

# impact

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A Leadership Magazine

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5 ways to be one

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5 skills to master

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# hello

Welcome to the May issue of IMPACT.

This month we turn our attention to generous leadership practices, strategic thinking skills and how leaders need to play the long game.

We also share another of our monthly IMPACT HACKS (quick, practical tips for great impact), this time on peers.

And there's a story about what a difference intention and focus makes to impact.

Enjoy the read!

Please share your thoughts on the topics by connecting via [www.2020visionleader.com](http://www.2020visionleader.com).

Thanks for reading

**Mandy Flint & Elisabet Vinberg Hearn**



# impact

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# THE GENEROUS LEADER

5 ways to be a generous leader

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Having team members who don't freely and generously share what they know, is a challenge that most teams face. And yet, a team can't afford not to share their thoughts, ideas and experience. Sometimes people don't make the link between lack of generosity and not getting as good a result as they could have. And yet, the link is real. Workplaces need to be generous places.

As a leader, you can show the way for what generosity means and what it creates. Generosity starts with you.

Fearlessly share what you know, your wisdom and insights, your experience (without thinking that your perspective is the complete or correct answer). Be a generous leader.

There can be many reasons why people are not generous towards each other, here are a few examples to ponder.

## **BELIEVING THAT KNOWLEDGE IS POWER**

This is a common misperception. With this belief people will withhold information as they expect it will make them weaker if they give information away. However, the opposite is true. There is the old fashioned saying that "knowledge is power" yet today we live in a world where information is so quickly out of date that we need to share simply to keep up to date.

## **LACK OF AWARENESS**

If there isn't a habit of sharing, people won't share. They won't be used to it so they won't see it as important or even an option. They don't know what they don't know. They won't see the benefits of sharing as they haven't experienced it. If people are also busy, there will also not be any appetite for even taking the time out to try it and see what it could lead to.

## **SILO THINKING**

If people don't understand how what they are doing fits into the bigger picture, they will not see a reason for sharing as they will only be narrowly focused on their own part. They are maybe used to working alone and have not had reason to consider how this could help them or others.

## **NOT VALUING YOUR OWN KNOWLEDGE**

If you don't value your own knowledge or opinion, you are less likely to think anyone else would either. This will mean you are not stepping forward to offer your contribution to a discussion or a collaborative situation.

## **COMPETITIVE THINKING**

If you see your colleagues as competitors, this will inevitably inhibit you from sharing.

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## **IF YOU HAVE KNOWLEDGE, LET OTHERS LIGHT THEIR CANDLES IN IT.**

*Margaret Fuller*



In a perceived competition, you compare yourself with others and will not share as it would give your 'competitors' an 'advantage' they did not have before. It's driven from a win-lose thinking where you think there can only be one winner.

Another aspect of competitive thinking is making any sharing conditional. It's based on the underlying idea that you will only share something if you get something back. "If you don't tell me, I won't tell you."

Yet another expression of competitive thinking is to want others to have to work as hard for it as you have had to.

#### **FEAR-DRIVEN BEHAVIOURS**

It can feel scary to share. You may feel as if you are giving away something very valuable, and you may be fearful of what that does to your position in the team. It may make you question if you will still be as valuable when your knowledge has been spread to others.

Feeling threatened, whether the threat is real or perceived, drives defensive or at least protective behaviours.

#### **FOR PROTECTION**

In some cases, information is withheld in order to protect others. The logic behind this is that people may not be able to handle the information or may be hurt by it.

#### **FEARLESSLY SHARE**

Effective teams are those who regularly, generously and fearlessly share what they know and think for the benefit of everyone. In order for this to happen, there needs to be a good level of trust.

#### **BUILDING TRUST**

An effective way of building trust is to kick off some powerful sharing, starting with the small and building it up. Then actively and explicitly explain the links to why the sharing made a difference and where. It could be as simple as a debrief meeting or discussion after a meeting, simply saying "let's share what worked here and what didn't work."

## **"GENEROUSLY AND FEARLESSLY SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW"**

*Mandy Flint & Elisabet Vinberg Hearn*





## Here are 5 ways to be generous as a leader:

### **TIP 1: TIME**

Be generous with your time. Spend time with people on a regular basis. Emails can wait. And be 100% present. When you're with someone - in real life or remotely - show them that they have your full attention and that you value them enough to not let yourself be distracted by buzzing phones or pinging emails. Read more about presence in the Impact hack in the April 2021 issue of IMPACT.

