under pressure and ensuring that they are hard-wired to uphold a respectful and customer service focus throughout an individual's time with the organisation, from their first day through to feedback and performance management.

We empower managers to drive teams that are trusted to deliver through defining what 'good' looks like in all job functions through our Performance Excellence Framework. Driving a respectful culture is about being clear on expectations and not being afraid to have difficult and constructive conversations. This sentiment is not just echoed in our work with our clients but is normalised throughout our teams.

“This level of autonomy for an in-country presence heavily relies on clarity of strategy and significant uniformity of branding and process.”

Respect is expecting the best from everyone in our teams and giving people the platform and opportunities to shine and be acknowledged. We believe in our teams, partners, and clients from the word ‘go’.

But what about the person that walks through our doors on a project? Be that an employability project in the UK or a project further afield, how do we hold respect at our core in our interactions with them?

It’s a belief in the positive and potential; it’s looking for and encouraging creative solutions; and being proactive in looking for the next step. It is about involving our recipients in that journey and making sure that it’s tailored and adapted to personal circumstances, the changing environment, or relevant feedback. Our customers have shared with us that they feel “spoken to like an adult” and that they “appreciate the confidence that their Employment Adviser has in their ability,” and perhaps most importantly, “don’t feel judged”.

Agility in Action

We prioritise agility in the work we deliver. As leaders at Palladium, we are accustomed to our operating context changing very quickly – sometimes by the second – and we value our ability to flex with those circumstances as a core competency in complex programme delivery.

In development programmes, we have traditionally designed our delivery teams to be substantially autonomous from the centre. A team operating in Nigeria can ill afford the time

of waiting for support from London, so we prefer to staff our teams with local employees who have substantial autonomy within a designated delegation of authority. This means that they can respond quickly to a rapidly evolving situation and do so with an intimate understanding the local context and constraints, while at the same time they’re empowered with the tools they need to ensure work can continue sustainably.

This level of autonomy for an in-country presence heavily relies on clarity of strategy and significant uniformity of branding and process – diminishing the opportunity for confusion and misalignment. The benefits far outweigh the disadvantages of any extra effort.

In terms of employability, our team deploys agility every day by applying a nimble approach that prioritises quality and nuanced interactions with the recipients of our service. This approach has allowed us to better understand how best to find the role that would fit individual needs, provide sustainable employment, and break down any barriers to work. The result of this agile focus on the individual is that we are seeing enhanced employment outcomes in our region and a higher success rate for individuals staying in work.

We are driving success because the service is agile enough to be tailored to individual circumstances. Because at the end of the day, what is more personal than finding meaningful employment?

Super-Charged by Impact

We hold impact at the core of what we do – our purpose at Palladium is to catalyse an enriched future for all – and we assess opportunities to deliver work through this lens. We think specifically about the

“In terms of employability, our team deploys agility every day by applying a nimble approach that prioritises quality and nuanced interactions with the recipients of our service.”

communities we will be working with and the broader impact of our work on each part of the ecosystem we are entering.

Whether reducing deforestation in the Amazon or improving maternal health in Northern Nigeria, we invest a huge effort in quantifying the impact we will achieve and committing to it – frequently to the extent of prioritising “Payment by Results Mechanisms”; putting our money where our mouth is.

This focus on delivering impact is a substantial leadership boon – our teams are motivated to do the best possible job and to prioritise outcomes based on a clear connection to a tangible result. They are also motivated to think broadly and innovatively to find new ways of delivering inputs and of driving outcomes.

Leading in this environment can certainly be challenging – our employees are immensely driven and will actively press leaders to expand scope or to do more; however, the upside is that we have pressure from all directions to deliver the best possible work we can and ultimately, we are better for it.

In summary, Palladium drives successful outcomes through leadership that prioritises agility; is underpinned by respect; and catalyses impact.

Ultimately, leading with respect is necessary if an organisation wants to truly establish it within a culture from the top down. When recruiting a leadership team, we are looking for those that share these values and utilise respect to

develop that culture within our all of our teams and colleagues.

We actively listen to understand the real constraints people face, and deliver impactful solutions that are individually tailored, fit for purpose, and aligned to the context. Across Palladium, we’ve found that this approach to leading is equally applicable in a changing and volatile job market, under pandemic conditions, or in countries rife with political turmoil or conflict.

