

impact

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A Leadership Magazine

TRUST

Four effective ways of
building trust as a leader

INNOVATION

Five leadership behaviours
that can help drive innovation

FUTURE

Top tips on how to prepare for
the future as a leader

A STORY

Being a team takes more than
just reporting to the same
leader



hello

Great to see you here - welcome!

This issue of **impact** brings you a collection of our published articles on different aspects of leadership; trust, innovation and getting ready for the future - all subjects that are of great importance at this time of great disruption and uncertainty.

And we've brought you a short story about "A Team on Paper only".

If any of the topics trigger questions that you would like to discuss - just get in touch, we'd be delighted to help.

Happy reading!

Mandy Flint & Elisabet Vinberg Hearn



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HOW TO BUILD TRUST IN TEAMS

Trust can't be demanded, it can only be earned - it happens as a result of your actions and behaviours.

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Let's be honest - if you don't have trust in a team you don't really have a team at all - all you have is a group of people working in the same area or reporting to the same manager.

Without trust, people tend to work for themselves, cautiously eyeing others around them, holding on to information and not letting their guard down. It doesn't feel good and it's not an effective way for a team to operate. Imagine a football team that worked like that, where the players didn't trust the others with their passes - and everyone would run for the ball at the same time. Well, it just wouldn't work, would it? And it doesn't work in the workplace either.

Lack of trust is not just uncomfortable, it is costly too. Without it team members' collaboration will be limited which creates inefficiencies and is likely to impact the customer experience negatively too. And all of this affects the bottom line.

So if you're serious about wanting to do a great job, you also need to create trust with your team members, regardless of whether you are the team's leader or one of the members.

Trust can't be demanded, it can only be earned - it happens as a result of your actions and behaviours.

Here are some simple yet very effective ways of creating trust:

- Get to know each other. It's hard to trust someone you don't know, so it all starts here. Encourage team members to talk to each. Spend time together that isn't just all about work; get to know each other beyond the work personas. Talk about background and interests for example - take a genuine interest in each other.
- Share something about yourself, open up. When you trust others with information about you, you are indeed showing trust - and by showing trust, you're more likely to receive it back. Talk about a challenge you had and overcame, a disappointment that you learned from, something you are proud of - or anything else that shows that you are opening up to them.

- Decide to invest in building relationships. See them as the crucial part of business they are; no one works alone, so we are all dependent on the relationships we are able to build and the trust that comes with it. Set aside a certain amount of time each week to build your relationship with your team and other important stakeholders where trust is key.
- Have a great "say/do ratio"! Keep your promises. This may seem pretty obvious, but as trust is something that's earned, our actions and our ability to honour our commitments, to do what we said we would do, matter greatly when it comes to trust.

Behaviours matter too, it not just what you do but *how* you do it. So listen, be interested, show courage and empathy, be open and transparent - and create trust.

If there's not 100% trust in the team you're in, start building more trust today to make you and the team even more successful.

LEADERSHIP THAT DRIVES INNOVATION

There's plenty leaders can do to create an environment where the kind of innovation the future needs can flourish.

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

The future holds challenges that we know nothing about yet. The increasing speed of change in the world of business and in the society as a whole, makes us realise that we need to become more and more innovative to find the solutions that are needed for the future.

Yes, innovation is key and leadership is one of the main vehicles to make it happen. Leaders set the tone in an organisation for what is expected, what is acceptable and what is the norm. There's plenty leaders can do to create an environment where the kind of innovation the future demands can flourish.

Many organisations will have "innovation" as a buzzword in their values or vision and mission statement, but what is the differentiating factor between the ones that really innovate and those that don't? The behaviours that back up the actions are the key.

Let's get practical. Here are five leadership behaviours that can help create an innovative culture and environment.

