

● impact

July 2021 | Issue 13

A Leadership Magazine

ONE
YEAR
ANNIVERSARY

FEEDFORWARD CULTURE

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hello

This last year has flown by - we are celebrating IMPACT's 1 year anniversary!

We hope you have enjoyed the first 12 issues covering various angles on leadership impact. As we move into our second year, the magazine will now be issued every other month, with some additional contents.

In this July issue, we focus on how to do feedforward well, why managing change isn't enough, the void that is created when a leader leaves, and we have also included some practical tips on making time for relaxation and recharge.

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

And there's a story about what happens when we go it alone.

Thanks for reading - enjoy!

In our September issue, we will turn our focus to "doing hybrid right" and more - see you then and enjoy the summer!

Mandy Flint & Elisabet Vinberg Hearn

impact

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CREATING A FEEDFORWARD CULTURE

How to do feedforward well

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Following on from last month's article of "feedback or feedforward?" we continue to explore how to do feedforward well.

By giving feedforward in an effective way, you can start to create a culture where people feel comfortable to talk to each other about pretty much anything. What it comes down to is respectful and supportive transparency. By being open to feedforward and seeing it as a gift, we encourage others to share their feedforward. The more that happens, the more open conversations between people become and the more natural and non-threatening feedforward becomes.

It becomes part of the culture, a culture where honest feedforward helps people grow and develop, for the benefit of themselves as well as their colleagues and the organisation.

To create a feedforward culture you need to make feedforward part of your success strategy. You want to start giving and receiving feedback regularly, practice to openly share and discuss, and make that a habit.

There are so many reasons to do it - how about this one: According to Gallup's research on employee engagement, a key factor of engagement is getting recognition or praise for good work, **every week**.

Positive feedback is often overlooked, we tend to think more about feedback as something that's given when things aren't going great. And yet, positive feedforward is crucial and it's also a great place to start when you want to build a healthy feedforward culture. It doesn't need to be complicated. Just tell them about something you have observed that has worked really well and has had an impact on you, the team and/or the wider organisation. Start small and start to see the effects. Another Gallup study shows that both productivity and profitability increases when managers are given strengths feedback.

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HOW TO DO FEEDFORWARD WELL

So let's have a look at some proven ways to give and receive feedforward well.

WHEN GIVING FEEDFORWARD

(as per our TOP FEEDFORWARD MODEL below)

- Be friendly sincere yet professional
- Share what you have observed the other person do (behaviours)
- Tell them what the impact of their behaviour is (positive or negative) – on the team, on the organisation and/or on you
- Make suggestions for what they could do next time (eg. more of the same or something different)

HERE'S AN EXAMPLE OF HOW IT COULD SOUND

"Thanks so much for getting us all organised and together for that meeting, it was a really good meeting. The part that you played was important, you kept us on track and sent us all the details in advance. It helped us to be more efficient and quickly."

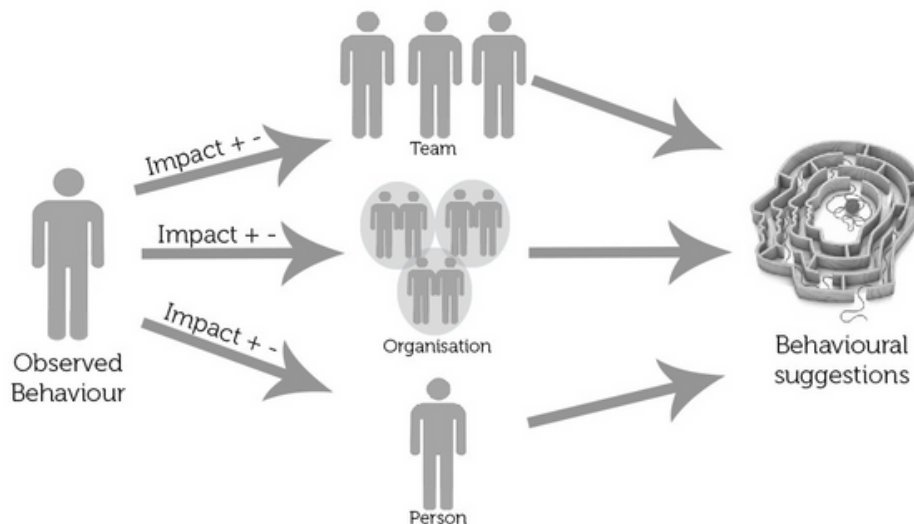
"I appreciate how organised you are and how you manage to do it in a very positive way. The way it affects me personally is it makes me feel comfortable that you have everything covered and I can relax. The team is comfortable with it too and this allows us to be more efficient in the wider organisation, so thank you – and keep doing it!"