But in a practical sense, it’s how we treat those that we work with on projects: as equals.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rhys Morris | Managing Partner | Palladium

Rhys joined Palladium in April 2015 and has managed Palladium’s global security approach; its US Operations and latterly its EMEA business as a Regional Business Partner.

Driving change through his personal commitment to Palladium’s vision and with a passion for leading large teams of professionals, Rhys brings his operations experience and a collaborative approach to the management of the EMEA business.

Rhys has degrees in Biochemistry and in Biochemical Engineering and is a certified Management of Risk Practitioner.



Putting Values at the Heart of Leadership



David Phillips
Managing Director
City & Guilds

✉ david.phillips@cityandguilds.com
in [linkedin.com/in/david-phillips-4974917/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/david-phillips-4974917/)
🌐 [cityandguilds.com](https://www.cityandguilds.com)

Workplace environments have been evolving dramatically for over a decade and more recently, the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated changes within the workplace.

According to recent data released by the Office of National Statistics we know that hybrid working is here to stay with 84% of workers who had to work from home because of the coronavirus pandemic planning to carry out a mix of working at home and in their place of work in the future. For some businesses this has exposed weaknesses and for others it has revealed strengths in the effectiveness of company values and how they are put into practice.

Whether technologically, or otherwise, the workspace has undergone a significant transformation. The emergence of leading through values to define company culture could be attributed to some of these changes. But what is the difference between company culture and company values and how can leadership play a part in influencing these two all-important elements?

Company culture and company values are not the same thing. Values guide the decisions that are made in a business. They point to what the business values as right and important. Examples of values could be as simple as open communication and acting with integrity. The culture of a company is the collection of processes,

practices and interactions that make up the work environment. Values are the principles, the rules of the game. The culture sits on top of that and is the landscape that shifts on top of the values.

It's through company values that organisations drive business. The values are the philosophies and principles that guide the way a company performs, including the way it treats its employees and the way it interacts with its customers. When the values, mission and purpose interconnect, the business culture is at its strongest and the impact on performance is most powerful. A Harvard article from 2002, by Patrick M. Lencioni¹, warns against the dangers of hollow values. He argues it can be destructive because employees become cynical and dispirited. Customers pick up on this and feel alienated. Managers feel that it undermines their credibility. What becomes clear from this, is that when values are clearly defined and strictly implemented without the consultation or participation of employees it can create difficulties within an organisation. This is because the staff feel no connection to the values decided upon.

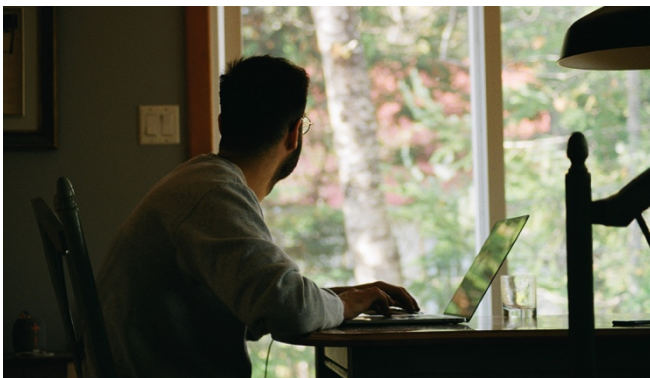
Employees are increasingly concerned not only with the values companies espouse, but with whether they live and breathe them in practice – not just in terms of how they behave externally, but how they treat their staff. A 2019 report from

¹ <https://hbr.org/2002/07/make-your-values-mean-something>

'The values are the philosophies and principles that guide the way a company performs, including the way it treats its employees and the way it interacts with its customers.'

Glassdoor² found that over 77% of adults across the USA, UK, France and Germany would consider a company's culture before applying for a job there, and 79% would consider a company's mission and purpose. More than half of those polled said that company culture is more important than salary when it comes to job satisfaction.

