

'This is an extraordinarily powerful book, full of deep, inspiring ideas that are simple, practical and make a real difference.'

'Future-Engage-Deliver has to be the simplest, fastest way for anyone to grow as a leader.'

**LEADERSHIP ISN'T COMPLICATED.
KEEP IT SIMPLE.
MAKE IT COUNT.**

Leadership expert, Steve Radcliffe, believes the topic of leadership is too often presented as complicated and only for a chosen few. His simple, practical approach to leadership, called Future-Engage-Deliver, invites us all to see ourselves as leaders.

Described by *The Times* as the 'no-nonsense approach shaking up the world of leadership', this book really does offer instantly applicable advice. It contains no jargon or irrelevant theory, just practical insights, straightforward actions and simple guidelines to accelerate your growth as a leader.

Whether you need guidance to lead an organisation or team or just want to feel more confident and effective at work, this book will show you how.

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LEADERSHIP ISN AND SIMPLE

STEVE RADCLIFFE

Anyone can be a leader.
Here's how.



FT PUBLISHING
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Welcome

One of my great passions is helping people grow as leaders. Why? Because I've seen so often the difference that quality leadership can make to the lives of people and the success of organisations.

I've written this book with the sole purpose of helping you develop faster as a more confident, capable leader. The only qualification you need is the desire to grow.

But let me be clear right up front. When I say 'leadership', I don't mean the leadership that comes from position or title. What I mean by leadership is you being at your best, in touch with what you care about and doing something about it. Where I'm coming from after 20 years in this field is simple and clear: everyone can be a leader and make a bigger difference whether it's to your career, your performance, the relationships you have with colleagues or the quality of life you have at home.

It absolutely doesn't matter where you are in an organisation. You can be in your first job, you can have no direct reports. You can have a team or run a department. You can head an organisation. And you can work in a school, hospital, charity or global business. It really doesn't matter because I've seen inspiring leadership from people in all these positions and I've realised that the fundamentals of leadership are the same for any situation.

We'll explore these fundamentals together in this book and I'll share with you the ideas and practices I've seen that have most helped people grow as leaders. You'll learn more about the leader you are now, the leader you want to be and the ways of getting there, even if you don't yet fully think of yourself as a leader.

What I'll bring will come from my journey as both a leader and partner to other leaders. After my early years in Wigan in the north of England, at Oxford University and then Procter & Gamble, I moved to the USA to be a chief executive in a multinational business before returning to the UK.

I then realised that who I wanted to be was a great partner to leaders. So

for 20 years now, I've been a leadership coach and consultant to individuals, teams and organisations of all shapes and sizes.

I've learned lots from reading other books on leadership but my most enlightening learning has come from sitting alongside leaders in 'live' situations as they have worked at engaging and mobilising others. I have captured what I've learned in my proven approach to developing leaders, *Future-Engage-Deliver*, the only three leadership practices you'll ever need.

I've seen that there is real value in keeping messages straightforward and practical. And this is what I'll do in this book.

This 'leadership stuff' really needn't be complicated. I believe that leading is a natural, human activity that is a part of all of us. You don't need a certain IQ or job title to be a leader!

But there is something you do need. You need to be 'up to something'. That is, you need to have an ambition, dream or goal for your team, organisation, colleagues or yourself and it's got to matter to you.

I've been a partner to hundreds of leaders and this has been the only common feature among them – whether we've been focusing on private or public sector challenges, in crisis or quieter times, on a local or global scale – the leader has wanted a different future and was determined to do something about it. He or she was 'up to something' that mattered to them.

This is so important. Do not have all your focus on your competencies and skills. First and foremost, get in touch with what you care about and want to be 'up to'. Then make it happen.

At this moment, you may not be clear on what you're 'up to'. That's perfectly ok. I'll help you get clearer on this.

Or you may be pretty clear on what's important to you and what you want but you don't know how you're going to make it happen. That's ok, too, and has been the case at some time with everyone I've worked with.

Or you may not even allow yourself to think about the future because you are

not confident you can influence it. Well, I'll encourage you to throw yourself in, try new approaches, experiment, practise and learn. In particular, I'll urge you to be really open to learning about yourself, and understand what it is about you that brings people with you and makes things happen. And also how you at times hold yourself back and so limit what's possible.

The result of you taking this approach is that you are guaranteed to become an even more confident and effective leader. I will show you ways you can immediately handle some situations differently and be more the leader you want to be. However, you will not grow fully as a leader overnight. It's something that takes time and comes with practice. My ambition is to be your partner in this endeavour. So please do not think of this as just a stand-alone book to be read once. There will be value in you returning to it often. Here's how I suggest you best use the book:

First, read at least the next chapter to get an overview of the topic of leadership.

I believe one of the factors holding many of us back from growing as leaders is that we don't have an overall grasp of what it's all about. Many of us have a number of ideas about leadership without seeing how they all fit together.

Second, when you're ready, read the book to identify what sort of leader you want to be and how you currently are as a leader. You will be naturally strong and not so strong in some aspects of leadership – that's how we all are. Get a sense of this as you read and begin clarifying how you want to grow.

Third, dip in at any time when things are not going well. Use this book to help you identify what's going on and what aspect of leadership is missing – I promise you the answer's in here!

Also use the book when things are going well. That way you can learn about what's really making things work and you can then take this learning to other situations.

The book is just one part of support for your ongoing development. For instance,

at the website www.futureengagedeliver.com you can subscribe to regular, free postings of articles, podcasts and videos that will keep you up to date with *Future-Engage-Deliver*. At www.futureengagedeliver.com/book you'll see copies of the key pages of the book which you can print off to carry as prompts or share with colleagues. You'll also find quotes and articles that have inspired me and that may inspire you too.

And please don't keep this stuff to yourself. Part of what you care about may be helping others to grow as leaders. In which case, get them involved. Talk to them about what you're learning. Help them get in touch with what they care about and how they'd like to grow as leaders. Steer them to the webpage. Give them a copy of the book!

Finally, let me hear back from you. If you have comments or stories to share, please send them to me. And if you want more support, there is a team of us who can support you by phone or by coming to see you.

I've distilled my learnings about leadership into a simple yet powerful framework, *Future-Engage-Deliver*. It captures the very best ideas and the three practices of how to grow faster as a leader. *Leadership: Plain and Simple* brings the framework to life so you can make it real for you and rapidly accelerate your development as a leader who makes a difference.

1

Future–Engage–Deliver

... there are only three aspects to leading that you've got to grasp. They are Future, Engage, Deliver.

- Future–Engage–Deliver
 - First, leading always starts in the Future
 - Second, if you want the help of others to create that Future, you'll need to Engage them
 - And third, in Deliver, you make things happen
- What do you see about your Organisation?
- What do you see about You?

Future-Engage-Deliver

In this chapter, you'll see that all this 'leadership stuff' needn't be as complicated as it's often made out to be.

And you'll see that you already have what you need to be an effective leader.

Boy, have I been slow?! For years, I've read all the latest books on people, leadership and organisations. Why? Because I've been seduced into thinking that this leadership stuff is really complicated, even mysterious. And I believed I'd have to do lots of reading to really 'get it'.

A major error! In contrast, when I've reflected on what it was about the leadership that switched on that board, project team or warehouse operator, I've recognised that there have always been three ingredients at play:

Future-Engage-Deliver

This is the model I have proven in use with leaders the world over. It has consistently been the catalyst for leaders who have wanted to accelerate their own and others' growth. It really is that simple – I promise you that you'll find a place for any leadership idea you come across inside this framework.

The fact is that whether you want to organise a great birthday party, create a high-performing team or help build a society that prospers, all you'll need to practise are these three aspects of leading.

Of course, it may not be easy to be brilliant at all three aspects, but I promise you that these ideas are all you need to 'get' in order to grow your leadership. Let me explain.

"It was only later that I came to see that you have to oversimplify things sometimes in order to begin to understand them. Only when the basic frameworks are established can you add in the qualifications and complexities."

Charles Handy

First, leading always starts in the Future

Leading always starts with ideas and thoughts about what you'd like to see in the Future, how you'd like things to be, where you'd like to get to or what you'd like to build.

We have many words to describe these ideas; they include 'goal, target, ambition, aspiration, dream' and from the world of business you can add words like 'vision, mission, direction and strategic intent'. These are all ways of describing the Future you want.

I'll say a lot more about Future later but let me be absolutely clear right now:

Powerful and effective leaders are guided by the Future they want. And more than this, the leader is strongest when that Future is powerfully connected to what he or she cares about.

Why does this matter? Because the more commitment the leader has for the desired future, the more they will persist, the more energy they'll bring along the way, the more they'll stay 'up to something'.

Additionally, when the leader has this powerful relationship to the Future they care about, it can also have an extraordinary impact on others ... sparking innovative thinking, giving people a reason to go the extra mile, providing hope in times of difficulty and, most importantly, giving meaning to people's work. In essence, a strong connection to the Future you want can create a mood of optimism, hope and possibility that can ignite human creativity and build confidence.

Second, if you want the help of others to create that Future, you'll need to Engage them

That is, you will interact with them in a way that has them *wanting* to build the Future with you. Engagement is central to a leader's ability to build alignment, involvement, ownership, unity and team. Crucially, it is absolutely distinct from 'communicating to', 'presenting at', or 'telling'.

I am staggered that so many leaders still appear to believe that, in order to get the best from others, it's

enough for them simply to 'transmit' their ideas or wishes. It isn't.

Engaging others is a two-way interaction and it's something that happens inside your relationships. To be fully effective, you'll need to engage people in yourself, as well as in the Future you want to create, and this calls for qualities like integrity, openness and consistency. When engagement occurs, not only is an enormous sense of possibility generated but people will be ready to knock down barriers as they pursue what they have helped to invent. What's possible for a group or organisation when people are really engaged can be immense.

And third, in Deliver, you make things happen

This is where words like 'performance, execution, implementation and results' live. Leading doesn't stop with 'vision' or 'team'. It ends with getting the best out of yourself and others in order to deliver results.

So when you are up to something, you start with ideas about what you'd like to see in the Future. Then you talk with others so they want to build it with you – you Engage them. Then you encourage and support them to make it happen, to Deliver. And if you're really being a leader rather than a doer, the other people you've engaged will make most of it happen.

Whatever the ambition or goal, this is what's involved: **Future–Engage–Deliver**. You'll notice I don't dwell on leadership competencies or qualities. Rather I prefer to focus you on what you have to get done, what you have to practise. If you want to be truly effective:

- you have to be guided by a Future you want,
- you have to Engage others, and
- you have to Deliver.

Let's get practical right now and start working with this framework by using it to look at your organisation and then you.

What do you see about your Organisation?

Have a look at your organisation through the *Future–Engage–Deliver* lens and consider these questions:

Future

- How strong is the sense of Future in your organisation? Is there an uplifting sense of purpose and ambition? Or is the focus more on analysing the past?
- Is there a sense of possibility in the air? Do people readily think about what could be achieved rather than what can't be done?
- Is there a feeling of optimism and hope? Is this strong enough to help people feel confident in the face of barriers?

Engage

- Are people engaged in and do they want to contribute to the goals of the organisation?
- Do they feel valued and involved?
- Do people look to engage colleagues or is it more a culture of 'communicate to and tell'?

Deliver

- Is your organisation strong at delivering what it sets out to?
- Are conversations about delivery full and robust, or do people 'go along' with what's being asked of them?
- Also, are people helped to develop in order to increase the organisation's overall capacity to deliver?

Ask the same questions about your department, team and key individuals. What do you see about how strong the leadership in your organisation is and where it's coming from?

What do you see about You?

Now let's turn to you. There is something here I really want you to take on board. It is that each of these aspects of leading requires what I call **Leadership Muscles** and the really good news is that you already have the Leadership Muscles for each of the three essential aspects of leading that I've outlined.

Let's demonstrate this now:

Future Muscles: At times, you have ideas about how you'd like things to be in the Future; you imagine, you dream, you visualise; you have ambitions and aspirations. This is the Leadership Muscle at the core of the Future aspect.

Engage Muscles: Similarly, there are times and places in your life where you've interacted with others so they've wanted to help you and do things for you. You already have the Muscles needed to Engage others.

Deliver Muscles: And finally, there have been times when you have followed up with people and they have delivered for you. This may have been delivery on a large or small scale. Either way, you were using your Deliver Muscles.

Not all your Muscles may be strong. That's ok – I've yet to work with a leader who's been really powerful in all three aspects of leading. Feel good about and exercise the Muscles that are strong, and enjoy developing through practice the ones that are weaker.

I'll show you how to do this as we go along and particularly in the next chapter where we'll look at how the leaders I've seen grow fastest do so.

"We learn best when we are committed to taking charge of our own learning. Taking charge of our own learning is part of taking charge of our lives."