### **TIP 2: OPEN MIND**

Keep an open mind. Be generous with your genuine consideration of the ideas and perspectives of others. Listen with curiosity. Consider ideas and opinions - don't be too quick to judge.

### **TIP 3: KNOWLEDGE**

Be generous with your knowledge. Share freely what you know. But only if people are open to it and are open to listening. One way of doing that is to make sure you share it as a suggestion, not the only answer.

### **TIP 4: GRATITUDE AND CARE**

Be generous with your gratitude and care. Praise and thank people, recognise them publicly if relevant. Cheer someone on for their effort, dedication, creativity and results. We have the power to increase the number of positive messages around us and that creates a ripple effect. We need it in these disruptive and uncertain times.

Show people you care about them. Be a leader who likes people.

### **TIP 5: HONESTY AND FEEDBACK**

Be generous with your honesty and feedback. Kind honesty is sharing your observations on what someone is doing very well (so they can do more of it) and also what they could do more effectively (where they're not having the impact they want or need). Feedforward is caring enough to be honest - always in a supportive way that makes the person feel you always have their best interest in mind.

**Generosity breeds generosity. It starts with you.**

**"DO THINGS FOR PEOPLE NOT BECAUSE OF WHO THEY ARE OR WHAT THEY DO IN RETURN, BUT BECAUSE OF WHO YOU ARE."**

*Harold S Kushner*







# THINK LIKE A STRATEGIST

**Practise these five strategic thinking skills**

**BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN**

Are you strategic? Are you strategic enough?

Many leaders we meet, unless quite senior, are focused on the tactical, day-to-day realities of work. That's OK, but there needs to be a balance, for everyone, regardless of our role – everyone needs to weave in strategy in what they do. And in order to be a positive disruptor, it's absolutely crucial to focus on and develop strategic ability.

So, what is strategy then really?

This is what [oxforddictionaries.com](https://www.oxforddictionaries.com) says:

*"A plan of action designed to achieve a long-term or overall aim"*

This is what leading strategist Michael Porter, Professor, Institute of Strategy & Competitiveness, Harvard Business School says:

*"Strategy is about making choices, trade-offs; it's about deliberately choosing to be different"*

And strategic ability is to be able to create and carry out a successful strategy. In a fast-changing world, that strategy may also be emerging rather than fully set from the start – and it may well need to change and be updated along the way – an agile approach.

That strategic ability can be broken down into a number of skills, which can be developed.

We have found these five strategic thinking skills to be crucial in building strategic ability. We also include some recommendations on how to develop them.

## **SYSTEMS THINKING**

Be curious about the world around you, to understand the system you're in – observe, listen and explore it. When it comes to systems thinking, there are usually two main systems to consider, the internal system of the organisation and the external system, which is everything outside the organisation that touches it in

some way; market, competitors, social, political and financial environment etc.

The more you know about your systems, the more likely you are to spot or create relevant opportunities, as well as understand the impact the organisation has and can have.

## **PURPOSE AND VISION FOCUS**

Begin with the end in mind. Be relentlessly purpose-driven, become super-focused on the organisational vision and reason for being. This kind of passion can have a big impact on others, igniting their passion for the vision and purpose too. Show the way, give enough direction while still allowing people as much autonomy as possible.

And, very importantly, show that everything is done for a reason – keep explaining and linking actions; why they are being done and what they will lead to. Doing something for a reason is engaging, it's an opportunity to everyone to know that they truly make a difference.

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### LONG-TERM THINKING

Plan for the future, set long-term goals (alongside your short-term goal). Focus on the relationships that are crucial for long-term success. This could be clients, suppliers, potential clients and colleagues – just to mention a few. By being respectful and collaborative now you can create a respectful and collaborative relationship over time, which is not just the right thing to do, but it will also make it easier to get them to want to work with you in the future. And with great relationships also come recommendations; clients and stakeholders that seek you out because they have seen your consistent approach over time.

### TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WHOLE

Remind yourself of the big picture, take a step back to see beyond your own responsibility today. Recognise that success requires shared responsibility. Look for linkages and interactions between tasks and people; eg. who is dependent on who, where are the handoffs etc. Think through the effects of decisions and actions, extrapolating into the future. Keep in mind though that this is hard to do alone, so find others you can work with to figure this out. Assess the impact of strategies, plans, actions and behaviours, to help you not just act in a potentially blinkered, here-and-now way.

