



Taking over a Leadership Role

What should you do in the first few weeks as the new leader? After all, they say that all it takes is six minutes (perhaps six seconds!) to make a first impression, and six months to change it.

The most important aspect of any leadership role is to be aware of what you stand for, what matters, and where you draw the line. Your own values are the rock on which your leadership style is founded and are there as a compass to guide you. So using your values, you can then establish what you want from your new job and why you want it. The next step is to identify which of your strengths, skills and experiences are going to be relevant in your new role. You got promoted because of your capability and potential for the new role. Now you need to identify what you have to change in your approach, attitude, working style and pattern so as to be a success in your new role. We often see people promoted but they carry on in exactly the same way as before, sometimes with disastrous results.

There is often a great temptation to sweep in to your new job like the proverbial new broom and make an instant impression. However, even if you've been brought in because change is needed, spend some time speaking to everyone in the team. Listen, listen and listen again to their views. Get out into the organisation and assess the situation from different angles, and question, question and question.

Next try to learn a bit about your team members on a personal and business level and find out about the team's experience as well. What's their view of the current situation and what would they do to change it if they were in charge? Find out what their aspirations are. What do they want to achieve and what's important to them? This gives you an opportunity to make a real assessment of your team not just one based on hearsay.

So far as the organisation is concerned, look for the internal politics, the power brokers, the movers and shakers, the formal and informal lines of communication and the unwritten "we do things like this round here". Better to know these organisational foibles early on than find out about them too late. Make sure you understand the organisational vision, strategy, goals, products, services, procedures, hierarchy and systems, and how they all impact on you and your team.

As far as your new line manager is concerned, what does he want from you? How does he like to work? What matters to him? This upwards leadership role is often overlooked but it is a vital element of your chances of success. Make sure you are clear about what is expected of you.

When you've assessed the situation, share your thoughts with the team. Involve them in any changes you intend to make, and where possible introduce the changes sequentially. Remember that change is an emotional phenomenon. Make sure everyone is absolutely clear on what the business objectives are and why they are important. If you "inherit" a PA, spend time building the

relationship with them. Working with you will be different for them and they may be going through a bereavement process.

With so much going on, consider working with a coach during your first six months. They will challenge you, your thinking and your actions, but above all they will be someone to use as a sounding board and will give you time to reflect. And don't forget your family at this time. It is very easy for your new role to swamp you but stability in your family life and a sense of work life balance, can provide just as much of a rock to you as your own personal values. Take them for granted at your peril!

So you now have your plan and are ready for the first day. But what are you actually going to do on that first day? Well if possible, meet all of the team. Make sure that you speak to everyone and get out and walk the floor to make yourself visible. Talk to people at the coal face as well as your immediate reports. Do this even if you are in a functional position - in fact particularly if you're in a functional role! Finally make sure you have a good meeting with your line manager.

So there you have it! Make sure you know the values and principles by which you are going to operate and stick to them. Your consistency and authenticity is magnetically inspiring and in addition to providing you with the bedrock of your leadership role, will attract loyalty, commitment and effort from your team. It will also set you up for the long term haul. Remember, taking over the reins of leadership is not a 100 metre dash, it's a marathon!

Inside this edition

Taking over the reins of Leadership – In this article, Simon Hollington will suggest actions that can be taken from day one of a new leadership role that will affect the whole of the new leader's period of tenure.

Why you should MOT your Coaches – Karen Frost uncovers why it is vital to your business that the coaches you employ should be supervised.

5 Tips on Coaching as a new Manager

TeamPulse Update – Values Based Leadership's on-line Team assessment gets a face-lift. Find out what's new and improved.

Cool Logistics case Study – John Frost provides an overview of how team building at Cool Logistics has helped a newly merged senior management team to gell and work together.

Thought Leaders – Simon Hollington reviews *Kotter's 'Our Iceberg is Melting'* and uncovers a simple four stage, eight step process for organisational change that anyone can follow.

On the Couch – Simon Hollington answers a question on whether personal development courses really work?

Final Thoughts

Why you should MOT your coaches

with Karen Frost



Many thousands of people are engaged in coaching relationships at work. But once coaches have undertaken training in how to coach, they are frequently 'let loose' with no further intervention or training from outsiders. A coach who is not continuing their own development or who has got 'stuck in a rut' by using the same approaches for every client is in danger of providing a poor service.