Bennis and Goldsmith

In summary ...

Future–Engage–Deliver, it's as simple as that. Don't believe that this 'leadership stuff' is any more complicated whether you are leading a full organisation, a team or just yourself.

You already have all the fundamental Leadership Muscles. And you can grow each of them further with practice.

FED IN PRACTICE

RUTH MADDISON

Ruth Maddison is a headteacher in Nottinghamshire who has recently come across FED and is already in action. She writes:

'My husband recommended this book to me and when I picked it up I realised how useful and straightforward *Future–Engage–Deliver* is as a model for leadership and how easily it could be conveyed to others.

'First, the book has helped me recognise many areas where I can grow as a leader. I can so often be so busy with day-to-day concerns that I miss the real leadership that I can offer. I have certainly had to work on the Deliver Through Others agenda as I have found it hard to delegate. I recognised so much of me in that chapter and can also see where I have improved – another good thing that the book helps me to do.

'But best of all, the simplicity of the language means that I can quickly introduce leadership ideas to others. I have young staff who are being given leadership roles and need help in developing their skills. I also have very new staff who, as you say in the book, are also leaders and need to grow. All of us have begun to explore what it means to be At Our Very Best.

'All this, along with the growing of self-awareness and leadership skills in our pupils, has set me an exciting challenge – one that I'm keen to take on board wholeheartedly.'

2

How to turbo-charge your growth

... some people grow faster than others. You get to choose the pace.

- How to turbo-charge your growth
- **1** Make your practice Conscious Practice
- **2** Build your Support Team
- **3** Know and Go beyond Your Limits
 - Limit One: Not Believing You're a Leader
 - Limit Two: Not Being in Leader Mode

How to turbo-charge your growth

Some of the leaders I've worked with have grown in their confidence and ability a lot faster than others. This chapter will show you the approach to adopt if you want to grow at this accelerated pace. I've identified the three ways that you can turbo-charge your growth.

They are:

- 1 Make your practice **Conscious Practice**.
- 2 Build your personal **Support Team**.
- 3 Know and **Go beyond Your Limits**.

1 Make your practice Conscious Practice

The research on leadership is totally conclusive that you do most of your learning and growing as a leader in real-life situations, not on courses or reading books, and you grow fastest when you're taking on challenges that stretch you.

This is great news because it means you have the opportunity to practise, learn and grow your Leadership Muscles every day. You don't need to wait until that next leadership course; you can develop while you're doing what you're doing.

In this regard, improving as a leader is no different from improving in many walks of life such as playing an instrument or a sport – the more you practise the better you get. And the kind of practice that most accelerates learning and growth is Conscious Practice. That is, when you are consciously using situations and challenges as opportunities to learn and grow.

At its best, what this means is that you'll be conscious of how you want to be as a leader ahead of meetings, conversations or challenges; that you are aware of what's happening while you're in these situations, and are then pausing to extract learning afterwards. Even better, you'll be asking for feedback from others to learn even more.

Pause for a second now and check in on yourself:

- How clear are you that you have opportunities every day to practise being a leader?
- How regularly have you been grabbing those opportunities?
- What specific opportunities are coming up for Conscious Practice of your leadership?

The leaders I've seen grow fastest look out for these opportunities and what I'll do in this book is introduce you to some ideas that will help you extract more learning from your practice. These ideas will also help you identify which aspects of your leading you want to develop and how.

Through such Conscious Practice, you will build your confidence as a leader, want to take on bigger challenges and so grow your leadership even further.

"What cannot be achieved by formula may be achieved by attention to the flow of Spirit and by continued practice. Effective leadership simply does not happen without practice."

Harrison Owen

2 Build your Support Team

Ultimately, your leading is completely down to you. But do not try to grow fast as a leader all on your own.

If you want to grow fast, it's essential you create your personal Support Team.

Here's the first reason. When the impact of leadership development programmes in eight different organisations was studied, one of the main findings clearly highlighted the power of receiving regular feedback from colleagues. The study by Goldsmith and Morgan in 2004 found that:

'Leaders who discussed their own improvement priorities with their co-workers, and then regularly followed up with these co-workers, showed striking improvement.'

'Leaders who did not have ongoing dialogue with colleagues showed improvement that barely exceeded random chance.'

It's as stark as that. So consider shifting your view from 'these are people I'm working with' to 'these are some of the people who can help me be a much more effective leader'.

If you really want to accelerate your growth, here's what to do. You identify the specific ways in which you want to grow as a leader; you tell selected colleagues and ask them to rate you in these areas now; you then ask them if they'll watch out for you in these areas because you'd like to talk to them regularly about what progress you're making. And do this whether you have a 360 degree feedback process in place or not.

This help from your Support Team can be the difference between *'striking improvement'* and *'improvement that barely exceeds random chance.'*

The second major reason to have a Support Team is that they can help in many other ways, too. We are all human. We all have setbacks, moments of doubt, times when we want to get stuff off our chests or just disappear and hide. With the help of others we can talk stuff through, get things back into perspective, have a laugh and re-energise ourselves.

So check in for yourself now:

- ☉ Do you have people you talk with who can help you get yourself back in shape?
- ☉ Who would you like on your Support Team who currently isn't there?
- ☉ What request will you make of people on your Support Team?

You already have people who help like this. But think wider. Who else could be on your Support Team? Who else could help you believe more in yourself and spend more time being at your best? You may not find asking for help easy, but for your rapid growth as a leader it's essential.

"Leadership development can only occur in the tumult and possibilities of our relationships. Others help us see things we are missing, affirm whatever progress we have made, test our perceptions, and let us know how we are doing. They provide the context for experimentation and practice. Without others' involvement, lasting change can't occur."

Daniel Goleman

FED IN PRACTICE

ORLA WHALLEY

Orla Whalley is a finance manager and mum of two. She wrote to us a while ago about her Support Team.

'It's easy to know when to go to your Support Team, right? When you need guidance, when you want some feedback on how you are being or just to check in and tell them how well you are doing.

'But what about when things aren't so great? I recently went through a period of ill health that left me absolutely physically drained. I got sick of myself in the end and I did something that seems completely backward to me now, I hid from my support network. It just felt wrong to own up to feeling like this in a culture of being "great", where how I was feeling might be seen as a personal weakness.

'It was only when one of my Support Team came looking for me that I realised I was trying to regroup on my own and to only contact people when I had "good" news. In that phone call, talking about how I really felt highlighted my mistake but also made me realise that it is sometimes hardest to use the support when we need it most.

'When I checked in with all the people who care about my emotional and physical wellbeing, without exception they came back to me with words of empathy, support and advice on how to keep going forwards. It was an

eye-opener to realise that when I let people understand where I was at, I didn't get any sense of having become less of a person in their eyes.'

Orla finishes with some great questions: 'How often do you put a brave face on how you're feeling and not use your Support Team? And how ready are you to reach out to others who seem to be struggling?'

3 Know and Go beyond Your Limits

Put simply, there are two ways to grow as a leader. One is to build your Leadership Muscles with the help of Conscious Practice and your Support Team. The other is to notice and then reduce the ways in which you limit yourself.

In particular, there are two major ways that I've seen people limit themselves as leaders – and I can promise you that at least one applies to you! See how strong these limits are for you.

Limit One: Not Believing You're a Leader

The other day, I was asked to do a session on someone else's leadership programme. The group of 20 managers from this high-profile organisation were pleasant enough but there was no spark, no buzz. When we looked into this, we revealed that, even though they were on a leadership programme, most of them didn't see themselves as leaders!

What a waste of human potential. And this isn't an isolated case. I come across thousands of people who are held back just by the way they think about themselves and leadership. How has this come about?

My answer is that people have digested too much 'accepted wisdom' about leadership that is both out of date and seriously debilitating.

At its worst, this is how the story goes:

- Leaders are different from me; they are charismatic, probably heroic and perhaps even explorers!!

- In organisations, they are older and in senior positions; they may have been helped in getting there by going to the right school or university.
- These leaders have few doubts or insecurities. They are terrifically confident. They are somehow special.
- Also, to be good at this leadership stuff, we can be seduced into believing we'll have to understand complicated theories and models, and generally be pretty bright.
- Oh, and you'll also have to find the 'right' way to be a leader, the 'right' answer – how many years did I read books believing 'the answer' would be in the next one?
- And, finally, leadership is a solitary journey, one you must make alone.

Of course, this is a load of rubbish. But check in now to see whether you've been limiting your leadership potential by how you've been thinking about yourself. Consider these questions:

- What have you believed about 'leaders' and 'leadership'?
- What have you taken for granted and not stopped and really thought through?
- Who do you consider to be leaders, and who do you say are not?
- What do you believe it takes to be a leader?
- What are the characteristics you believe leaders must have?
- To what extent do you see yourself as a leader?

Overall, notice how strongly the way you think about leadership encourages you to see yourself as a leader and be a leader in your own right. You may be one of those not held back too much by this very common limit, in which case 'terrific'.

But if, like so many, you do have limiting beliefs around your own leadership, then simply notice them and go beyond them.

It's time instead to start focusing on who you want to be as a leader, what you're like when you're at your

best and how you've been in those moments when you've been at your brilliant best.

Leading is a natural activity, a part of all of us, regardless of position, title, or place in the hierarchy. You already have the Leadership Muscles needed. You simply need to develop them through practice.

"The illusion is obstinate and enduring: A mortal is seemingly anointed by the gods and is stamped with a unique gift that allows him or her to lead others. This person shines irrepressibly, and other mere mortals are compelled to follow. As prevalent as this notion is, it is demonstrably false, and any person who has seriously studied leadership has found that it is not a predetermined affair."

Warren Bennis

Limit Two: Not Being in Leader Mode

I've little time for endless debates about whether leaders are made or born. A far more useful angle that can help people grow as leaders is the idea that at times we are in our **Leader Mode** – times when we are at our best and making things happen – and at times we are not.

Take Jane, for example. I worked with her when she was the successful Chief Executive of a division of a major company. She was then promoted into a prestigious global position.

Jane was a proven leader but, one afternoon when I met her, she certainly wasn't in her Leader Mode. Her energy was flat, she'd lost sight of her ambitions for her team and her business, and she was bogged down in detailed analyses of the past results.

Sadly, I've met thousands of people like Jane; people in leadership positions who've lost sight of themselves as leaders and have slipped back into what I call their **Operator/Manager Mode**, where their focus is on managing and doing, not leading.

I now believe that this characteristic is one of the major reasons why so many organisations perform way below what's possible.

What's going on here? This is what happens to some degree to all of us:

In our early days at work we succeed by becoming effective Operators. We fix this and sort that. We are then promoted and start to develop a strong Manager Mode, in which we supervise other Operators.

Before long, we each have a well-honed Operator/Manager Mode in which we feel both competent and comfortable, and which we know has been one of the reasons for our success to date.

In addition, although organisations are asking the Janes of this world to lead, they can also put them under relentless pressure to review the past and manage the present, rather than focus on the future.

And this isn't all. Many Janes do not grasp how fundamentally different it is to lead; so they can spend almost all their time in Operator/Manager Mode without realising it.

As a result, even people as capable as Jane can spend more time than they want to in Operator/Manager Mode. Of course, we all need to spend time in all three modes.

However, I have yet to find anyone who at times doesn't slide back into Operator/Manager when being in Leader Mode is what is needed.

So pause here to think about what you're like.

- What do you notice about the ways in which you spend your time?
- How clear are you about what you're like in your Operator/Manager and Leader Modes?
- What has you slide into Operator/Manager Mode when actually you don't want to?
- What do you notice about how your organisation encourages you to be in one mode or another?

Have no doubt, we all sometimes limit ourselves as leaders in this way, but happily there is something very simple we can do to know this limit and go beyond it.

It's Conscious Practice! Simply raise your awareness of the times and places

you want to be in Leader Mode but have slipped into Operator/Manager Mode, and choose not to be.

This is how you do it:

- Remember some times when you've been in Leader Mode, when you've been at your best. How did you feel? How would you describe your energy? What were you doing? (If you struggle to recall some times, ask colleagues from your Support Team to give you examples.)
- Now list those times and places when you are in Operator/Manager Mode – in which meetings and interactions; on which projects; with who else in the room etc?
- In which of these situations do you want to be in Leader Mode?
- What's your picture of how you want to be at these times? Create a mental picture that has you feeling good and encourages you to be the leader you want to be. You can draw on the memories of when you've been in Leader Mode.
- Then, just ahead of these times, practise thinking about who you want to be.
- And then practise during these times being who you want to be.

This is one of the ways you can grow as a leader immediately. Some building of your Leadership Muscles may take time. But some of your practice can make a difference straight away. Have a stronger picture of you being the leader you want to be and simply practise being that leader in more situations, more of the time.