### ASKING STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

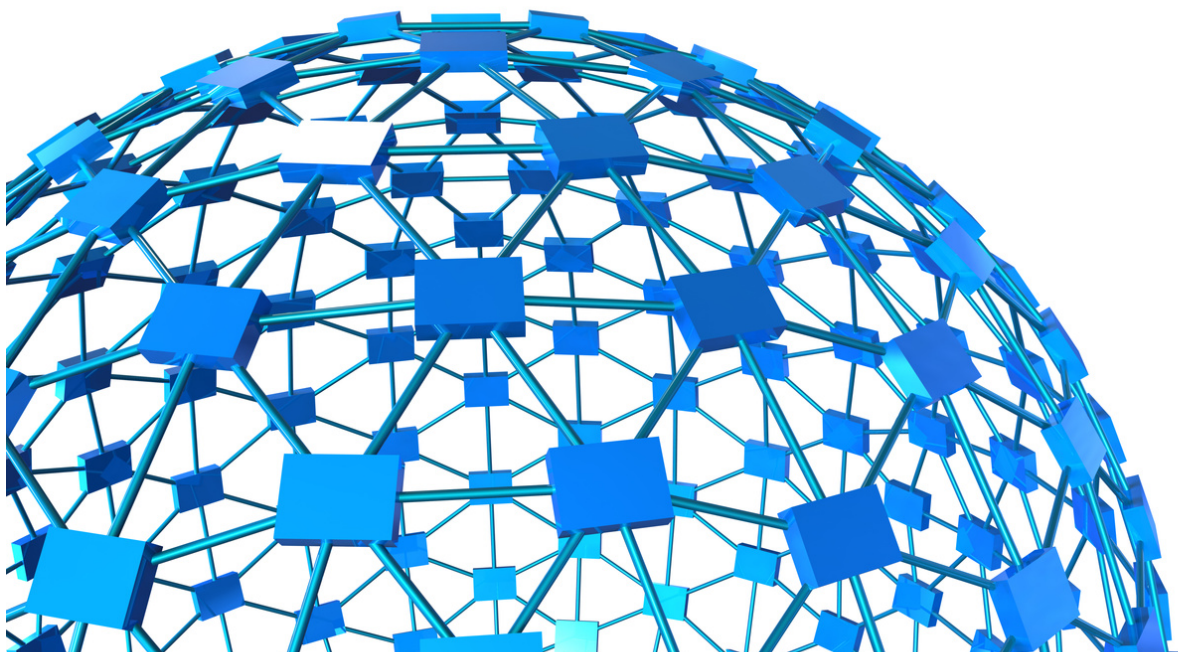
Provide strategic focus to dialogues. Influence others to take a strategic view and build their strategic ability. Here are some examples that you can use:

1. What are we trying to achieve?  
Where do we want to be?
2. For what purpose are we doing what we are doing?
3. How will this differentiate us from others (competitors)?
4. How will that benefit us? Could we reach that benefit some other way?
5. Where are we now?
6. How will we get there?
7. What will be the impact of those actions, now and later?
8. What are the dependencies?

Which of these skills do you already have? Which would you like to develop further?  
How will you do it? Who could you partner with in that learning?  
What other strategic skills are important to you?

**LANGUAGE IS NOT ONLY THE VEHICLE OF THOUGHT, IT IS A GREAT AND EFFICIENT INSTRUMENT IN THINKING.**

*Humphry Davy*







# CREATING A LASTING LEGACY

The world needs Long-Game leaders - are you one?

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

More than ever, the world needs leaders who are strategically focused on the long-term picture; long-term sustainable organisational success – not just their own short-term success.

Have you observed how when a new (senior) leader joins a team/division/organisation they are typically expected to put their own 'mark' on it?

We call this a 'Ruler' leader. Everyone's eyes are on them; *what will they do? What's their vision? What impact will they make?*

There are times when businesses need an overhaul and this kind of approach is perfectly reasonable and needed. But often it's actually not the best strategy. In global organisations the ruler leadership culture means strategies and tactics change every two to three years as senior leaders come and go.

This kind of short-sighted approach is too common in business. When organisations keep changing strategy and tactical approach too frequently, it doesn't allow for previous strategies and plans to be carried out to completion, and results seen.

Add to this the reality that many leaders take on leadership roles for a mere few years to further their career, and because it's the norm. There are of course benefits with leaders that have had many different roles and build up their experience and ability to see the bigger picture, but that's a topic for another day.