So how can buyers of coaching make sure that they are not buying a poor service? Ask your coach whether they are in regular coaching supervision?' If the answer is 'yes', the follow-up question is: 'How does it inform and improve your work as a coach?' Coaches in regular coaching supervision are enthusiastic about it and would not dream of pursuing their craft without it – much like you or I would not dream of driving our cars without regular servicing and a full MOT.

So here is my 'bone of contention'. If coaches think coaching supervision is good for them, and even coaches who are not in coaching supervision think that regular supervision is important, why are there so many coaches out there who don't do it? And why are so few organisations providing the opportunity?

Possibly coaches perceive coaching supervision to be too time-consuming or too expensive to do, or that it is a way of checking up on their work rather than being a developmental process. My belief is that the coaching profession needs to look after its own because, like the medical profession, if we don't self-regulate and encourage our professionals to continually develop, we will be in a situation where the profession will be regulated for us.

But what exactly is Coaching Supervision? It is a technique that aims to ensure that the quality of coaching and coaching relationships are maintained at a high level. The

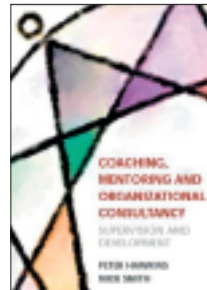
coaching supervisor will never meet the person who is being coached.

Instead, their role is to coach the coach – to ensure that their coaching relationships are healthy, positive and fruitful. Therefore, coaching supervision is a working alliance between two professionals, in which the coach offers an account of their work, reflects on it, and then receives feedback and guidance, if appropriate, from their supervisor. The objective of the alliance is to enable the coach to gain confidence, ethical competency and creativity so as to give the best possible service to clients.

Coaching can be a lonely business. Values Based Leadership has coaches working in a range of businesses based both nationally and internationally. All are in regular coaching supervision and have the opportunity to share their practice in a confidential way with qualified coaching supervisors. This, we believe builds confidence, develops creativity and provides excellent quality to our customers.

If you would like to learn more about buying coaching then I would recommend the CIPD Guide – Coaching and Buying Coaching Services by Jessica Jarvis available online at:

<http://www.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/C31A728E-7411-4754-9644-46A84EC9CFEE/0/2995coachbuyingservs.pdf>



Likewise if you would like to know more about Coaching Supervision I would highly recommend an excellent book: *Coaching, Mentoring and Organizational Consultancy* by Peter Hawkins and Nick Smith.

5 tips on coaching as a new manager

- 1 **Develop Rapport:**
Get to know the person as well as the role and job function. Coaching is most powerful when the relationship is based on mutual trust and respect.
- 2 **Take Time to Listen**
The pressure may be on to deliver the numbers but take time to listen, give people time to think. This is a very powerful sign that you really value coaching as a way of leading.
- 3 **Develop Your Questioning Skills**
A few well placed open questions can lift the mist for your team member and give them ownership of the solution.
- 4 **Use Coaching Moments:**
Coach and develop others when you see an opportunity for learning. There are many of these moments during a day so use these as well as the formal 1-2-1's with your team members.
- 5 **Value Coaching:**
Coaching as a style of leadership is incredibly powerful. It puts you as leader in the position of enabler, achieving tasks by growing the team. So, make your development as a coach a priority for your learning and development plan.

Cool Logistics Case Study

by John Frost



“Striving to be a pleasure to do business with” has been at the core of Cool Logistics’ business culture since the company was established in 2000. Following the sale of 25% of the business equity to packaging giants SCA Packaging in mid-2005, Managing Director Kevin Valentine believes that this customer service focus is now even more important.

Cool Logistics Ltd manufactures and supplies temperature controlled packaging to the pharmaceutical and biotech industries. Established by three directors, the company now has nearly 60 employees and Kevin and his fellow director, Richard Perks, are keen to ensure that as the company grows, the values upon which they built their business are not lost.

With this in mind, in late 2006 Richard asked John Frost, Operations Director, at Values Based Leadership (VBL), to help with Cool’s newly-formed senior management team. The team had been established following the merger with SCA and comprised two members who had been with the company for five years or more and three others who were newly appointed. Richard and Kevin wanted to be certain that this highly important group of people gelled together and had a thorough understanding of the business.

John developed a flexible programme for Cool that included facilitated discussions and team building exercises. Open and honest communication was encouraged between all parties in order to build levels of trust, respect and support and to ensure that all members of the team got to know each other well. Fundamental issues regarding the future of the business were also addressed during the programme. Kevin felt that the programme was “very effective.” He continues: “There were some difficult points to address, but ultimately we came out at the end feeling extremely positive.”