"Leadership is often spoken of as if it were simply advanced management. The presumption is that whatever the manager is supposed to do, the leader does more of and better. Leadership is not advanced management; it is radically different from management, and to equate the two is to miss an essential distinction."

Harrison Owen

In summary ...

You can influence dramatically how fast you grow as a leader. You can flex and build your Muscles every day and you'll build them faster with the help of a Support Team. Also, be clear that you already have an effective Leader Mode. Get out there and practise it.

IN PRACTICE

THE MARKETING SOCIETY

Gemma Greaves is Marketing Director of The Marketing Society and was a participant on her own Society's leadership programme that we help run. Before then, she'd tell you that she was, '110% busy, had no time to think and there weren't enough hours in the day'.

The course was a real wake-up call for Gemma because she saw that she was deep in Operator/Manager Mode and not in her best Leader Mode. She was busy managing the present and doing little to imagine how she wanted the Society to grow and how great she wanted it to be. This all changed after the programme. She picks up the story:

'I sat listening to this leadership stuff thinking, "It all sounds great but I haven't the time to think about that!" But then the simplicity of FED pulled me in and I realised I wasn't doing Future and hadn't really worked out what we were building as a Society because I wasn't in Leader Mode.

'So the first thing I did after the programme was sit down with my Chief Executive, Hugh Burkitt, and agree our future vision. We established the positioning "Inspiring Bolder Marketing Leadership" and a new structure for our programme that now runs through everything we think and do. And we saw that we could take this message and expand our network globally. Already we have a presence in India with more countries to follow. These are definitely exciting times for The Marketing Society.

'Personally, understanding my limiting beliefs and how to be where I want to be has been incredibly powerful both personally and professionally. Plus my team tells me I'm a better leader because together we have a clear vision and I'm giving them so much more room in which to grow and develop. Thank you, FED!'

3

Future—Engage—Deliver

... above anything else, leading is about being in touch with what you care about and then going for it.

- Future
 - Question 1 What do you care about?
 - Question 2 What do you want to lead for?
- Practices to build your Future Muscles
 - Be Guided by the Future you Want
 - Embrace the Big Picture, the Whole
- So why aren't we all already brilliant at leading?
- Future: How we Limit Ourselves
 - Question 3 Who is the Leader you want to be?

Future

In this chapter we'll make sure that the foundations of your leadership are in place. I will encourage you to create answers to three fundamental questions about your leadership and I will highlight specific practices which you can take on to build your Future Leadership Muscles.

Also, I'll help you identify how you limit yourself in the Future aspect of your leadership and how you can break through these limits.

Leading always starts in the Future. It always starts with ideas you have about what you'd like to see in the Future.

As I've already said, we all have the basic Leadership Muscle which allows us to imagine, dream or visualise what could be. For instance, you'll probably find it easy to dream about your next holiday or imagine something at work going really well. But when you're in your best Leader Mode there is another and immensely powerful factor at play. I want to draw your attention to this factor by telling you about Stephen, one of the most effective leaders I've worked with.

Interestingly, Stephen doesn't lead a team of people. He's never had more than a couple of direct reports, he's never run a main piece of the business and he's not on the executive team running this major corporation. Also, he wouldn't strike you instantly as inspirational and he couldn't tell you much about his psychometric profile.

However, there is something powerful in Stephen that I've found in every leader I've worked with – something that seems to be an essential ingredient of leadership and is more fundamental than anything to do with your title, position, personality or experience. It's this.

When you're in Leader Mode, like Stephen, you're 'up to something'. In other words you're in touch with something that's important to you and you're doing something about it.

This is what is so distinctive about the Future aspect of leading.

Leaders who are in touch with a Future that matters to them allow it to guide what they think and how they act every day.

Since I've known him, Stephen has always been 'up to something'; he's wanted his company to succeed. He didn't report to Richard, the Chief Executive, but he would regularly give Richard feedback about what he saw in the company that was and wasn't working. And if he wasn't meeting Richard, he would send him a personal letter to give him his feedback instead.

Not surprisingly, Richard began to value this truthful input so he invited Stephen to help facilitate his team meetings and give feedback on what he saw. Richard will tell you that, over the next couple of years, Stephen made a material difference to the ambition, culture and performance of the company – exactly what Stephen was 'up to' and wanted to make happen.

I know that, at times, you're just like Stephen. When you're in your best Leader Mode you don't have just any ideas about what you want to see in the Future. You have ideas directly linked to what you care about. And this is what gives you your drive and ambition and inspires you to take action.

Of course, being a leader who is 'up to something' doesn't guarantee that progress will be straightforward and easy. You'll meet resistance and apathy; you'll suffer setbacks and disappointments; you may have moments when you think about giving up. So why do you keep going? Because what you're up to matters to you. You care.

If there is only one idea you take from this book, my request is that you make it this one. Leadership is not about your competencies, skills and personality. It's first and foremost about being in touch with what you care about and then going for it.

There are other people who emphasise this critical point, too. Here's how they put it:

'In the corporate world there is so much pressure to say yes, even if we are only halfway there. Disapproval from the wrong quarter can be deadly for prospects and advancement. Yes or no, the voice throws us back on what we want for our life. It forces us to ask ourselves Who is speaking? Who came to work today? Who is working for what? What do I really care about?'

DAVID WHYTE, author and poet

'We can create the lives and organisations we desire only by understanding the enlivening spirit in us that always is seeking to express itself.'

MARGARET WHEATLEY, President, Berken Institute

'So the "how-to" books and the "great-men" books give people a formula that is missing the most critical ingredient that the great people had, which was they took a stand for something and did what ever had to happen.'

RICHARD PASCALE, Associate Fellow, Oxford University

I'm putting particular emphasis on this point because I'm not confident that you'll have been told this. I say this because every month I meet people wanting useful tools and techniques about leadership. But when I probe we quickly uncover that they are not in touch with what they care about, they haven't realised that this is where it all starts and so they don't have that energising feeling of being 'up to something'.

To make this real for you, I believe you need to answer two essential leadership questions. You'll be a more effective leader more of the time if you can quickly connect with your answers to these questions. These are usually among the first questions I ask all the leaders I work with.

Question 1 What do you care about?

Other ways to reflect on this question are to ask yourself what matters to you, what's important to you, what you value most or what you have most passion for.

This is where your leadership starts. You won't be a great leader for things you don't care about! You can be for what you do care about.

There is, of course, no one right way to answer this question or one right answer. And there are many different aspects of your life you might want to think about. Here are a few that might just prompt your thinking ...



As soon as you can, go and find some quiet time and start scribbling down your first ideas about what you care about

When you have had a go at this, there is something I want you to notice. How are you feeling? How is your energy? If you are not full of life and feeling good, you've not got to your answer.

Be clear, this is not an intellectual exercise. This is about connecting with *'the enlivening spirit in us that always is seeking to express itself'*. It's about tapping into your energy of passion, pride and possibility.

You may get in touch with this energy faster if you talk out loud to someone. Consider asking someone in your Support Team to sit you down and ask you questions like:

Ok, so tell me what matters to you.

What's important in your life?

What do you care about?

What matters deeply to you?

If you're still struggling, go ahead a few pages to read about how we limit ourselves in imagining the Future; this may free you up. And, if then you're still stuck, get in touch with us and we'll see if we can help.

Answering this question and feeling good and energised by your answer then prepares you to answer the next question to further develop your leadership.

"To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a little better; whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is the meaning of success."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Question 2 What do you want to lead for?

The job here is to link 'what you care about' to what is real, tangible and specific. So, what do you want to actually make happen in the Future you want?

There are various ways to get into this question. For example, what do you want to take action on? What results do you want to achieve? What specifically do you want to make happen that is part of what you care about?

I summarise all of these in the question 'What do you want to lead for?' and I encourage you to think about what you want to lead for in terms of your organisation, your colleagues, your customers and anywhere else in life where you have the opportunity to make a difference.

Again, notice your energy after you've answered this question. If there's any sense of 'I *should* lead for this' then beware. This isn't about settling for someone else's agenda or doing something dutifully. Rather it's about being aligned with what matters to you and it's you who gets to choose.

When you've answered these questions, I invite you to flex your Future Muscles now. Imagine what could be next for you, now you are in touch with what you care about and what you want to lead for. Here are some questions to stimulate you:

- What could you do next to further what you care about?
- What new conversations could you have – and with whom – about what you want to see happen?
- What's happening in your life that you will simply stop tolerating and do something about?
- In which situations could you switch from Operator/Manager Mode to Leader Mode and what new opportunities might appear?

My hope for you is that in addressing these questions you will open up all sorts of new possibilities for you as a leader. But now is the time I also want to emphasise an important insight I want you to see about yourself:

There are times when you have already been the leader you want to be, bringing into the world what it is you care about, making real what you want to lead for.

That is, being a leader is already a part of you; you already have an effective Leader Mode. The question is not 'Will I ever be a leader when I get old enough or at a senior enough level?' It's more about how you can grow even faster as a leader to make even more of a difference to what matters to you now.

And the way you do this is by building your Leadership Muscles through Conscious Practice. Here's how.

"As I look back I note that most of the things I was trying to say revolved around the small cluster of basics that have resonated with me for most of my adult life. To communicate as an authentic leader, you have to look into your own experience and find those themes that are most important to you."

Derek Walcott

FED IN PRACTICE

DAVID MADDISON

Like all headteachers, David Maddison is being challenged to develop himself and his staff as leaders. However, David has inspired us by using FED to also help develop his primary school children as leaders!

He writes: "You know that FED has helped us as teachers wonderfully to have different conversations with each other. Well, FED is also helping us to open up discussions with children around leadership and develop their early understanding of what it is to lead.

"We want the challenges we're offering our pupils to engage and involve them in learning in a way that they will enjoy, be positively affected by and remember. As part of this, we are moving from talking with pupils about what their "learning objectives" need to be to having a conversation with them about what we are up to and asking them: "What are you Up2?"

"We're having more conversations with pupils about their futures, building on what they are Up2 now, and how we can help them explore what they'd like to get Up2 in their lives. All of this is part of inspiring them and engaging them and having them go for (Go4) it.

"For the kids, this is such cool language. Up2, Go4 – it's definitely got a chance! We are also about to experiment with giving children an "Up2 Book" which will be personal to them (i.e. not marked by teachers) in which they can keep their own ideas, personal thoughts, notes, etc. All part of emphasising the concept and importance of future-focused leading, goal-driven living and knowing the direction you are travelling in.

"Even children can be up to something. What are you Up2 and what are you Going4? And if you haven't already got a leadership journal, how about getting your own Up2 Book?"

Practices to build your Future Muscles

When you're in touch with what you care about and what you want to lead for, the core foundations of your leadership are in place. But how can these foundations influence your leadership each day? The short answer is by consciously taking on two practices that I have seen effective leaders excel at.

1 Be Guided by the Future you Want

I'll always remember a phone call with an HR Director, Nic, about his latest staff survey results. He told me that he was pleased to see that the score on one factor had moved up from 30 to 37 per cent. 'That sounds good,' I said, 'and ideally what would you like the score to be?' 'Oh, 80 per cent,' he replied, instantly seeing the result in a new light.

Nic had done what we all tend to do; he'd viewed the present from the past. He was comparing where the company had got to with where they'd come from – it's a common practice of Operator/Managers. In Leader Mode, however, we view the present through a different lens; we compare where we are with where we want to be.

As someone once said, 'It's not what a vision is; it's what a vision does.' That is, what matters is what it 'does' at this very moment now to guide your focus and thinking. Your ideas about the Future you want give you a powerful lens through which to look at current reality. This lens influences what you see and pay attention to. It helps you to focus on what matters. It helps you see what is working and what may be missing that you'll need to put in place.

To make sure that you are being Guided by the Future you Want rather than the present or the past, practise asking yourself the following questions:

- How does what exists now compare with how I want things to be?
- What's the size of the gap between where things are and where I want them to be?
- What's missing from today that I want to see in the Future?
- On what fronts must I work in order to move fastest to the Future I want?
- What must I attend to today to move to where I want to be?

Yes, make sure to acknowledge progress from the past – the score did move from 30 to 37 per cent. But questions like these will help to ensure you never lose sight of your dream, your aspiration, your equivalent of the 80 per cent score that you are looking for.

"The goal of Strategic Intent is to fold the future back into the present. The important question is not 'How will next year be different from this year?' but 'What must we do differently next year to get closer to our Strategic Intent?'"

Hamel and Prahalad

2 Embrace the Big Picture, the Whole

I've facilitated many team meetings in different parts of the world and I've often asked myself the question, 'If I didn't know who the hierarchical leader in this room was, how would I work it out?' The answer started to dawn on me a few years ago. I began to see that the leader was not necessarily the brightest person in the room, as some of my old thinking about leadership led me to believe. What I saw was that often the leader was the most practised

at taking a couple of steps back from the content and looking at the bigger picture, the context.