Research has been done into how the pandemic has affected the way companies live their values. There is evidence that values featured prominently during the Covid-19 months, creating a shared culture. The workforce has become much more remote. People crave more freedom than they used to, and this has impacted where and when people work. Because remote work is becoming a norm, a work team is no longer necessarily confined to one office space or one building. Work teams can span the globe. This does create unprecedented challenges for leaders. They need to support remote teams. They need to ensure that people feel connected to the organisation when they are not physically working in that organisation. This is where values can play a role - people feel connected to something greater than them.



The pandemic, however, hasn't only affected teamwork in the sense of location.


To preface the next point, it's important to note that historically, when companies have been through difficult times, it is often their values that have dictated whether they survive or not. The companies that will come out strongest will be those where leaders have used their values to strengthen their teams and focused on the individual. The values, when observed and relied on, impact on the company culture, making the organisation a place of cohesion and support.

Value led leadership and embodying these values throughout the organisation, will form a critical element, as workers increasingly prioritise a workplace culture that empowers and motivates teams, with many having felt that leadership was lacking during the pandemic. A company that can adapt to such change is a strong company. A company that is able to stay unified is, arguably, even stronger. Employees need to feel safe, psychologically. Clarity and certainty from leadership goes a long way to unifying a staff body towards the same goals and outcomes.

A more person-centred and authentic approach seems to speak volumes to employees. The way upper management and executives interact with the employees plays a pivotal role in how effectively they perform. When management and executives are using the values to inform their interactions, they speak the same language as their employees (providing the employees are living the values too).

When it comes to values, it's important that all people across the organisation are implementing them all the time. Companies with multi-level management and executives seem to be at their strongest when all players are observing the values. When staff members see that leadership is not observing and living the values, it creates dissent and resentment. When leadership lives the values of a company, there is much more cohesion within the company, and a sense that

² <https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/blog/mission-culture-survey/>



'The way upper management and executives interact with the employees plays a pivotal role in how effectively they perform.'

the values are alive and functional. Taking a holistic approach, refining and articulating the values that govern the organisation will help employers to attract high calibre candidates, retain them over the long-term and build a strong workplace culture that will enable their people, and their business, to grow.

Putting values into practice

While our mission and purpose have always remained the same, over the last 140 years City & Guilds has evolved and developed to meet the changing needs of learners and the changing world. Our values have to be more than simple statements or ideals – being able to measure, track and evidence the implementation of our values is essential, helping us to ensure that we are driving behaviours among ourselves and delivering on our commitments to our customers and colleagues.

Our Social Impact Report is one of the ways we ensure that our behaviours are aligning with our values, tracking the number of learners we have reached and the impact the programmes operated by our charitable foundation have had. As the nature of work, training and skills development evolves in line with social and technological change, the way in which we engage with our employees and our customers, and what that means for us, will also evolve. Throughout these changes however, our commitment to living our values in the way we work, and lead remains consistent.

To build on this, through 2021, we worked on refreshing our values to better reflect our mission. We lead through these values to have measurable impact on employment outcomes,

organisational performance and productivity, as well as social and economic benefits to society:

- **Inspire** - We inspire people to raise and achieve their aspirations
- **Improve** - We improve performance and productivity
- **Achieve** - We assess and recognise achievement, making it visible
- **Trust** - We hold ourselves accountable and act with integrity

City & Guilds is an organisation founded on strong principles and with a clear mission to inspire and help people and businesses to continually improve their skills, performance, and productivity through training and development. As such leading in accordance with our values has always been hugely important to us. Ultimately, when everyone in the organisation is invested in the values, everyone speaks the same language, at all levels of the organisation.

You can find more information about ILM - a City & Guilds Leadership & Management brand [here](#) and hear more from our [Leading through values](#) report.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Phillips | Managing Director | City & Guilds

David is a Managing Director at City & Guilds, responsible for leading the City & Guilds awarding and assessment business. He also leads the Group's growing End Point Assessment (EPA) business.

David has spent the majority of his career in education, working in companies that serve and partner with schools, colleges and training providers. He is passionate about working in the education and training sector and enjoys supporting others develop and grow. Prior to City & Guilds, David worked at Emap Business Communications Ltd and RM plc before spending 10 years working at Pearson.

Leadership – more complicated than it looks?