Cool have since worked with VBL on additional team-building programmes for its senior teams, including VBL’s on-line diagnostic tool TeamPulse. This tool provides a powerful and accurate diagnosis or ‘health check’ across nine team-related elements and is designed to provide teams with an objective view of their performance. Kevin says: “This showed us where we were against where we thought we were! There was lots of constructive feedback and, although we generally scored high, there were areas where we could improve.”

As the company continues to grow and as further significant change is anticipated – not least Richard’s retirement from the business – it is perhaps even more important that the people within the business continue to work effectively together in their teams. Kevin anticipates that individuals will be more autonomous and expected to take additional responsibility for their actions. Yet he is also keen to ensure that the company maintains its positive client focused culture and continues to be a great place to work for its employees.

In the future, therefore, Kevin anticipates that the relationship between Cool and VBL will continue. “I hope that John will continue to help bring us all together as a team,” he says, “John is a refreshing character. His help in assisting us to understand our culture - based on mutual trust, respect and support for each other - will point us in the right direction!”



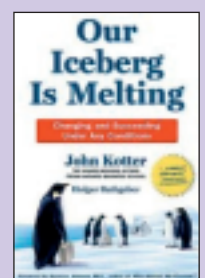
Cool Logistics Management Team

Thought Leaders

Our Iceberg is Melting: Changing and Succeeding Under Any Conditions

John Kotter is to Change what Daniel Goleman is to Emotional Intelligence and Charles Handy is to Management Philosophy: simply the most respected expert in his field in the world today. Known more for his research and case studies writing (‘Leading Change’ has been a best seller since it was first published in 1996) he has teamed up with Holger Rathgeber to write a fable – about penguins! Hardly the sort of book you might expect from such a pre-eminent writer. However, much in the same way that Spencer Johnson’s “Who Moved My Cheese” broke down the human emotions of and reactions to change into a simple easy to follow story, so “Our Iceberg is Melting” does the same – only for Organisational Change.

The result? A highly readable book that is easy to digest. More importantly, it is easy both to understand and to relate to work. The simple four stage, eight step process it describes lays out guidelines for organisational change that anyone can follow. I predict another long stay at the top of the best seller list.



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On the Couch

with Simon Hollington



I am a senior HR Manager responsible for all L&D in a FTSE 250 organisation. I recently undertook a review of our external personnel development training and frankly I'm more than disappointed with the results. The courses all score well when we ask the participants for feedback, but I don't think that anything changes as a result. Any thoughts?

Regrettably this is all too common. We go on a course, we get really excited by what we learn, and then six months later nothing seems to have changed. Life, work, tasks, people, and pressures all take their toll. The daily grind literally does that – grind us down! But merely sending someone on a course isn't the way to keep them motivated and loyal. People want personalized learning, they want to feel valued, want to feel that they've contributed, and want to feel part of something significant. They want to feel that they are growing, and it's a line managerial responsibility to make it happen.

When someone comes back from a course, it really makes a difference if the line manager takes time not just for a single conversation. Often – in fact far too often – de-briefing after a course is patchy to say the least. “Hi, how did it go? Good, well back to business. While you were away....” is not uncommon which leaves the course attendee with more than a little sense of “Why did I bother?”

It is precisely at this stage – when someone is back from a course – that coaching comes into its forte, whether that coaching is from the Line Manager or from outside. With the exception of on the job training, training courses are to a greater or lesser extent removed from the reality of work. The greatest difficulty facing a delegate on a course is not the course itself but taking

the learning and translating and adapting that learning into the reality of the workplace. In particular identifying the impact of new techniques and procedures on the culture and practices that already exist is precisely where coaching comes in. Coaching allows someone to see the world from another's eyes so that decisions are not made from the myopic viewpoint of one individual struggling and striving alone.

If the leadership of an organisation doesn't have the necessary skills to coach people when they come back from training, they are faced with three options: buy it in from outside; let their people sink or swim; or finally accept that training is a waste of money! None of these options are really tenable in the long term so training line managers in the art and skills of coaching is the way forward. After all, coaching really is the glue that binds learning.

Learning & Development personnel can really make a difference. It is important to follow up after a course and I've often seen post programme questionnaires that focus on content and delivery (important). Rarely have I seen a questionnaire that focuses on the extent to which learning is supported (vital!). Coaching on a one-to-one basis will identify individual personal development needs, support the implementation of learning and ideas, help staff to feel wanted, cared about and respected by their organisation - and most importantly, ensure that the organisation gets the return on the investment. So in a nut shell, make sure line managers are involved in post program support and measure their performance in this vital area.