1. CURIOSITY

Leaders need to let go of any "need to be right", they need to get rid of any sense of prestige and admit that they don't know everything. Great innovation leaders are curious and open-minded, realising that what they knew yesterday may already be out-dated. Great leaders don't get complacent, they keep looking outwards and inwards to see what's going on; what's happening in the world, what does the society need, what do customers need, what problems need solving, what opportunities exist, how can we thrive in the long-term? They constantly look at themselves to challenge themselves on this too.

2. INCLUSIVENESS AND GENEROSITY

No one has all the answers. When leaders start sharing their leadership with others, by including others in discussions and decisions, a multitude of ideas and inspiration can start to cross-pollinate, enabling the creation of new ideas and solutions for innovative results. Great innovative leaders continuously invite their employees and other stakeholders to open, explorative and challenging dialogue.

3. LONG-TERM THINKING

Business is so much more than the 'here and now', yet many people get caught up in the urgencies of the moment. And as much as this is needed, great leaders are able to balance long and short-term thinking, by setting goals and creating plans to achieve that balance. They spend time in the strategic, future space. They ensure they move away from the day to day to allow for the new, different and future thinking that is needed to innovate. Great innovation leaders continuously invest in Research and Development, budgeting with a long-term focus – always investing for the future and sustainable business results.

4. COURAGE AND RESILIENCE

With changes and progress come mistakes. There is no way that everything that is tried becomes a success. Indeed, some of the greatest innovations and results come from daring to try and learning from mistakes. Just look at Thomas Edison's

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famous “mistake” where he tried thousands of times to invent the lightbulb! Imagine if he had given up! But he didn't. He had the courage to keep trying new things and the resilience to not give up despite the setbacks. Great leaders encourage and coach others to take calculated risks and to learn from them. They are OK to shut ideas down if they don't work, not seeing it as failure but as new results to get closer to what is new and different. There is no such thing as failure, only results.

5. INNOVATION COACHING

Everyone benefits from coaching, particularly in a fast-changing world. Great leaders notice what their employees do and help them to hold up a metaphorical mirror on the work they do and how they perform it. This helps employees to keep learning and developing in line with the need for innovation and progress. They give people really good, specific feedback and observations on what went well and what could have gone better, all with the positive intent of creating learning. They create a learning culture by helping others to succeed and this allows for innovation to take place.

Transformational, lasting change happens at a behavioural level, so these 5 behaviours are crucial to success.

Leaders have to create a learning culture in themselves as leaders and in others to make innovation a reality.



CHANGES CALL FOR INNOVATION, AND INNOVATION LEADS TO PROGRESS.

Li Keqiang



HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE AS A LEADER

Leadership needs to constantly change and evolve to meet the challenges of the future. Futureproof your leadership

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Leadership needs to constantly change and evolve to meet the challenges of the future.

Yesterday's leadership is not fully relevant today and neither will today's leadership be spot on for tomorrow. Leaders who want to stay relevant and successful, must adopt a curious mindset, proactively making sure that they futureproof their leadership for the challenges and opportunities that are still to come.

The fast speed of change that we are experiencing in the business world and the society as a whole is one of the main reasons why expectations on leaders are changing right now. Globalisation is also part of that change and offers all sorts of possibilities, as is the digital revolution and AI. Expectations of sustainable business ethics and processes, carefully managing the natural, human and financial resources needed for future success is another important factor that puts new, heightened expectations on leaders – as are the demands of new generations.

This is not a threat, it's a promise. It is happening and it's a great opportunity to learn and develop, to build new experience and create better results.

So, if you don't do it already, start considering your leadership as your key asset for success, for getting the job done. Don't hesitate to be proactive and invest in your ongoing development. Set some time aside each week and month for self-studies, networking, coaching, mentoring or other relevant learning activities. Don't let the day-to-day pressures become an excuse for not ensuring your future success, and that of your organisation. Take a balanced view on your short- and long-term priorities.