Overall the ruler leadership isn't sustainable, it's costly and it's demotivating for employees.

Specifically, it can result in:

- Employees becoming disenchanted with the continuous change of direction as they don't get to see the results, and they lose track of why change is happening or what the organisation stands for
- Constant 'chopping and changing' is costly; particularly when ideas are not carried through to completion where there could be a pay-off on the investment (in time, effort and money)
- Leaders being tempted to make short-term decisions that look good on the quarterly report and are good for their own careers but may be detrimental to the business longer-term
- More (unnecessary) change in an already fast-changing world
- People being weary of change and so resisting it, thinking "here we go again, another boss, another reset"

There's a need, a desire and a passion for a different type of leadership. We call this **Long-Game Leadership**.

**"LEADERSHIP IS A CHOICE, NOT A POSITION"**

*Stephen Covey*

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Or to use the spirit of Patek Philippe's advertising slogan for their watches: "you don't own/rule an organisation, you are only looking after it for future generations".

And there are of course leaders that operate like this already, but there's simply not enough of them.

A leader's role should be to make the most of the resources they have been appointed to, and make them grow and flourish. The Long-Game leaders are very aware they are leading the team for a period of time only. They think of the legacy they are picking up when they join, the legacy of what they want to leave behind when they move on to their next role.

They ensure the leadership role they play is bigger than themselves and truly sustainable therefore "making their mark" in a very different way, in the Long-Game way.

When a Long-Game leader joins an organisation they look at the existing business, its goals, priorities, and resources and think:

- *How can I build on this?*
- *How can I progress what's already underway (assuming it is still viable)?*
- *How can I, by adding my experience and skills, fast-forward the journey to success, together with the stakeholders involved?*
- *And continue to lay the tracks into the future?*

The overall speed of change we are all experiencing means that the whole concept of leadership is changing as we speak.

What was expected just a few years ago has already changed. Leadership is becoming more collective; no one has all the answers, the leader needs to become the unifying factor that gets people working well together so that the best ideas can be created together with others. The Long-Game leader is all about that.

It's high time to 'rethink' leadership, in order to be successful into the future.

**Make way for the Long-Game leader – the transformational legacy maker.**

## "YOUR IMPACT IS YOUR LEGACY"

*Mandy Flint & Elisabet Vinberg Hearn*







# A STORY: TURN UP YOUR VOLUME

A story about how impact can be dialled  
up when needed

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

*While on holiday at a well-known ski resort, I stepped onto the balcony to take in the cold air and view the magnificent mountains covered in snow.*

*On the balcony in the room next door a well-known TV presenter was preparing to record to the camera crew. This person took a deep breath pulled himself up taller and filled himself with energy. The camera started to roll. Smiling and enthusiastically he spoke about this famous resort telling the story of the slopes, the skiing, the views and the apres ski.*

*The presenter put himself into his media role. His voice changed, it was deeper and had more tonation in it, emphasising certain words for effect. He also ramped up his energy levels to be more energetic and animated.*

*He was positive, smiling and making you feel engaged and wanting to hear more. The TV presenter had put himself into a positive and energetic state.*

*When I met the presenter earlier in the day he was quieter and more reserved, he changed his personality when filming to make an impact in front of the camera. He needed to be a more extreme version of himself to create impact at that time. He had the ability to be energetic and enthusiastic but he just needed to increase the intensity almost like "turning up the volume" on himself to tap into his natural strength and use that to have more affect.*

*You can choose to have an impact too. What impact are you having right now? And what could you "turn up"?*

**"WHEN YOU ARE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT WHAT YOU DO, YOU FEEL THIS POSITIVE ENERGY. IT'S VERY SIMPLE."**

*Paulo Coelho*





## ANALYSIS

As this story highlights, impact is not static, we all have the ability to consciously dial up our impact in situations that require it, if we choose to do so. That's what the TV presenter did as he put himself in front of the camera.

At times we are all 'on stage' or wanting to get a specific message across and we therefore need to choose how to best 'turn up the volume' of our communication and impact. Exactly how that looks will depend on the situation, the audience, the message and desired outcome. But it always needs to be authentic, otherwise it can have a negative effect.

But don't be fooled by the reference to 'turning up' and 'dialling up', it's not about volume per se, it's about the impact experienced by the recipient. And impact is sometimes about being more quiet and tranquil too. It's about having an impact that makes a difference.