Being a master of context involves being able to see not whether we are climbing the ladder successfully but whether it's leaning against the right wall!

At times, this will include seeing how this project or goal fits in with other priorities or other activities elsewhere in the organisation. Or how it compares with what others in the field are up to. Or what customers are saying they really want. Or where society and technology trends are headed.

So the second practice that will build your Future Leadership Muscles is to keep revisiting the bigger picture, the context, in order that you can speak to not just the 'what' is needed by 'when' but also 'why' it is needed at all.

This is a considerable shift from our learned behaviour as Operators and Managers when we developed the ability to focus on a part of the whole, a task or a short-term goal. In Leader Mode we need to be able to see the whole as well as the parts. And, if you've answered the questions earlier in this chapter, you will have already flexed this Muscle.

Notice I didn't ask you in those questions what you wanted to achieve on a short-term task, project or challenge you have. I first asked you to step back and get in touch with the whole of what you care about, the context that will shape your leadership.

Similarly, you can practise building this muscle each day by answering those questions that get you in touch with the bigger picture, such as:

- Let's remind myself, why am I doing this?
- How does what I'm working on connect with what I care about and am leading for?
- What is the bigger whole that what I'm working on is a part of?

These can be particularly valuable questions at times of difficulty. One of our most powerful ways of bouncing back from setbacks, upsets and disappointments is to pause and get back in touch with what we care about

and why we are doing what we're doing. It's so easy to lose sight of this picture in the hurly burly of everyday life.

To demonstrate some of the power of putting both of these practices into action, let me tell you about a dot com business I've worked with. The team in question had been pleased with their healthy rate of growth, until they stepped back and properly looked at the bigger picture of technology and customer trends, the rate of competition growth and where the world could be in three to five years' time. It was only then that they saw that they'd need to move much faster, build new alliances and turn lots of their thinking on its head, in order to have the winning Future they wanted. By shifting their context they are now being guided by a much clearer picture of the Future they Want and are moving there at a dramatically faster rate.

"The ability to maintain perspective in the midst of action is critical. We call this skill 'getting off the dance floor and going to the balcony', an image that captures stepping back from the action and asking, 'What's really going on here?'"

Heifetz and Linsky

So why aren't we all already brilliant at leading?

There is something I notice about everyone I work with. As well as having our own unmistakable talents and magic, we also have our limits. And what distinguishes the fastest-growing leaders is that they have not only exercised their strengths, they have also consistently sought to go beyond their limits.

In this book, as well as helping you to build your Leadership Muscles I also want to help you see how you too limit yourself as a leader and so give you the best chance to go beyond those limits. I outline the most common ways in which I see people limiting themselves in the chapters on each of the Future, Engage and Deliver practices of leading. At times, it's working on your limits that'll give you the greatest progress in your development.

Future: How we Limit Ourselves

You could say that being good at the Future aspect of leading is just about imagining and having ideas about what you want. And you'd be right, it is

simple – but I have seen three very common ways in which people limit themselves and their Future.

- 1 **Thinking from the Present.** I have flagged this issue a number of times already. The pull of the present can be overwhelming. The immediacy of what's happening now can have us lose sight of the big picture and where we want to be. There isn't one leader I've worked with who hasn't from time to time got sucked into the detail and slipped back into Operator/Manager Mode unknowingly – it's human! The key here is to be conscious. Ask yourself, 'Am I thinking from the present or past, or am I being Guided by the Future I Want?'
- 2 **'I can't see How'.** One of the most effective ways we have of limiting ourselves in life is not to take things on because we don't know ahead of time how we are going to do them. However, this 'not knowing' doesn't hold you back when you're in Leader Mode. When you're 'up to something' you rarely know exactly how you're going to make it happen. You simply want to make it so and you get on with it. This is the power of commitment. Think of all the things you've achieved in life that you didn't know how to do when you started but you were determined you'd succeed. Take walking and riding a bike as prime examples!

"Until one is committed there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back – always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: That the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too."

W H Murray

- 3 **Our Limiting Beliefs.** And now for the most powerful way we limit ourselves. If we really want to be at our best more of the time this is a topic we really need to explore. So let's start here and then go into more depth later in Chapter 7.

I'll move into this topic by telling you a bit more about my own journey. I used to think it was only me who was plagued with self-doubt and who questioned whether I was really good enough or smart enough to do the jobs I was doing.

It seemed to me that everyone else appeared to be confident while I was worrying about whether I'd be found out!

Over the years I have learned that this is a totally false picture. Through honest conversations with many impressive people I have come to realise that all of us have doubts, fears and uncertainties – and that at times these beliefs and feelings seriously hold us back.

If you met me today you'd probably think that I'm a confident sort of guy. So you'd likely be surprised to know that from time to time I'm thinking, 'What am I doing here? I'm just a lad from Wigan!'

Such thinking is an example of our Limiting Beliefs – and, while you may not share the same ones that I have, be in no doubt that you have your own set of Limiting Beliefs that sometimes will hold you back from being who you want to be. Common Limiting Beliefs that many people have shared with me include:

I'm too young I'm too old
I'm only ... I'm not bright enough
I can't do it
I'm not worthy of more I'm just ...
I'm just not good enough
I don't have a degree

Which of these strikes a chord with you? The message I want to underline here is that such beliefs can seriously work against you flexing your Future Muscles. When I've worked with people struggling to tell me about the Future they'd really like, I've invariably found that they are held back for reasons linked to their Limiting Beliefs. For instance, some people don't see how they deserve any more than they've currently got – I can relate to that one. Others

won't allow themselves to think about what they really want because they don't believe they could make it happen, so why set themselves up for failure?

I've explored the power of Limiting Beliefs with thousands of people and I have some good news and some bad news! The bad news is that they don't go away. The good news is that there is a lot you can do to loosen their grip on you. Here's what you do.

First, practise being conscious of them. The power of Limiting Beliefs often fades rapidly when we're aware of them and name them. So if I catch myself feeling powerless and not in Leader Mode, I'll ask myself what I'm thinking and feeling. For me, it will often be something linked to, 'I'm just a lad from Wigan' or 'I'm not good enough'. Recognising this gives me the chance to see if I really do believe these notions. Most of the time, I don't really. It's as if these Limiting Beliefs have been asleep and they've been awakened by something or someone and they're now controlling how I'm feeling and behaving.

So for now ...

- Think of some times when you feel powerless, trapped or just ineffective. Then ask yourself what you're believing about yourself in such moments.
- Check in and ask yourself how much you really really believe that these ideas are really true.
- Smile.
- And then connect with your answer to the next key question for anyone growing themselves as a leader.

"Most of us hold one of two contradictory beliefs that limit our ability to create what we want. The more common is belief in our powerlessness – our inability to bring into being all the things we really care about. The other belief centres on unworthiness – that we do not deserve to have what we truly desire."

Peter Senge

Question 3 Who is the Leader you want to be?

On your journey as a leader you will have setbacks and disappointments that knock your energy and confidence. You will have moments when it'll feel that your Limiting Beliefs are true. What I strongly recommend you turn to at these times is a description of what you're like at your best, when you're being just who you want to be. This way you can give yourself a moment to choose who you want to be.

Let me tell you about the first time I practised this consciously a few years ago. At that time, about 80 per cent of my work was in one global company and I was helping to stimulate a powerful culture change across many of its operations. Then, one Tuesday, I got a call from a director, saying, 'Steve, I think you should know, I've just been in a meeting with the Chairman and he's said, "I am not having Steve Radcliffe run this company".' Oh dear!

On Friday, I was having lunch with this Chairman and, as I was about to step into the meeting room, the HR director grabbed me to say that the Chairman was in a foul mood and he'd forgotten I was coming for lunch. As you can imagine, my Limiting Beliefs seemed at that moment very real! I was feeling quite afraid and was ready to run home. But instead I took a quiet moment and asked myself who I wanted to be. My answer was that I wanted to be an expert consultant making a positive difference to the lives of thousands of people in this organisation.

So I took a deep breath, swapped greetings with the Chairman, and dived straight in. I asked him to tell me if I was causing him any nuisance through the work we were doing. We talked it through, everything was sorted and I continued to help him and his leadership team to create a new, vibrant culture throughout the organisation. I had been who I'd wanted to be.

It isn't always easy, but it's always possible for you to ask the same question I asked myself. Who is the leader you want to be?

You need to have an energising answer to the question and my request to you is to write down your response here and now. Don't hold back. There's no room for modesty here or playing safe because your Limiting Beliefs are

talking quietly to you. Flex your Future Muscles and picture the Future when you're being at your very best, being the leader you want to be.

The leader I want to be is

When you've answered this question, notice your energy and recognise how you're feeling. This knowledge of who you want to be is something to remember and use. When things aren't going well or you're not on form, pause; get in touch with how you want to be and get energised by the prospect.

Imagine if you were that way now, what you would do, how you would feel, how you would speak. Allow yourself to be uplifted by being connected to who you are when you're at your best.

This is one of the most powerful practices I can suggest to you. You'll create more of the Future you want when you're being the leader you want to be. And I believe this is such an important practice that I have more to say on this topic later in Chapter 7. When you've finished this chapter, feel free to go there if you want to and then come back to the next chapter on Engage.

"Becoming a leader is an individual process and means a deep awareness of who we are and the sort of human being we want to become. Once we know this, it can be expressed in our relationships and actions at work."

Hilarie Owen

In summary ...

We have started at the foundations of your leadership. Everything else sits on top of your answers to the big three questions in this chapter:

- 1 What do you care about?
- 2 What do you want to lead for?
- 3 Who is the Leader you want to be?

Being clear on what you care about, what you're leading for and who you want to be as a leader will give you clarity and the strength to bounce back in times of difficulty.

And watch out for those Limiting Beliefs. They cause all sorts of mischief if you let them!

FED IN PRACTICE

STEVE HOLLIDAY

Steve Holliday has been practising being the leader he wants to be in his role in Siemens. He writes,

'I was heading south on the train last night from Newcastle, having just met a number of new colleagues. I felt exhilarated that we had built relationships way more than I'd hoped for. And I reflected on how this had happened.

'Before my meetings, my energy had been bouncing between excitement about what I hoped to achieve, mixed with some anxiety about the unknown and how it might go. I had wondered whether they would like me, whether I would show up at my best and whether I was good enough! Playing with such feelings and thoughts helped me reconnect with who I am when I'm at my best and it was then this simple – I went for it – without knowing the end result, but guided by a future I'm passionate about.

'This reflection also meant that when I met my new colleagues I was listening well and paying attention to them while staying true to what I stood for and believed in. This sense of exploring possibility felt rather like the start of a voyage where, despite the uncertainties ahead, we were able to generate an early sense of confidence, belief and commitment.

'As I passed Sheffield, I shared my feelings with my friend, Martin, and his response made me smile. He asked, "Why isn't it like this all the time? It's effortless."

'My answer is that it can be more of the time if we choose it. But in order for that to occur we have to pay real attention to ourselves, our relationships and the exciting futures we're passionate about. And while we may not always get it right, it becomes so much more likely when we're ready every day to practise showing up as the leader we want to be.'

4

Future–Engage–Deliver

Engage is fundamentally different to 'communicate at' or 'tell' and not enough people get this.

- Future–**Engage**–Deliver
- 'Engage', different from 'Future'
- Levels of Engagement
- Engagement: What's involved
- The Relationship to Results Pyramid
- The Four Aspects of Engagement
 - 1 Relationships
 - 2 Possibilities, Ideas
 - 3 Opportunities, Priorities
 - 4 Actions
- Three 'Engage' Practices
 - 1 Consciously Practise 'Engaging' rather than 'Transmitting/Communicating'
 - 2 Consciously Practise Building Big Relationships
 - 3 Consciously Manage your 'Shadow of a Leader'

Future–Engage–Deliver

In this chapter, I'll help you see how Engage adds power to the Future aspect of leading, what the key ingredients of effective engagement are, and what practices you can take on to be a significantly more engaging leader.

Tim is the head of a high-profile organisation where he leads tens of thousands of people. And he's a world-class example of how *not* to engage people! I'll bet you know a few people like Tim.

Yes, Tim is clear on what he wants to lead for but his predominant style is to 'transmit' and 'tell', rather than 'connect' with people and 'engage' them. People around him feel talked at and at times talked down to. It's as if he simply expects people to obey. And, although people go along with a lot of what he wants, crucially Tim does not leave people *wanting* to bring their very best and *wanting* to go that extra mile.

In contrast to this situation, I often see the magic of what's possible when people are truly engaged. So I continue to be amazed that I regularly come across 'Tims' who are miles away from tapping into the brilliance of the people around them.

So my encouragement to you is not simply to 'transmit', 'present', 'report' or 'tell' but look to 'engage' people so they want to work with you and build a Future with you. This is how you add pace and velocity to what you're leading for.