Here are our top tips for how you can best prepare for the future as a leader:

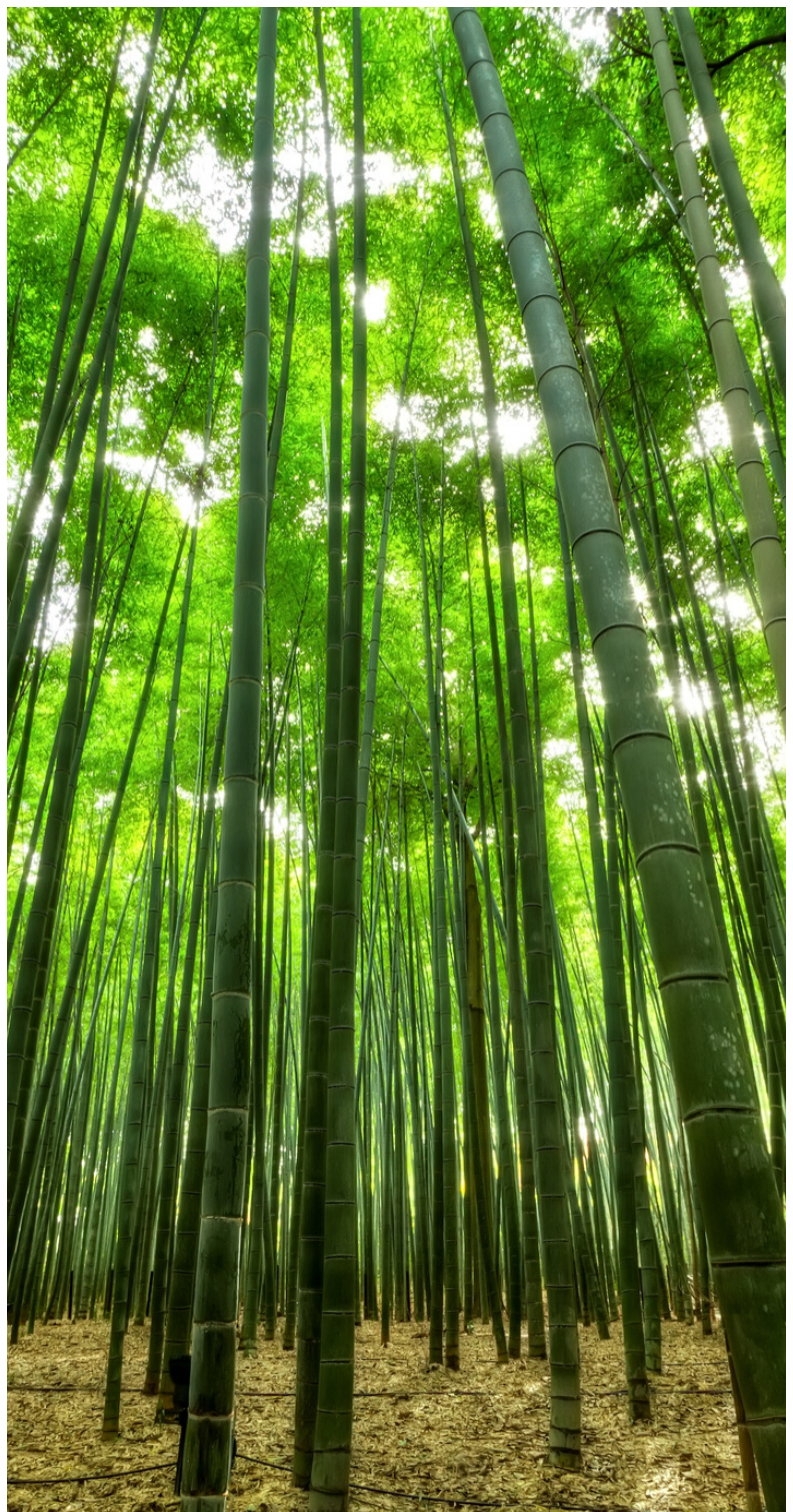
- Commit to constant development as a leader – remember that development never stops - take responsibility for your development.
- Be truly curious about the world around you, other people, developments and trends – listen and ask questions.
- Keep an open mind to new ideas, new ways of thinking and doing things. Remember that even if you once knew the best answer/solution to something, things change and hence so will the needed answers.
- Encourage and promote dialogue between people. Ask questions, challenge people's thinking to establish a creative dialogue climate where more is achieved as a result of that exchange.
- Share your leadership, become as inclusive as you possibly can, to encourage and develop individual and collective leadership and ownership.
- Recruit people who know more than you (especially in those areas where you know the business needs to develop) – don't be afraid to not "know it all" (no one does!).
- Maximise your strengths. No one can be best at everything, so make the most of your unique talents and strengths. Acquire new knowledge linked to your talents, use your strengths in new situations, push yourself to become the best you can be.