Whatever impact you want to achieve, reflect on it and take control of it, especially in those important moments that matter the most.

**IN EVERY DAY, THERE ARE 1,440 MINUTES. THAT MEANS WE HAVE 1,440 DAILY OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT.**

*Les Brown*

This story and abbreviated analysis is an excerpt from "The Leader's Guide to Impact", Financial Times Publishing 2019





# IMPACT HACK #5 PEERS

**3 proven hacks  
for dialling up  
your impact with  
your peers**

**BY MANDY FLINT &  
ELISABET VINBERG HEARN**

Your peers are a crucial stakeholder group to manage with care. You need each other and the more you can have a great impact with them, the better you will do.

Here are 3 quick impact hacks to consider, to connect and collaborate better with your peers, and jointly deliver with more impact for the organisation overall.

## **SEE THEM AS CUSTOMERS**

Imagine that they are someone that you can be of service to, someone you can help and want to do good things for. Impact starts in your mind, the way you think about someone drives your impact. If you don't like them or if you see them as a competitor, it will drive certain behaviours in you, which will likely reduce your positive impact.

## **PRAISE, DON'T BLAME**

Take personal responsibility by focusing on solutions rather than blame if something goes wrong. And recognise the good things your peers do, give credit where credit is due. Be confident enough to lift others up and let them shine.

## **BE POLITICALLY AWARE**

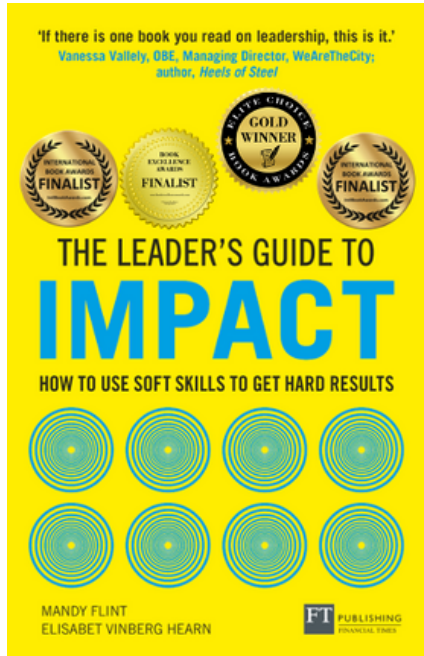
Develop your system thinking, to understand the 'system' you're in. An organisation is an internal system, with all its interrelated and interdependent parts; processes, people, procedures. The more you understand that system, the dynamics, the culture: implicit and explicit expectations— the greater impact you can have.

Have your radar on to pick up on the intricacies of who knows who, who's connected with who. Who's collaborating and who's maybe competing with you?

This is particularly pertinent when it comes to peers, where collaboration and healthy competition is a must for continuous creative challenge and growth.



# CHECK OUT OUR AWARD-WINNING BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP



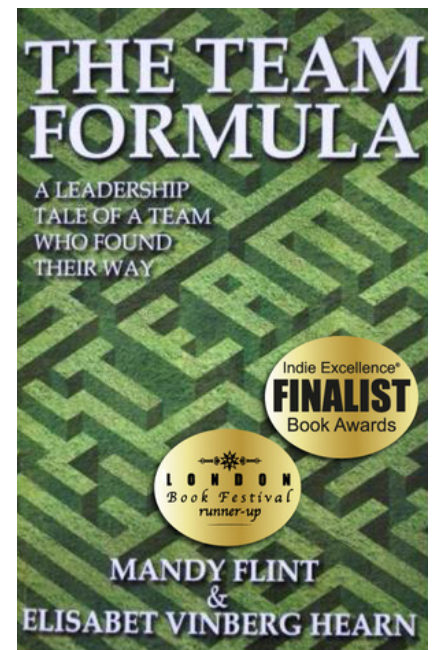
**"A COMPELLING READ FOR THESE DISRUPTIVE TIMES"**

*Amazon reader review*



**"IT IS THE BEST BUSINESS BOOK I HAVE READ THIS YEAR, HANDS DOWN"**

*Amazon reader review*



**"THE BEST BOOKS... ARE THOSE THAT TELL YOU WHAT YOU KNOW ALREADY!"**

*George Orwell*



**"THIS BOOK IS A 21ST CENTURY GUIDE ON HOW TO BUILD A WORLD-CLASS TEAM"**

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