"All of the winning leaders I've studied share a passion for people. They also know how to keep themselves engaged in what they are doing at the moment. Leaders focus on how they make people feel after each interaction."

Noel Tichy

'Engage', different from 'Future'

The Future piece of leading focuses on you. It's about your thinking, your imagining and getting clear on what you care about. In Future, your awareness

is on yourself, how your spirits are and you choosing to be in Leader Mode. You can actually do great work in Future without needing contact with anyone else.

Engage is different. Engage is about your impact on others, how you connect with them, how you stimulate their thinking and impact their energy. You still need self-awareness but in Engage you must also be aware of the situation and how people are behaving and feeling around you. This is the 'emotional intelligence' territory.

Another way to think about Engage is to recognise that it always happens inside your relationships with others. So much of your ability to engage others lies in your ability to build big, strong relationships that help you get the job done.

When I'm talking about Big Relationships I'm not talking about you liking everyone and everyone liking you. I'm pointing to the sort of relationships you already have that you might call strong, easy or healthy ... relationships that really help you work together and get stuff done.

You could say that in your Big Relationships, people are not engaged just in the work you do together, they are also engaged in you.

This is an important distinction – because when you're looking to engage people to work with you, the best results will come when they are choosing to engage both in the Future you want to build together and in you. You know this from your own experience. Think about times when you've been truly engaged by another, and notice that while you've been engaging in the Future goal or project you've also been engaging in them.

Let's go back to Tim and see how he was seriously limiting himself as a leader. Here was a man who was very bright with bags of Intellectual Energy to bring to the Future aspect of leading. But he was low on Emotional Energy, the energy of human relationships. And even worse, he believed that in order to have people follow him it would simply be a case of bringing more Intellectual Energy – more logic, more analysis, more argument.

Please note I'm not saying you have to be a certain sort of inspirational or charismatic person. What I'm saying is that there is a job to be done in your

interactions with others if you want to have the Future you want. To one extent or another, you will be engaging people around you. I'm encouraging you to be conscious of this job to be done and do it as best you can, whatever your personality or other traits.

One of the ways in which I helped Tim with his engagement was to help him discover what impact he was having on his colleagues. He learned about this by asking them for feedback and he was surprised to find that there was a big gap between the impact he wanted to have, his **Impact Intended**, and the impact he actually had, his **Impact Felt**. With this information, he was able to see that he needed to engage people differently to help them want to bring their very best. This was the start of a dramatic shift in Tim's effectiveness as a leader.

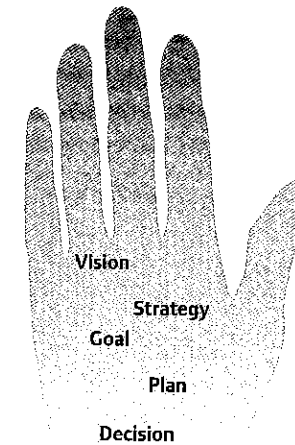
But before we look at how you can be even more engaging, I want to be absolutely clear about the benefits that come from people being engaged. There are a couple of models I use for these topics. You can download them from www.futureengagedeliver.com/book.

Levels of Engagement

In the Engage leg of leading, there are two particular aspects to pay attention to. First, there is of course the Future you want expressed as a goal, strategy or plan. Second, and at times more importantly, there is also how people are relating to that goal or plan. If your leading includes too much 'transmit' or 'tell', you may not notice where people are and how they are relating to what you want. On the other hand, if your intention is to engage people, you'll pay close attention to this matter.

So what will you do if others don't care how inspiring your vision is, or how compelling your strategy is? What if they resist what you want? The following model, adapted from Peter Senge's 'Possible attitudes toward a vision' (Senge 1993), gives you a way of thinking about where they might be in relation to the Future you are leading for as well as providing you with some powerful insights about how to engage them.

The Future I Want



Level of Engagement



On the left-hand side of this model you will see listed various aspects of the Future you may be leading for. On the right-hand side are some terms that describe the ways that people might be relating to, or are engaged with, that Future. And it is this right-hand side that I now want to examine.

Starting at the bottom right of the model, you'll see the word **Resistance**. Here people don't want what you want and they'll resist. They may put down what you're about, or engage colleagues in going a different way. Either way, you certainly won't get a lot of pace from them while they stay here.

At the next level up, some people simply may not care about what you're up to, they are in **Apathy**. People in this space can be the most difficult to engage and shift.

At a slightly more positive level, some people may be in **Grudging compliance**. There's a sense here of, 'Well, I wouldn't do that, but if that's what you want me to do, ok. But I'm only doing it because I have to, not because I agree with it.' Here you get some traction, but there's also a distinct dragging of feet.

One step up from here is **Willing compliance**, the territory of 'good soldiers'. Here, people will take actions in line with the vision, strategy, plan. There's a sense of, 'Ok, if that's what you want, I'll get on with it,' but there is no burning enthusiasm. There's a lot that can be achieved by people in **Willing compliance**. This Level of Engagement can be enough to have 'business as usual' run pretty well.

At the levels I've highlighted so far, people are at best 'going along with' what you want. But the real magic occurs when people *choose* to join you, when they want what it is you want and naturally bring their creativity, enthusiasm and ideas. Here, they are **Enrolled**.

But even when people are Enrolled, they can be distracted and they may switch to other priorities. This all changes when the people you engage get **Committed** to what you're up to. Now they bring their own energy because what they care about is touched and they really do want what you want.

I use this model a lot with clients. It really helps prompt a conversation about how engaged people are and how engaged a leader wants them to be. Let's use the model now to look at what you're like and what's happening around you. First, notice for yourself:

- What in life and work are you resistant to or apathetic about? What priorities that others see as important do you not want to put any energy into? If you look, you'll see things at home and at work.
- What in life and work do you 'go along with'? What do others want to see or make happen that you comply with but don't bring anything extra to? (To this question, I always think about jobs round the house!)
- What in life and work have you chosen to participate in and make happen? In what are you engaged, i.e. Enrolled or Committed?
- How are your energy and attitude different when you are engaged?
- What extra is possible because you're engaged? What can happen faster?

Most people say that they are very different when they are engaged versus 'going along with' or not caring. I want you in touch with how you are different

so you can imagine just how different your team, project or organisation could be if most of its people were truly engaged.

Now, how would you say that people in your organisation relate to its vision, mission or goals? What are some of the priorities in your organisation that people are generally not committed to? How well do you see your organisation's leaders 'engaging' people? And just how different would the place be if people were engaged and bringing their very best to work each day? What could happen that doesn't seem possible today?

You may work in an organisation with high levels of engagement. Unfortunately, you are in the minority. Surveys galore regularly quantify low levels of engagement in organisations the world over and this fits with what I have seen on my travels.

Now take a moment to consider where people you work with are in relation to what you are up to. Can you identify those who are engaged and those who are not? What do you notice about how much easier it is working with those who are engaged? How much does work happen faster?

Part of my ambition here is to help you think much more about consciously engaging others and building your Engage Leadership Muscles. To that end, let's now look at what's involved in engaging others, and how you can become even more effective at it.

"Full engagement begins with feeling eager to work in the morning and equally happy to return home in the evening. It means being able to immerse yourself in the mission you are on, whether that is grappling with a creative challenge at work, spending time with loved ones or simply having fun. Full engagement implies a fundamental shift in the way we live our lives."

Loehr and Schwartz

Engagement: What's involved

Again, let me restate that this is not completely new territory for you. There are already times you are engaging and do engage others. Also, you already know

quite a bit about what's involved in making engagement happen. I know this because I've asked thousands of people to help identify the key ingredients of engagement and I've never been met with silence!

Demonstrate this to yourself now by thinking about someone who you would say is engaging. Alternatively, identify how you are when you're engaging or think of a time when you've been engaged by someone. What were some of the ingredients present when engagement happened? Before reading on, note down your first thoughts here:

What people usually come up with when I pose this question are the following kinds of characteristics: enthusiasm from the engager; authenticity; my opinion is listened to; a hook or point of interest; they are talking to me; a request to do something.

There isn't a definitive list because leaders engage people differently and people get engaged differently, but happily I've seen it's possible to group all the possible ingredients under just four headings. I believe you'll need to pay attention to these if you're going to be great at engaging others.

The Relationship to Results Pyramid

Here is my all-time favourite model inside the *Future-Engage-Deliver* framework. At some time, I'll use it with every client because it's so quick to reveal what's happening in any interaction with either an individual or group. When things aren't working for you as a leader, it quickly points to why that is and what you can do about it. If there were one model I'd want to influence how you read situations, meetings and any other interactions, this would be the one. It will help you in many ways, including how to be a more engaging leader.

Basically, to get things done, we first generate **Possibilities and Ideas** of what could be. We then choose certain **Opportunities and Priorities** that we'll plan and focus on. And then we'll take **Actions** inside those Opportunities. And this leads to **Results**. It looks like this:

Results

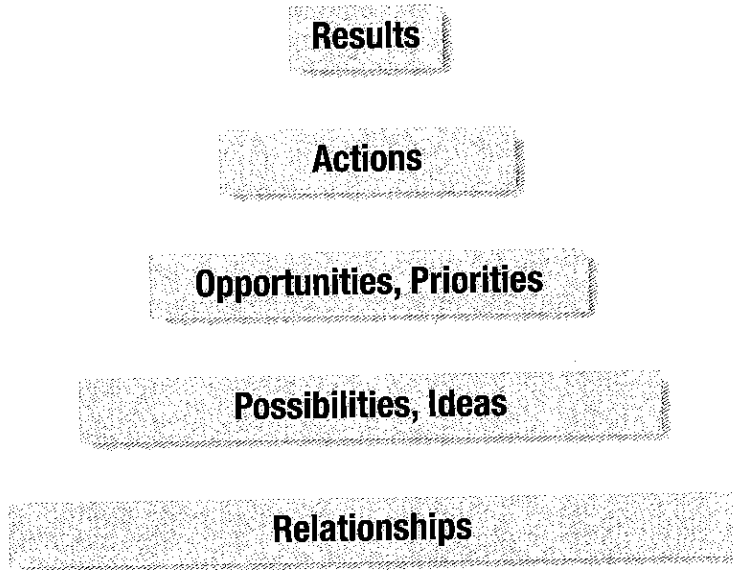
Actions

Opportunities, Priorities

Possibilities, Ideas

There's no rocket science here, but there is real value in you being able to separate the different aspects to making Results happen. However, although this all looks simple and straightforward, the problem is that human beings

are involved! And all the work that goes on inside this pyramid happens inside our **Relationships**. So the full Pyramid is this:



There is a very good reason why the shape of the model is a Pyramid – and I'd really like to shout it from the rooftops:

You have to have Relationships big enough to get the job done.

Remember, by 'big enough' I mean 'strong enough' or 'good enough'.

I am in this territory every month when I'm with leaders who've done a great job on vision, strategy, budgets or plans but aren't getting traction because people aren't engaged. What's missing is so clear – they haven't got Relationships big enough for people to be engaged and want to move forward with them. Remember Tim? He had been a classic example of this kind of leader and the Pyramid for him looked like this:

Results

Actions

Opportunities, Priorities

Possibilities, Ideas

Relationships

As you can see, in Tim's world there is much in place. There is no shortage of Possibilities. Priorities have been identified and the desired Action is clear. But the Relationships Tim typically has with people are small and so they hold back from being truly engaged by him.

And Tim is not alone. Many leaders I come across in all walks of life are limiting themselves and their ambitions by not attending to this crucial aspect of leading – the size and nature of their Relationships.

I want to be really clear here to anyone searching for the tips and techniques of leadership or the processes involved. The Future aspect of leadership is about who you are being when you are alive with a sense of a Future you want. The Engage aspect is about how you show up in your Relationships.

That is, leadership is about what you're like and how you come across, not what techniques you've got to bring to the party or what processes you want to put in place.

Your influence and impact on others comes via your Relationships. These are the channels through which you lead others, engage others and have them want to walk with you. They have to be big enough to get the job done.

I'm going to reinforce this message in different ways but for now I want to help you use the Pyramid to see what's central to effective engagement and how you can up your game.

"Leadership is a relationship. It's a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow. Sometimes, the relationship is one to one. Sometimes, it's one to many. Regardless of the number, leaders must master the dynamics of this relationship."

Jim Kouzes

FED IN PRACTICE

JOHN HARPER

A few years ago when John Harper became UK Managing Director of Hasbro, one of the two global toy companies, things were in pretty bad shape. The four UK businesses were losing money, morale and confidence were at an all-time low, and customer service was non-existent.

John needed to move quickly to get the business back into financial health and re-energise the people, and this would be made doubly difficult by a significant and unavoidable downsizing.