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- Be open and transparent; people and organisations need more and more transparency going into the future. There is an expectation for leaders to be more open - share what you can, be transparent and create trust.
- Be a creative communicator. Get savvy with how you communicate; consider your message, medium and approach. Don't just go with your trusted ways of communicating, push yourself to be creative, to stand out and be heard.
- Share your knowledge, insights and wisdom with others. Fearlessly share what you know – the challenges of the future demands more sharing and cross-pollination of ideas – to find the solutions we need.

These tips are based on our continuous trend spotting on leadership. As you can see most of them are behavioural – and this is an important point. Leadership is the art of influencing others, and we influence through our behaviours. Use these tips as an inspiration for being proactive about the future. Commit to a proper investment into your own future success, and continue to develop the leadership behaviours that will make a difference in the future.

Focus on your strengths and think: *how am I adding value as a leader today and how can I best add value in the future?* Let the answer to that question guide you in where you should focus your next steps for leadership development – and future success.



THE FUTURE INFLUENCES THE PRESENT AS MUCH AS THE PAST

Friedrich Nietzsche



A STORY: A TEAM ON PAPER ONLY

A short story about what happens when team members don't know or trust each other

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

The meeting hadn't started yet, and the 14 people around the table were all on their smartphones or laptops. They were tapping away or with their phone headsets on, acting as a barrier to shield themselves from their immediate surroundings. Apart from two people having a hushed conversation, there was no other interaction going on between the people around the table.

The group was waiting for their leader Davide to turn up. He had summoned them to here for a monthly team meeting. All working for a French construction company, they were based in different locations around Europe. They had officially been a team for 3 months and met on several occasions and yet, with the exception of a couple of people, they didn't know each other at all. Their average age was late 40's and there was a wealth of industry experience in the room. It represented a gold mine of opportunities for this team to be very successful.

There was a sudden burst of energy as the door flew open. Heads turned towards Davide, their leader, as he raced into the room, pulling out his earphones while finishing a conversation in an abrupt manner "I need to go now. I'm starting a meeting, talk later". His dramatic entrance was met by raised heads followed by a quick return to what they had been doing before.

"OK, let's get started. We have a lot to get through and not much time". He rattled through the agenda, which was far too ambitious, making everyone painfully aware that they weren't going to be able to do all of it. Everyone nodded just the same as none of them was courageous enough to say what they really thought.

There was no chitchat going on, which meant Davide could get started straight away on his list of agenda topics. And he didn't invite any small talk either.

Going around the room, each person was asked to give an individual update. Most of them were a dialogue with Davide, and no one else would intervene throughout the dialogues. The other 12 people were like an unwilling audience, still on their smartphones but now held under the table.

Why do I have to be here? This is a waste of my time. I have so much to do. I wonder what my team is doing now, I should have been there instead. I can't wait until this weekend and some time off. Is it really 3 hours to lunch? Oh, here we go again, another boring update!

These were some of the thoughts running through the minds of those present.

Davide continued to move the agenda along, listening to each person's update, asking some questions and then moving on, never encouraging any interaction or sharing, simply expecting a straightforward report. Fred was half way through his update, when he mentioned how some key metrics of the production scorecard were improving at the manufacturing plant in Germany.