Latest News

Training Journal Conference 24th June

Karen Frost, Director of Values Based Leadership's Coaching Centre of Excellence will be holding a workshop at this conference in which she will be doing a live coaching supervision session with Lynn Davidson, a qualified internal business coach for a large home improvement company. Karen has worked as one of Lynn's supervisors for the past 2 years supporting her with her coaching work. Lynn can be coaching up to 20 internal clients at any time and has identified how to use Karen's skills to maintain high standards of coaching.

Growing Gloucestershire Conference 26th June

Karen Frost will be presenting at this years conference in which she will discuss the topic of creating a High Performance Culture through Coaching.

In this session, Karen will give a live demonstration of outstanding coaching. Following this there will be an interactive audience discussion on the techniques and methodologies she uses. She will then share her ideas on how to develop a coaching culture in your organisation which will deliver real and sustainable performance improvement.

TeamPulse Updates

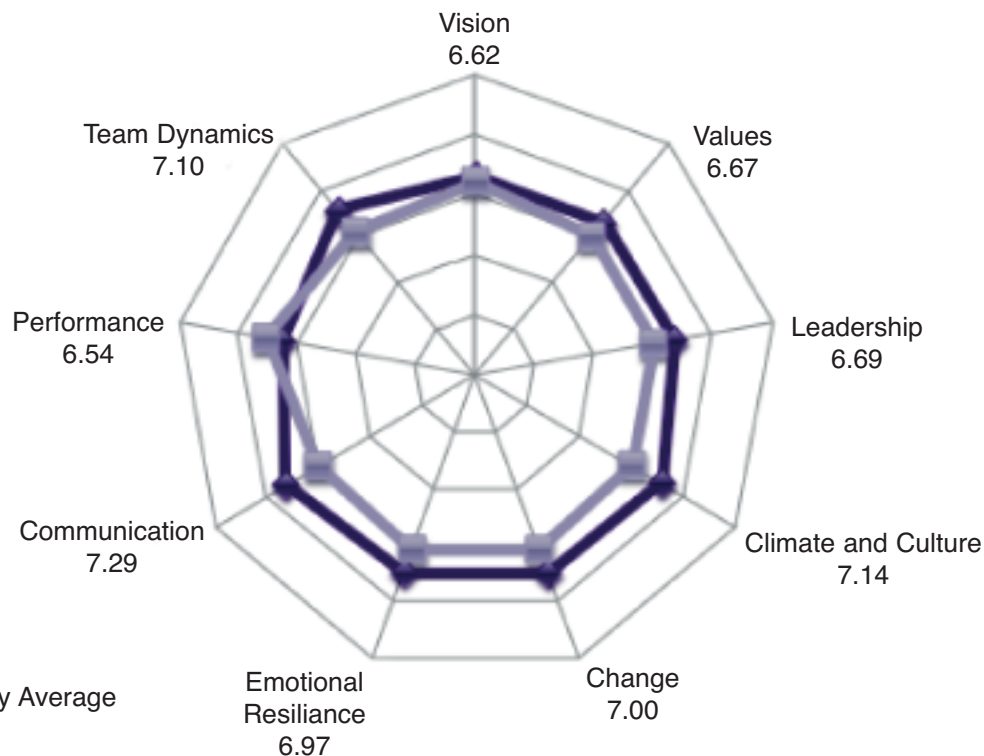
We are very pleased to announce that our TeamPulse online survey has been improved for ease of use and now also enables teams to benchmark themselves not only against other teams, but against company performance as a whole.

TeamPulse is an on-line survey designed to provide teams with an objective view of their performance. It measures against nine different elements of high performance namely: Vision, Values, Leadership, Climate & Culture, Change, Emotional Resilience, Communication, Performance and Team Dynamics. Each of the 9 elements has 5 or more questions associated to them, the results of which allow the team to identify specific factors that are affecting performance.

The results are collated to provide a team overview which can then be analysed in more detail and action taken to close any gaps identified alongside showing the team their areas of strength. Reports are provided with an overview of your team's results. These results can then be further analysed to measure the ratings for your team against the company benchmark, so that you can also see how you compare to your peers within your company.

For more information and to view an example of TeamPulse, log onto:

<http://www.valuesbasedleadership.co.uk/tpi9.pdf>



Final Thoughts

With realization of one's own potential and self-confidence in one's ability, one can build a better world.

Dalai Lama

Old friends pass away, new friends appear. It is just like the days. An old day passes, a new day arrives. The important thing is to make it meaningful: a meaningful friend - or a meaningful day.

Dalai Lama

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