John had become a big fan of FED earlier in his career and he knew that this was the time to be bold in his leadership. His brief to me was clear. He wanted his teams to connect to three big FED ideas:

- 1 What is the Future we want and how great can we be?
- 2 How do we Play to Win and perform At Our Best?
- 3 How do we build our Relationships internally and with customers so we can deliver the future together as a team?

To get started, John closed the companies for a day and brought everyone together to start exploring these ideas. We had a truly transformational day. People spoke the truth about how things had been and how they felt, and then went on to co-invent the future they wanted, with new stronger relationships as the foundation.

From that day on, it was John's leadership and the leadership he sparked in others that turned the company round. He's now running a great Hasbro business across Europe and says, 'Re-energising the UK business was such a rewarding time. We transformed customer service levels, profitability and morale. It's simple, really. Imagine a great future. Liberate the people. Build great relationships.'

The Four Aspects of Engagement

I have guided hundreds of leaders on ways they can be more engaging in their one-on-one conversations, with teams or in larger groups. When people have been engaged, ingredients in each of the four boxes of the Pyramid leading to Results have been present. Let's identify what's involved at each level.

1 Relationships

The idea of 'engaging' is getting more press these days but more leaders are talking about 'engaging' rather than being 'engaging'. What most of them haven't grasped – or are avoiding – is that engagement only happens in a particular kind of relationship.

The truth is that you will be most engaging if people feel valued in their relationship with you. Put it another way, if people feel listened to by you, feel that their opinion matters to you, believe that you actively want them involved, and get acknowledged by you, then you'll be going a long way to engaging them. At best, your relationship with them gives them a feeling of being in partnership with you, up to something together.

To get the power of this aspect, go to the flip-side for a moment. How engaged

would you be by someone whom you felt didn't value your opinion, didn't listen to you, you didn't feel acknowledged by, and you got no sense of partnership from? Almost certainly you'd not be engaged.

And you can check this for yourself with these prompts:

- Describe the nature and feel of the relationship you have with people you are readily engaged by.
- Now describe it with people you're not engaged by.
- Similarly, what do you see about your relationships with people you easily engage and those you don't?

Be in no doubt – engaging others is so much easier when it's underpinned by a Big Relationship. And this happens when people see that you are real and authentic. They feel they can trust you and be safe around you and this has them believe in you and what it is that you want. Your challenge then is clear – to build these bigger relationships with all the people who you want to lead.

"Now we have to add another denomination: we must develop the ability to form relationships in such a way that people get a whole lot more done a whole lot quicker. Trusting, supportive, and energising relationships are the new currency."

John Childress

2 Possibilities, Ideas

You will help yourself engage others if you create a sense of possibilities about the Future, and ideas of how things could be. This is how you can lift the spirits of people, spark their Spirit Energy, raise their optimism and sense of hope.

But again, notice how your focus is different in Engage from what it was in Future.

In Future, your job is to connect with Possibilities that lift your spirits. However, in Engage the key is to spark Possibilities in others that are meaningful to them.

This is a shift of focus many leaders don't figure out. They can be excited about the Future and can automatically assume others will be too. Sometimes others might be. But what you've really got to do is help people see Possibilities for themselves and what they care about in what's being explored.

Put it another way, where does engagement take place? It takes place over there in other people, so your job is to help ignite Possibilities over there – and not be content just because you're pretty excited over here.

So how can you share what you're up to in a way that sparks Possibilities in others? My one-word answer is **Co-invention**. This can be the most powerful way of helping people move up the Levels of Engagement – by inviting them in to co-invent Possibilities of

- what the Future could be like,
- what 'great' would look like,
- what we'd need to work on to get there,
- what could be some next steps,
- how we would need to work together, and so on.

In other words, you will engage people more by valuing them and asking them to be involved in the thinking about the Future rather than you simply delivering a finished vision. This doesn't mean you ignore what it is you care about. Rather, it means also inviting Co-invention that builds others' sense of ownership for what you are leading for. Some of the art of leading is bringing your leadership for what you care about and inviting Co-invention at the same time. As ever, you'll improve with Conscious Practice.

"If I were to wish for anything I should not wish for wealth and power, but for the passionate sense of what can be, for the eye which sees the possible. Pleasure disappoints, possibility never. And what wine is so sparkling, so intoxicating as possibility?"

Søren Kierkegaard

3 Opportunities, Priorities

After watching many leaders engage their colleagues, I've concluded that getting things right in the bottom two boxes of the Pyramid – Relationships and Possibilities – is where engagement stands or falls.

However, working here alone leaves room for people to go off in all sorts of directions – and this may not be appropriate if you want them to focus in on particular Opportunities and Priorities.

It's also worth saying that some people connect more quickly to more tangible ideas than to what can seem intangible Possibilities. Sometimes you can help people get to the 'oh, I see' moment by being more specific about what you want to work on together.

For example, you may want to link the idea of being 'the best company or team in the field' with the Priorities of being specifically the best at service, quality, rate of innovation or focus on customer, client or patient in order to engage the full energy of people. That is, this is where some serious planning is done, to convert broad ideas into specific areas you'll choose to focus on.

Again, you can raise the Level of Engagement by inviting Co-invention here. For example, you may want others' views on what areas of Opportunity they believe you should focus on if you're to be the best. Or if you have decided on the Opportunities you'll focus on, you might ask, 'How do you see we can excel in the areas we are going to focus on or how would we need to work differently to excel in these areas?' Such Co-invention builds ownership and prepares for action.

4 Actions

Leadership doesn't end with engaging people. It ends with Deliver – that is, Possibilities getting focused into specific Opportunities, and then Results being delivered through focused Actions.

On the bridge from Engage to Deliver are the conversations you have about what Actions are needed. At the core of these conversations are Requests and Promises. If you want to move yourself and others into Action mode, move

from co-inventing ideas and sharing opinions and points of view into making powerful Requests and Promises. Let me explain.

Just as I believe that

Leaders build Big Relationships

I also say that

Leaders make Big Requests.

Many of us hold back here – yes, it's those Limiting Beliefs again that can get in the way. But in your best Leader Mode, you ask for what you want. You're Guided by the Future you Want and you make Big Requests in line with it. Standing by your Promises and helping others do the same with the help of your Requests ensures that you turn ideas and dreams about the Future into reality. So just consider for a moment:

- How well developed is your Leadership Muscle of making Big Requests?
- To what extent in life are you strong in asking for what you want?
- In which situations and relationships do you ask fully for what you want?
- What's holding you back when you don't make the Request you'd really like to?

The good news here is that whatever you're like at the moment you can become much more effective as a leader through the Conscious Practice of making Big Requests.

And one way to practise, both ahead of and during conversations, is to ask yourself the question, 'If I could have anything at all here, what would it be?' Then practise making the Request.

"The capacity to establish high performance-improvement expectations continues to be the most universally underdeveloped skill."

Robert Schaffer

To summarise then

The wonderful Pyramid model lays out in a simple way the four spaces that need to be addressed for people to work together to deliver excellent results. It also shows you the four aspects of Engage that you'll need to attend to.

They are:

- 1 Your engaging of others happens inside your Relationships and engagement happens a lot faster inside Big Relationships.
- 2 Engagement is fuelled by Possibilities that others can see for themselves linked to the Future they want. Co-invention can be immensely powerful at sparking these Possibilities and raising the Level of Engagement.
- 3 Engagement is then sharpened by agreement on the specific Opportunities and Priorities to be focused on.
- 4 And the bridge to Deliver is made by making Big Requests of others to elicit Promises to take Action.

You can grow rapidly as an engaging leader through your Conscious Practice. To maximise your rate of growth I want to finish this chapter by pointing you towards three muscle-building practices.

Three 'Engage' Practices

1 Consciously Practise 'Engaging' rather than 'Transmitting/Communicating'

Your interactions with others will be a mix of 'transmitting, telling, presenting and reporting' to them and 'engaging' them. But how many of those instances could be opportunities you take to engage people in you and what you are up to? The answer is certainly more than you've been aware of to date.

When you're up to something, you're actively looking for opportunities to engage people. So do this consciously. Make it a Conscious Practice and, of course, get feedback from others about when you're engaging and when you're not. Find out what it is about you that helps you be engaging and how

you sometimes work against yourself. You cannot know how you come across to others. Get feedback.

2 Consciously Practise Building Big Relationships

You can tell by now how crucial I believe your Relationships are to being an effective leader. I've learnt to emphasise this point because it's not at all obvious to many leaders who believe that it's their thinking and their ability to be persuasive in argument that wins people's commitment.

But don't be the Operator/Manager who is focused solely on getting the task done.

In Leader Mode, you don't just get the job done, you also consciously build the Relationship at the same time.

Think about it. In each of your interactions, you're either building your Relationship or you're not. Why not practise getting the job done and building the Relationship too? That way, the current task will likely be done better and faster and you create the ground for more to be done together in the future.

Your influence and impact as a leader arrives via your Relationships. Consciously build them big enough to get the job done. This will require you being really effective at the third practice.

"Increasingly, the best of breed lead not by virtue of power alone, but by excelling in the art of relationship, the singular expertise that the changing business climate renders indispensable."

Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee

3 Consciously Manage your 'Shadow of a Leader'

Can you think of someone who, when they walk into your work area, immediately dampens your spirits and flattens your energy? Can you also think of someone who, when they come over, whatever you're doing, has the reverse impact and lifts your spirits and has you feel more lively?

This is such a fascinating phenomenon. People arrive in your space and,

before a word is spoken, you can feel different. I describe this by saying that each of us at different times shines our **Light** and casts the **Shadow of a Leader**.

By answering the questions above, I'm sure you could quickly identify the Shadow some people cast on you, and the Light that some bring. But here are some big questions for you about you as an engaging leader:

- How well do you know what the Light is that you bring and the Shadow you cast?
- How well do you know how your Light and Shadow impact different people?
- How well do you know which of your Relationships are limited because you are casting a Shadow on another but are not aware of it?

The fact is that, by yourself, you cannot work out the answers to these questions. Again, this is where you need your Support Team. And here's a way into the conversation with them. Get clear on the impact you want to have on people around you, your Impact Intended. But then realise that this counts for nothing compared with your Impact Felt – the impact you actually have on people as experienced by them.

I guarantee there will be times when not only will you not be having the impact you intend but you won't have been aware of it.

I'll always remember working with a very capable leader, Sandy, and his team. Sandy was very sharp and wanted an Impact Intended that had colleagues feeling listened to and valued while stretched and challenged. However, when I asked his peers and reports to describe how they felt around Sandy it included 'steam-rollered, trampled on, not good enough, and left thinking "why did I bother?"'

This was absolutely not Sandy's Impact Intended and he was shocked to learn that at times this was his Impact Felt.

Of course, it was only by learning about his Shadow that Sandy could do anything about it – and it's the same for you. To grow fast, learn about your Light and your Shadow. Ask colleagues how you impact their energy, how

they feel, what they see is possible and what is not when they are with you. I've also found this sort of feedback on the home front pretty enlightening too!!

With this learning, you can then become a lot smarter at managing the impact of your Shadow wherever you are. In turn, this will help you build bigger Relationships and engage people even more to respond positively to your Big Requests to build the Future you want.

"The culture of a company is the behaviour of its leaders. Leaders get the behaviour they exhibit and tolerate. You change the culture of a company by changing the behaviour of its leaders. You measure the change in culture by measuring the change in the personal behaviour of its leaders and the performance of the business."

Dick Brown

In summary ...

When you're a leader up to something, every interaction is an opportunity to engage others in you and the Future. Why not practise being your engaging best in many more of these situations? Build those Relationships, bring your Light and manage that Shadow.

FED IN PRACTICE

LUCY KIDD

Lucy Kidd was a client of ours at Unilever and is now one of the Steve Radcliffe Associates team. She has an interesting take on the importance of engagement.

'Something I'm practising at the moment is to notice when I'm resisting something and then to choose instead to fully engage with it – to go with the flow and see where it takes me.

'I was working on a document when my four-year old son called for me. I could immediately feel myself resisting his interruption, but chose in

the moment to let this go. Instead, I took a deep breath and decided to fully engage with him.

'He wanted to show me the "fox den" that he had just built under the bedcovers. My "resisting self" would have tucked him in, said "good night" and hurried back to my computer! Instead, I crawled in with him and became a "fox mummy" for a while! I came back to my writing with a smile on my face and warmth in my heart. By choosing to engage rather than resist I had not only connected more positively with my son but had also been energised by it.

'When we choose to fully engage, we give ourselves totally. Through letting go of our resistance and choosing instead to engage, we can connect with what is really important to us. It isn't easy but when we do we may find it fuels our energy and helps us bring our best.

'So notice what you resist. Notice how this resistance affects your energy and how it would be to engage. These questions might help you:

- What is the source of your resistance?
- How could you let go of this? (e.g. deep breath or connect to the bigger picture.)
- What else could you do to fully engage?'