David Imber FIEP
Principal
The good employability company

✉ david.imber@good-ec.com

🐦 twitter.com/goodemployco

🌐 good-ec.com

How much inspiration there is in this edition of our IEP Journal! The subject of Leadership is controversial, as Chris Martin FIEP, our Guest Editor says: "Leadership. It's an emotive word, with many differing opinions on the subject as to what constitutes a good or bad leader."

Our authors have shown strong agreement about what it means for the employability sector. As Chris says: the sector tends to attract coaching and compassionate leaders "there is a wonderful, shared characteristic that presents so often and that is absolute compassion".

The personal attributes are clear enough: Integrity: being the good person "when no-one is watching", as Gemma Medlicott puts it, positivity; trustworthiness, courage, caring, and being "effective, open, diverse, outward looking, expert, fun, focussed, honest and optimistic" as Liz Sewell sees it. Inspiration matters too: "We inspire people to raise and achieve their aspirations" is a core value at City and Guilds, and one that we would hope for across our sector. Rhys Morris sums it up in Palladium's approach: "Respect underpins everything Palladium does".

And there are risks to be avoided in this catalogue of qualities. Manley Hopkinson reminds us that "(Compassion is sometimes) a tick-box tactic to say that they have acted, thus deflecting the attention away from themselves", and Andy Milne

that "the ability to build trust is a vital skill for a leader, but not necessarily an easy one, or at times something that can come naturally". No author disagrees that a directive style doesn't work. Anthony Dandrea has experienced it: "did this approach work? Yes, but only short term, did it create independent, self-sufficient, innovative, successful individuals around me? No." Chris Blackwell cautions us that "Consistency doesn't mean it is not possible to change your mind or change direction. The environment you work in often changes, and your need to adapt and change your approach accordingly".

Are our authors saying that a good leader should be a benign hero, a saint of communication, trust, empowerment and integrity? Perhaps they are, and I little doubt that they take for granted some technical skills such as budgeting, networking, business development, bidding and so on. It is hard to imagine a front-line adviser who would want it otherwise. But our authors point to the complexity of this most human activity. Debbie Braid asks "...how do we create this culture of trust? After all it's a feeling, not a technique that can be taught, but an emotion that needs to be felt.... the most common misconception about leadership is that you must be 'born with it'..... Well, I have great news, you do not. It can, and is often, 'learned'".

'With such agreement about the qualities of good leaders and the complexities they face, why then is the subject difficult?'

These are important matters, that lead naturally to consideration of the skills a leader should have. The list, incomplete as it is, is impressive and includes:

- Being purpose-led
- Candour
- Communication
- Delivering
- Empathy
- Empowering
- Networking and collaboration
- Problem solving
- Role modelling
- Strategic choices, including choosing not to do things.

Among these positive descriptions, we find mentions of a core problem with which employability leaders must wrestle: the built-in conflict between targets and service quality. Anthony Dandrea has it that "The balance between contract needs and the quality of the participant journey is essential" Chris Blackwell responds that "targets relate to getting people into work dissolve that perceived conflict" and Chris Martin that the "need to be creative couples with a competitive trait that drives the performance". In this environment we do well to heed the words of Manley Hopkinson: "Who is it that creates the work environment where mental health and well-being becomes a problem..... is driving a culture of disengagement and unhappiness? Who has the ability to make a real tangible and lasting difference to our current working practices? The leadership of course."

Respectful leadership is sometimes couched terms that suggest a hidden core of forcefulness: Rhys Morris mentions that "We are driving success..... we empower managers to drive teams..... armed with decades of experience.... supercharged by impact" and "prioritising Payment by Results". Are we seeing a blend of compassion with urgency?

With such agreement about the qualities of good leaders and the complexities they face, why then is the subject difficult? Can we unpick these agreements to find some unambiguous truth? Perhaps it's about achievement? Taken alone, that would allow a slave-driver into the good leaders' club. Achievement plus caring? Surely that brings us back to the central dilemma of outcomes versus service quality.

Might we say that good leaders manage the dilemma well, and have successful happy staff? Or maybe they are fortunate to have good outcomes and staff, but exercise only marginal influence. Either way, the question remains open.