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Jon was suddenly paying attention.

The information had filtered through to him despite his apathy, and the reason was he knew straight away that Fred was not telling the truth. Jon had been at the plant the previous week and knew these metrics had not improved. He had even participated in a meeting where this had been discussed.

Jon felt acutely uncomfortable but tried to hide his reaction. He didn't know Fred, he didn't even know Davide very well or any of the others; he didn't trust that he could bring this up.

He asked himself why Fred would not be sharing the true state of affairs with this team. He must have his reasons, he thought. But as he didn't know or trust him, he decided to keep quiet, making a mental note to tread carefully in this team.



ANALYSIS

In this story, the group of people is a team on paper, but not really functioning like a team in reality. The lack of interaction portrays a group of strangers rather than an effective team. And it's hard to trust someone you don't know. In this example, the members of the team are simply individuals reporting to the same person, nothing more nothing less. They don't know each other and are showing no wish to change that.

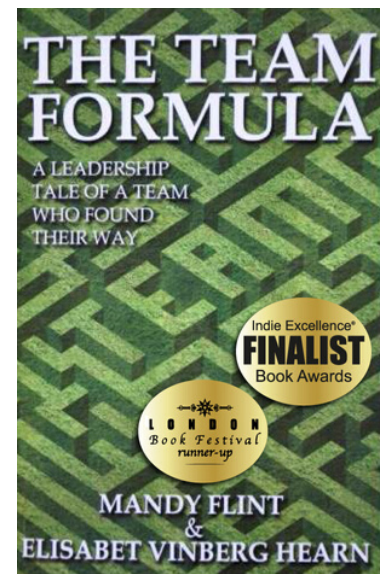
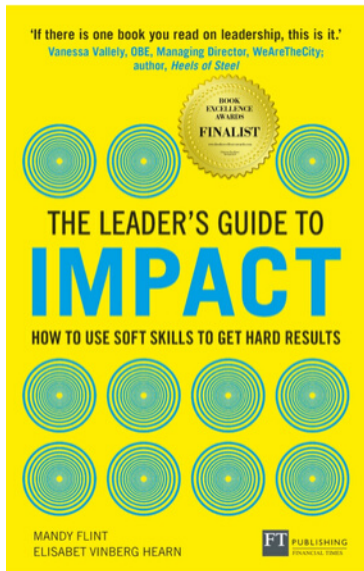
There are of course a number of problems with such a scenario. If people don't know each other, then they don't understand each other, and they don't want to engage or take an interest, because they haven't made that human connection. Therefore they don't trust each other.

A human connection happens when two or more people meet and talk to each other about more than just the facts. In the example above, Davide is simply asking for a factual update. This process means that they are not relating to those facts, they are only relaying them. It's transactional rather than relationship driven. Mere facts may interest people but will rarely engage them on an emotional level. As a result they are unlikely to share information with each other unless they have to, good or bad. This leads to a hesitance to share what they know, which creates a lack of trust. This means they never get to know each other outside the factual dialogue and can't create an effective relationship, let alone a working one. Would you choose to work in those circumstances?

A brilliant working relationship demands a great personal relationship, as people don't leave their persona at home when they come to work. Additionally, when people bring their thoughts and feelings to the team, it provides more valuable information about the subject and it becomes easier for people to relate to. This makes them more engaged and willing to participate, sharing their knowledge and experience. It's a win-win strategy that benefits the individual, the team and ultimately the business and its customers.

A team needs to spend time together, invest the time it takes to get to know and trust each other. It's actually that simple. If you are the leader of a team, you can make this happen by recognizing that it needs some thought and follow-through. What can you do to create a deeper level of trust in your team?

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**“YOU CAN NEVER GET A CUP OF TEA
LARGE ENOUGH OR A BOOK LONG
ENOUGH TO SUIT ME.” – C.S. LEWIS**

C.S. Lewis



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