5

Future–Engage–Deliver

... *the focus is not on how well you deliver, it's how well you deliver through others.*

- Future–Engage–Deliver
- Deliver *through Others*
- Deliver More Now
 - 1 To excel in Deliver, you must first have done a great job in Future and Engage
 - 2 To excel in Deliver, you have to mean it!
- Deliver More Later
- Putting it all into Practice
- The Leader's Conversations for Delivery

Future-Engage-Deliver

You can see it every day in the papers – instances of organisations not delivering; not delivering aspirations, strategies, plans, levels of quality and service, goals, results. That must mean there are an awful lot of leaders out there not delivering!

At the same time, I know that this needn't be the case. I have learnt so much from sitting alongside leaders who have delivered through the people around them.

In this chapter, I will point you towards ideas and practices that can significantly increase your capacity to Deliver in two regards. First, there are practices to take on in order for you to Deliver More Now. Second, there are practices that help you build the capacity to deliver in those around you, and thereby Deliver More Later.

But first I want to ensure you're thinking about Deliver from your Leader Mode and not as Operator/Manager. Let me tell you about Larry.

Deliver through Others

Larry was the Head of Manufacturing at the Los Angeles cosmetics company I used to run. He knew every nut and bolt in the place having been there for decades. As a marketeer by training, I knew very little about these places called 'factories'! So I asked my friend and manufacturing expert, Mike, to come over and tell me what he saw.

Mike thought the place was well run but he made one memorable comment. He told me that, while Larry should continue to make sure that all the lines ran well, from now on he should never physically touch a machine again!

What Mike had identified was that Larry was an excellent Operator/Manager who, through his expertise, was delivering well. But if we were to succeed in

our ambition to expand the business across the USA, he would need to grow into a leader who Delivered *through Others*.

We all know how to get something done, to Deliver. Your ability to deliver is one of the qualities that helps move your career forward. And sometimes you will have to deliver in your Operator/Manager Mode. But beware, this strength can be your weakness, particularly when people need you in Leader Mode.

It's easy at times to fall back to, 'Oh, it's quicker if I do it myself'. Or you might get a kick out of saying, 'Yea, give that to me, I'll show you how to do it'. But this is a mistake if you are trying to Deliver *through Others*.

The first step then in being brilliant at delivery as a leader is to make sure you are in the right mode.

In Leader Mode, your first thought is not 'what shall I do?' It's 'who do I want to Engage and what is the Request I want to make of them?'

This is a shift in mindset and one that some budding leaders don't make. In Chapter 4, I introduced the idea that 'Leaders make Big Requests'. Yes, we are here again. This is an essential Leadership Muscle. We all have it but I've found that most of us can grow this muscle substantially.

Pause for a while and notice what you're like:

- How strong is your tendency just to do a job yourself?
- Is making requests of others your first or second thought?
- Who are the people you do make requests of?
- Who are the people you don't?
- How clear is your picture of you delivering in Leader Mode rather than in Operator/Manager Mode?

So take on the Conscious Practice of first noticing whether your inclination is to do a job yourself, then choosing not to. Instead, practise making Big Requests of others. I'll help you get even clearer on these Deliver practices later but, for now, I want to make sure you're clear about the next two factors you have to be excellent at to consistently Deliver More Now.

"No company can deliver on its commitments or adapt well to change unless all leaders practise the discipline of execution at all levels. Execution has to be a part of a company's strategy and its goals. It is the missing link between aspirations and results."

Larry Bossidy

Deliver More Now

My learnings from meeting Derek point to two essential factors in the territory of Deliver.

Derek was the chief executive of a billion-pound-plus business. With his team, he had developed goals for the business, a clearly articulated strategy, detailed plans by brand and customer, clarity of what would be measured and good financial controls. This data was translated into department and individual targets and progress was monitored regularly. All very thorough.

And yet, despite all this, the business did not deliver!

It missed its targets, slid into decline and Derek was moved on. As a leader, Derek had not brought the two ingredients I have seen as essential if you want high levels of delivery through others.

1 To excel in Deliver, you must first have done a great job in Future and Engage.

Deliver is not a standalone aspect of leading. It follows directly on from Future and Engage. This is captured in the story of the two stone-carvers. You meet the first one and ask him what he's doing and he replies, 'I'm carving stone'. You then ask the second, more motivated carver and he says, 'I'm building a cathedral'.

What the story tells us is that when you need people to deliver consistently for you, you cannot ask them simply to carve more stone and then some more! You have to help them imagine a powerful sense of a bigger, more compelling Future. And you'll need to Engage them in that Future so that they are feeling it's not 'your cathedral', it's 'our cathedral'. Derek had done neither.

To get your own perspective on this point, answer these questions now:

- How well do you Deliver when you feel you're just being asked to carve more stone?
- How differently do you behave when you feel you're part of building a cathedral?
- What extra human energies, qualities and drives do you bring when you're building cathedrals?

So excellence in Deliver first requires excellence in Future and Engage. If you're not seeing the levels of delivery you want from others, first think through what sort of job you've done in Future and Engage.

Even more importantly, check with them to find out what sort of job they say you've done.

"Vision without Action is merely a dream. Action without Vision is merely passing time. Vision with Action can change the world."

Nelson Mandela

2 To excel in Deliver, you have to mean it!

Even when you're alive with a Future you want and you've engaged people, there will still be forces working against you delivering brilliantly through others. In order to counter these forces, you need to bring yourself in a certain way to the Deliver aspect of leading.

While people may want to deliver with you, they are also human. They become distracted; they lose the plot; they make mistakes; they forget; they get different messages from different departments; they become unclear about what they're trying to do and why; they become disheartened because they don't believe they have the tools for the job or they see others working against them. You can probably add to the list when you think about what limits delivery in your organisation.

Leaders who deliver recognise that these factors exist and they bring their own vital energies to counterbalance these forces. Other writers make this point. Jim Collins' research found that the leaders best at delivering brought *Fierce Resolve* and Larry Bossidy et al. identified that having *Emotional Fortitude* is vital for high levels of execution. Others write about the need for *Focus, Discipline* and *Resilience*.

You already have these human qualities. They are a part of how you are at certain times in your life. But how do you effortlessly bring them to the Deliver aspect of leading? My answer is by having what you want delivered be a part of what you are leading for, which in turn is deeply connected to what you care about. In other words the focus of Deliver is an important piece of the Future you want.

This is a crucial connection but one that is easy to lose. Yes, it makes sense to translate your aspirations for the Future you want into targets and results that you can focus on now.

But many organisations in private and public sectors make these measures the end in themselves while losing sight of the overall ambition.

So keep on asking yourself big picture questions like, 'What's our overall purpose here?', 'What does glorious success look like?' and 'To have the Future we want, what other factors should we pay attention to as well as those we measure?'

When what you want to be delivered matters to you, you can lead powerfully in Deliver. You will have high expectations and set high standards. You will keep a focus when others may be distracted, follow through and follow up and you will hold people to account. And you and others will naturally put in place those practical aspects of delivery – plans, milestones, processes and timetables – to ensure timely delivery.

Crucially, you will more likely be strong in an area I see lots of leaders holding back from – the handling of poor performance. A pattern I see often is a leader doing so much to have people deliver but then undoing much of this good work by not facing up to poor performance. Yes, I know conversations here

can be uncomfortable, but you can push through that discomfort if what you want is part of what's important to you and what you care about. The more you mean it, the more you will not tolerate poor performance.

And when people see that you mean it, it impacts their behaviour. To take a simple example, one of my sons, Alex, like many teenagers, used to be extremely untidy. From an early age, when his Mum asked him to tidy his room, he'd immediately assess, 'Does she mean it or not?' Depending on his reading of Mum, he'd then get into action or not.

Similarly, a friend said to me the other day, 'We used to really perform when we worked for Terry; you could just tell he expected us to deliver, so we did.'

What's happening in both these situations is captured in the line:

Forgive me. I cannot hear what you're saying because who you are being is shouting at me!

In other words, in many of our interactions, people are reading 'who we are being' behind our words. And in the realm of Deliver this is crucial.

People around you are constantly reading:

- Is what you're asking of others important to you?
- Do you mean it?
- Are you bringing urgency and conviction or anxiety or hesitation to your requests?
- Are you likely to follow up on what you're asking for?

I've come to realise by watching the most effective leaders that it is these aspects of authenticity that take delivery to whole new levels. The best plans and timetables won't on their own suffice. You must bring powerful aspects of your being to bear if you want to bring the best out of others. To take you back to Derek, he hadn't engaged his people in a compelling Future and they didn't get that he meant it. Consequently they didn't deliver.

I will soon introduce a model that will help you be conscious of what you're like in these Deliver aspects of leading so that you can Deliver More Now.

"Cain didn't have the kind of inspiring personality that would galvanise the company. But he had something much more powerful; inspired standards. He could not stand mediocrity in any form. For the next 14 years, he relentlessly imposed his will for greatness on Abbott Labs."

Jim Collins

FED IN PRACTICE

ROB WILSON

Professor Robert Wilson is Medical Director and Surgeon at South Tees Acute NHS Foundation Trust and Professor of Surgical Science at the University of Durham. He's very grateful to have had a colleague introduce him to FED. He writes:

'I start a new job next month as Medical Director of the healthcare trust where I have been working as a consultant surgeon for well over 20 years. This has been the single most significant thing in my recent professional life. It has re-energised me and, thanks to the help of my colleague, Peter Lees, who is a great believer in FED, I too have become an enthusiast.

'I'm certainly going to need all the help I can get. As the most senior doctor in an organisation of near enough 1,000 medical staff and more than 7,000 staff in total, I will be responsible for leading my part in strategy and governance over the next five years or so.

'But what of the really big leadership challenges that interested me in the job in the first place? For me to be really up to something and deal with these new challenges will require energetic application of all the principles of FED.

'Already I am stretching some of the FED leadership muscles. I have a clear vision of the future, I'm past the starting gate and on my way. With this positive energy I know that I am engaging others in this future and see the challenge of the financial context that we face as a great opportunity

for us all. I really know that so long as I keep practising stretching these Future and Engage muscles that we will Deliver – together! And finally I know that, as a leader who is up to something big, I need to keep growing my support team – and I thank my senior colleagues for coaching me on this exciting leadership journey.'

Deliver More Later

Much of what's needed to Deliver More Now is about getting the best from yourself and others today. Much of Deliver More Later is about growing yourself and others so that the capability to Deliver increases into the future. That is, the best today gets even better in the future.

Encouragingly, I see more and more leaders committing to developing their people. Often, however, I see their approach limited by their dated thinking about leadership. The result is that I see many leaders developing people as *good, quality followers*. However, if you want to excel at delivering more later, my encouragement to you is to Develop Others as *Leaders*, and this is quite different.

A lot of the old thinking about leadership was based on the idea of one leader and lots of followers. However, this thinking limits both people's growth and the levels of delivery possible. Author John Kotter rails against this thinking when he writes:

'The notion of having one or two leaders in a large organisation is ridiculous. The trouble is that people have convinced themselves that leadership isn't their job. My vision is to create 100 million new leaders. That's not 100 million CEOs. But it is a question of enabling many, many more people to provide leadership in their jobs, no matter what their jobs are.'

This echoes where I'm coming from. We are all leaders. It's not a position that comes from our title or age. As we explored early on, people around you have a number of ways of limiting themselves as leaders and you can make a

material difference to their growth as leaders. You can do this by helping them distinguish their Leader Mode from the Operator/Manager one they will know well, by helping them see how they can grow their Leadership Muscles, and even by helping them identify and go beyond their Limiting Beliefs.

I encourage you to take everything you are learning here and elsewhere and bring it to the job of Developing Others as Leaders. Your impact by doing this can be enormous. Indeed one writer, Noel Tichy, concludes after 25 years of consulting:

'winning companies win because they have good leaders who nurture the development of other leaders at all levels of the organisation'.

So pause for a while and think about what being great at Developing Others as Leaders might look like for you. How would you need to think? How would you approach conversations with them? When would you ask questions rather than give answers? What would you need to know from them about how they want to be and grow?

Here are some prompts for you that will help make you strong in this area:

- You commit to Developing Others as Leaders because it's a core ingredient in your beliefs about how you're going to succeed. If you do it because someone told you to or it's the latest HR initiative, you won't be great at it.
- You develop a mindset that doesn't just focus on getting the job done now but also constantly looks for opportunities to grow others. We can all get so sucked into the immediacy of delivering now that we lose sight of investing in the future.
- You encourage them to explore the topics in Chapter 3. That is, you encourage them to think about 'what they care about', 'what they want to lead for' and 'who they want to be as a leader'. Yes, you'll have some views you'll offer on how you see them and how you'd like them to grow, but you add these to their thinking about who is the leader they want to be.
- You'll demonstrate that you too are practising growing yourself as a leader,

rather than just expecting others to do it. At its very best, you help each other to grow so that you are an integral part of each other's Support Team.