We are not alone in being unsure of ourselves. Debbie Braid's article lists five different management styles. And it's worth noting that "Whilst it has been argued that the leadership frameworks may suffer from an over-emphasis on the individual, they may also suffer from a lack of research basis. For many of the frameworks little, if no information, was available on how they were developed and it seems likely that no detailed research was conducted."¹

The inner conflict between performance and service is real: "The evidence is less weak when it comes to the interface between management and service. Management style, the use of monitoring, controls and incentives

¹ Bolden, R; Gosling, J; Marturano, A; Dennison, P. 2003. A Review of Leadership Theory And Competency Frameworks. Centre for Leadership Studies, University of Exeter.

'Perhaps the challenge is not only to be a good leader, but also for good leaders to focus on the resources, skills, networks, and the social and labour market links that empower advisers to enable clients.'

(on advisers) are not value-free tools that work independently of the adviser-client relationship: they impact directly on the quality of service and on advisers' motivation and service delivery"²

Complexity is central to our work. "Ambiguity and indeterminacy are inherent in IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance). A key challenge.... is how they are managed. This embraces both the need for a robust evidence base that informs organisational policy and practice, but also consideration of the organisation's culture and how it influences service delivery through the values and practices of employees."³

What to do? Perhaps the challenge is not only to be a good leader, but also for good leaders to focus on the resources, skills, networks, and the social and labour market links that empower (that word again!) advisers to enable clients. In this view, and following the evidence from the review of the matrix⁴ standard⁵, our hero-leader should not only have great personal attributes, but should also deliver a service that meets its goals and respects the people involved.

Thus leaders should:

- understand and apply quality descriptors for the service. The IEP's

current development of standards is a vital step forward

- encourage shared values and goals throughout the organisation
- support the application of self-efficacy, personal development, autonomy and informed decision-making in the provision of a person-centred services
- understand and accommodate the ambiguity and indeterminacy inherent in the service, and support their staff in working through it
- create an environment in which advisers co-operate and identify with the goals and outcomes of the programme
- use evidence-based development and learning
- apply targets or rewards in ways that enhance the service to clients and support advisers' motivation and service delivery
- apply an ethical stance in cases of moral or ethical complexity.

Nice words, but we have to dig deeper to make them real:



² See Drew, P.; Toerien, M.; Irvine, A.; Sainsbury, R. 2010. A study of language and communication between advisers and claimants in Work Focused Interviews. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No 633.
and Pleace, N; Minton, J. 2009. Delivering better housing and employment outcomes for offenders on probation. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No 610.
³ Bimrose, J; Hughes D; Collin, A. 2006. Quality assurance mechanisms for Information, Advice and Guidance: A critical review. British Journal of Guidance and Counselling Creative Methods

‘..our hero-leader should not only have great personal attributes, but should also deliver a service that meets its goals and respects the people involved.’

Ethics

- Apply ethical values. Avoid harm, unintended or negative consequence. Use monitoring and provide means for staff and clients to raise issues. Work only with clients who have given informed consent. Motivate by consent not by compulsion.

Competent service

- Implement quality standards. Apply quality assurance processes. Provide development to enhance staff competencies. Use information to respond to a changing environment, within a plan-do-review cycle.

Resources

- Supply sufficient resources for the goals and the outcomes, according to the needs of clients and partners. Manage caseloads with input from staff and clients, balancing efficiency with effectiveness.

Partnerships

- Co-operate with other organisations to facilitate outcomes and share resources, information, contacts or expertise. Be transparent, with clarity of objectives, and regular monitoring. Present services to clients seamlessly,

referring clients to organisations that can best meet their needs.

Outcomes

- Focuses on outcomes while accommodating clients’ knowledge, awareness, capacity, skills, experience and wishes. Accommodate social and cultural influences. Use objective evaluation. Develop understanding of social, political, economic and cultural circumstances. Offer relevant clear, achievable, planned interventions and contributions to the goals.

Now that’s quite a challenge!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Imber FIEP | Principal | The good employability company

David has over 30 years’ experience leading employment programmes in the private, charitable and public sectors.

He now works on research, training and the design of employment projects, and in consultancy to the EU and overseas government agencies. David is a Fellow of the IEP.



⁴ <https://matrixstandard.com/>

⁵ People, professions and resources: Quality standards for Information, advice and guidance services- A review of the literature. Imber, D.P.; 2021. <https://matrixstandard.com/media/1272/matrix-lit-review-final.pdf>