The old leadership game was hierarchical and mostly one-way. The new game is one in which everyone helps grow each other. In some organisations, I've helped create what I call a Community of Leaders in which everyone knows they are working at growing themselves as leaders and everyone joins in to help grow each other. Results have included spectacular growth of people and levels of delivery.

How does where you and your organisation are now compare with what's possible?

- How much is Developing Others as Leaders a strong part of the culture?
- Who do you have developing you as a leader?
- Who would you like to have? and
- What can you do to arrange this?
- Who are you developing as leaders?
- Who could you be? and
- What difference could that make to what's Delivered Now and Later?

"The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers."

Ralph Nader

Putting it all into Practice

Briefly then, if you want to Deliver then you have to be thinking and acting from your Leader Mode. That way, you'll be looking to Deliver *through Others*. You must also ensure you've first done a great job at the Future and Engage aspects of leading. And to really Deliver More Now, you have to mean it. To ensure you Deliver More Later, don't just look to develop those around you, develop them as leaders. It's a mindset and requires Conscious Practice.

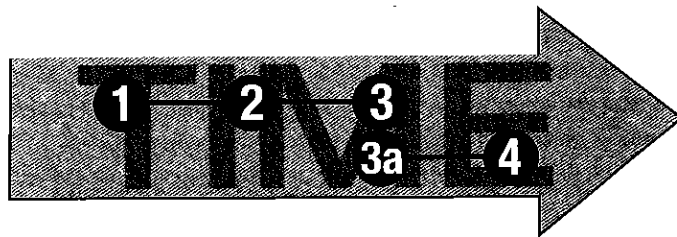
So how do you put all this into practice? The answer lies in what you're like in The Leader's Conversations for Delivery.

The Leader's Conversations for Delivery

As ever, I want to help you be a more Conscious Leader. In the Future aspect of leading, I've encouraged you to be conscious of who you are being – are you being an Operator/Manager or Leader in touch with what you care about? In Engage, I've steered you towards being conscious of your relationships – are they big enough to get the job done? Now in Deliver, I want to help you heighten your awareness of what you're like in your conversations – are they a Leader's Conversations for Delivery?

It is through your conversations with people that you stimulate Delivery *through Others*. It's here that you show up as a leader, engaging and meaning it – or not. It's been fascinating over the years noticing the quality of conversation in different organisations. In the most successful, the nature of conversation is what I and others call **Robust Dialogue**. That is, adult to adult, straightforward, grown-up conversation that gets to the truth of the matter. Different points of view are listened to and, when decisions are made, they are committed to. In too many other organisations, the space to challenge and speak the truth doesn't seem to be there. Yes, decisions are made but they are gone along with rather than committed to. Check in now. How well would you say your organisation does Robust Dialogue? How well do you?

Though delivery can seem immensely complex, I've realised that it's really about just four conversations. Make these more robust and I guarantee you will deliver more. I'll first outline the four conversations and how they hang together. Then we'll take each in turn to help you identify where you want to be stronger. This is how they look in time:



Conversation 1. Making Big Requests: this is where you make the request for delivery. Ideally it is made in a way that has others engaged by the Future you want and leaves them wanting to deliver what's needed.

Conversation 2. Maximising Probability of Delivery: this is the ongoing conversation you have until the result is achieved. Its purpose is to maximise the probability of delivery.

Conversation 3. Delivery is Acknowledged: this is the conversation you have when what you want is delivered at the time and to the standard you'd like. Here is a major opportunity to build more capability to Deliver More Later.

Conversation 3a. Non-delivery is Addressed: this is the conversation you have when what you wanted has not been delivered or to the standard you'd like. It can require some Emotional Fortitude from you but it also provides another great opportunity to build more capability to Deliver More Later.

Conversation 4. The Wrap-up: here is the wrap-up conversation when the job is eventually completed.

Having explored these conversations with thousands of people, there is a promise I can make to you. It's that you will not yet be brilliant at all these conversations and, as you look at each one in turn, you will definitely find ways you can be stronger at one or more of them.

Another reason I'm confident with my promise is that in our interactions with others there are always things we'd prefer to avoid. It'll be different for each of us but we may want to avoid being seen as too aggressive or demanding; we may want to avoid the risk of setting back our relationships; we may want to avoid being rejected or not liked. We'll all have our favourites linked to our personal Limiting Beliefs! You may want to think about what holds you back at times with each conversation.

With that perspective, let's look at each conversation. I'll provide a checklist for the main ingredients you might want in the conversation. I suggest you read them through now to identify where you are already naturally strong

and which ingredients you will consciously practise bringing to your Deliver interactions with others.

You can also then come back to the list before or after crucial Deliver conversations to help your Conscious Practice. To help you do this, you can print off this next section at www.futureengagedeliver.com/book.

Before you dive in, just get in touch with how you are when you are at your very best in this area. Think of a time when there was something really important to you that you wanted others to Deliver for you, i.e. you really meant it. Get in touch with the energies you brought to your conversations. Notice how robust you were. With that perspective in your mind, reflect on how you can be in these conversations:

Conversation 1 Making Big Requests

- Are you clear on what you want, by when and to what standard? If not, are you ready to invite others in, in order to get this clear?
- At the end of the conversation, you may be clear but how will you know if others are? (I used to be great at being crystal clear on what I wanted but it never crossed my mind to check whether others were!)
- Are you looking to engage others or just 'communicate at' them? Or at times do you ask them to 'just carve more stone'?
- Similarly, are you seeing this as a one-way conversation or a two-way dialogue and Co-invention that helps build others' involvement and ownership?
- If you are looking to engage them, is the Relationship big enough to get the job done, or will you need to build it further as a part of this conversation?
- Are you focused only on Possibilities that excite you? Or are you

sparkling Possibilities for others so they feel that the 'cathedral' is theirs too?

- Can the Request you're making be delivered within the current ways of working/the current culture? Or are you also asking for new ways of thinking and behaviours? In Leader Mode, at times you will want to and need to make these bigger Requests.
- What human aspects of delivery are needed and are you bringing them? Are you bringing conviction, urgency, passion, enthusiasm, belief that you can do it together?
- Finally, are you also designing Conversation 2, i.e. how are you going to work together to ensure you all do a great job here?

Of course, you don't need every ingredient present each time you make a request – you may not need to be passionate when you ask, 'Can you pass me a copy of the agenda?' The key is to be conscious and bring what's needed in each instance.

Conversation 2 Maximising Probability of Delivery

- Echoing the above, are you talking up front on how you'll work together to ensure delivery?
- Are you agreed on how you'll be kept up to date on progress? In what form and how frequently?
- Are you agreed on what you want to know and when after setbacks or missed milestones?
- And are you creating a safe space so that people feel safe to tell you of setbacks and bad news?

- Are you ready to offer appropriate input, support and coaching to help keep others focused and delivering?
- At the same time, are you also bringing a commitment and resolve that others see and respond to?
- Overall, are you helping others manage their energy towards successful delivery?

I'll always remember a very capable leader announcing 'I've just realised, I don't do this Conversation!' And that may be ok with some people some of the time. As a Conscious Leader, however, it's up to you to choose what's needed in each instance.

Conversation 3 Delivery is Acknowledged

I can't emphasise enough how powerful this Conversation 3 can be at helping people grow and so Deliver More Later. A number of these conversations over time can massively build people's confidence, self-belief and thereby capacity to deliver more. I'm putting so much weight behind this point because I've seen many instances of the power of this confidence-building – but I've met few leaders who are naturally strong in this conversation. It's as if we just don't recognise the power we have to help others feel good about themselves and what they can achieve.

Pause for a second and remember a time when you felt brilliant after someone had acknowledged you for what you'd done or how you'd gone about it. Please take on board as fully as you can that you have the same power to have people around you feeling similarly good about themselves. So ...

- Are you free in acknowledging others for a good job done? Or are you closer to the school of, 'No, I don't acknowledge a good job done. That's what they get paid for'?
- Potentially more important, are you free in acknowledging the person for what they have contributed to progress? 'Really good job, thanks,' from you will help someone feel valued. However, acknowledgement of the person, not just the job done, like, 'I want you to know I really appreciate the creativity you brought to this challenge, the way you kept everyone focused, and the tenacity you showed to get it all done on time. Many thanks,' can help someone's confidence grow even more. Whatever you do, don't try to fake being sincere in your feedback. Either mean it or keep quiet!
- With those you are developing as leaders, do you ask what they have learned about themselves and who they could be as a leader?
- Do you pause to extract the learning from this success rather than just bashing on with the next challenge?
- Also, do you pause to consider what's possible now that didn't seem possible earlier?
- Overall, do you leave others feeling good about themselves, wanting to grow even further and ready to take on even more?

Conversation 3a Non-delivery is Addressed

Here, quality delivery on time is not achieved. This is the conversation many people prefer to avoid or at least dilute. But if you're in touch with

what you care about and really want delivered, you'll be less inclined to fudge this conversation.

What can also help is if you speak to others with the mindset of wanting them to succeed and grow. If you want someone to grow and you see them performing poorly in some way, do you keep quiet? Not if you care about them and their progress. Certainly not if you are committed to helping them develop as a leader. So ...

- Are you having this conversation as soon as you can or are you putting it off? At worst, with someone who works for you, are you keeping quiet and storing it up till the annual appraisal?
- Are you speaking your truth about what you see and how you feel about it while also listening to their view?
- Are you maximising the learning from the situation?
- Are you making clear the consequences of repeated under-delivery? I can take you to quite a few organisations that could achieve so much more if the leaders were stronger at making just this one aspect of Deliver clearer.
- Are you agreeing a new timeline for delivery?
- Are you bringing commitment and determination to getting the job done? Are you bringing truthfulness and openness helped by wanting others to learn and grow?
- Overall, are you having this conversation in a way that lifts the other's energy – either immediately or soon after – rather than lowering their energy and confidence?

Conversation 4

The Wrap-up

Here delivery finally happens and in many respects this conversation is similar to Conversation 3 in the acknowledgement of a job done. But there is a powerful piece to add here because this is the conversation where you as a leader can help your colleague recognise something vital about themselves. We all sometimes trip up or meet unexpected obstacles and how we engage with difficulties is part of our leadership journey. There may be deeper learning about ourselves available at these times. Consider exploring this deeper territory with your colleague – it will certainly help you both develop faster as leaders:

- What beliefs did your colleague have about themselves when they didn't get it right first time?
- What might they have been tempted to do, e.g. avoid, hide, not take responsibility?
- What support did they look for and get in tackling the difficulty faced? Did they turn to their Support Team?
- What qualities did they need to bring to rectify the situation?
- What did they learn from the experience?
- And how have they grown?

"In order to get a real conversation, you have to drop artificial language, you have to drop politics and you have to drop an environment based on fear and hiding. People must be encouraged not only to know their craft, products, their work, but to know a little of themselves."

David Whyte

In summary ...

Reflect back on what you are like as a leader who delivers:

- What have you noticed about yourself and your Leader's Conversations for Delivery?
- Where are you naturally strong and not so strong?
- Could you be even stronger at delivering by making more explicit the connection with what you care about and what you are leading for?
- Crucially, how do your colleagues see you in these Conversations?
- How could you get more feedback on this aspect of your leadership?
- Which ingredients of which Conversations will you take on as part of your Conscious Practice?
- Who in your Support Team will you ask to give you regular feedback on what you're going to practise?

IN PRACTICE

JASON DANIELS

Jason Daniels is a Safety, Health and Environment Manager who wrote to us about his breakthrough moment in developing his colleagues.

'How often in my role as an emerging business leader do I find myself eagerly offering people the answers to the problems they are grappling with? I know at such moments that I'm busy on the hamster wheel and only later do I remember that there might have been a more effective way to engage colleagues in what they were delivering.

'Then after a recent FED coaching session, I took stock and considered again how my Shadow as a leader might be impacting on others. I recognised that if I was going to really develop my team of people as leaders then I would have to change my approach. So I made the

decision to make time to consciously practise holding back from using my intellectual energy and giving easy answers, and instead encourage people to show their invention and express their creativity.

'So in the next team project meeting, I purposefully asked inviting questions and held them long enough for people to emerge with more purposeful enquiries of their own.

'The result was transformational. Instead of it being about my solutions, they discovered their answers. As a consequence, they have chosen to lead for change with this project, chosen to engage with key stakeholders within the business and have started to envisage many future benefits that the end product of this project can be used for.

'The reward for me? Fulfilment! Fulfilment in seeing them excited and energised about the project ahead, of seeing them continue with further ideas of their own, and of their vision of just what is possible and of what the end goal will be. I'm now asking a lot more questions and seeing people perform in ways I hadn't thought was possible.'