WHEN RECEIVING FEEDFORWARD

- Start by assuming positive intent. Assume they mean well. The person could have NOT told you and then you would have been none the wiser about your impact
- Listen with an open mind. Hear them out, don't be too quick to jump in and try to disprove what they are saying. Don't defend it. If a person is sharing feedforward with you, they have observed something that you may not have – keep an open mind. If it's unclear to you, ask questions to find out more. This is also true for positive feedforward

- Sometimes we don't take positive observations seriously enough, waving it away, maybe even feeling uncomfortable about praise. The advice is this: if someone has taken the time to share, show them that you appreciate the interest and support by really listening and taking the information onboard
- If you don't acknowledge the feedforward given to you, you are in danger of creating a vicious cycle of people avoiding giving you feedforward and the next time they won't. If you dismiss the positive feedforward with a wave of the hand they won't do it again as it could feel like you didn't take the feedforward in and after all it may have been quite difficult for them to do it in the first place
- Thank the person for the feedforward. Let's face it, it might have been hard for them to do, but they did it anyway – for you

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TOP Feedforward Model™
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"POSITIVE FEEDBACK MAKES THE STRONG GROW STRONGER AND THE WEAK GROW WEAKER"

Carl Shapiro

- Consider what to do with the information you've been given. Not all feedforward needs to be acted upon, but you would do well to at least reflect on what you've learned and decide if it's valid, actionable and crucial for achieving success. Just like a birthday gift, it is your choice what you do with it, some you love and take onboard, some you say thanks and maybe don't use, some you choose to do nothing with or just let go of

CAREER BUILDING

Feedforward is not just about here and now, it's career building. By getting feedforward, continuous learning happens, which helps people grow, progress and stay ahead.

We all need to know how we are doing, how we and our actions and behaviours are perceived by others. Flying blind is not a good idea. We need the feedforward of others, and they need ours.

So make feedforward part of your success strategy and habits - for you and those you work with. Give it helpfully and respectfully and receive it gratefully and with an open mind.

Start today and enjoy the results - it starts with you.



"LEARNING AND INNOVATION GO HAND IN HAND. THE ARROGANCE OF SUCCESS IS TO THINK THAT WHAT YOU DID YESTERDAY WILL BE SUFFICIENT FOR TOMORROW"

William Pollard

LEAD CHANGE, DON'T JUST MANAGE IT



How to be proactive and stay ahead

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Learn to master change leadership, which is just as important – if not, more so – than change management.

For decades, managing change has been a key necessity for organisations across the globe. Managing change is largely a reactive response to changes that occur, in order to make those changes work. Being able to manage changes ensure your business can effectively handle the circumstances brought on by internal and external events.

But simply managing change is not enough to make the most of opportunities on the horizon; we also need to be able to lead change.

What does 'change leadership' involve?

BEING PROACTIVE

To lead change is to be proactive. It's thinking ahead: *'What do we need to do next, how do we need to change to be able to meet customers' / the world's needs to be successful?' It's looking around you: 'what's going on in the market, the world and the society I'm in? What do I need to be aware of? What are the signs that things might be changing or that they should change?'*

TAKING CONTROL

To lead change is to take control, which is a much better place to be in than feeling out of control. When you start to be proactive about change, you make it a very natural thing and potentially less threatening to your team members.

INVOLVING YOUR TEAM

Another key aspect of leading change is to involve your team(s) in it. It's not just the role of the leader to lead change. All team members can actively scan the world around them to understand the bigger picture and make better decisions for the team.

Here are some things you can do with your team specifically, to make this happen:

- **Discuss** the questions above with your team
- Create a **detailed strategy and communication plan** for your upcoming change, and a goal to recognise what you will achieve and why it's important. This will allow you to review your progress and to measure the success of the change

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"THE SECRET OF CHANGE IS TO FOCUS ALL OF YOUR ENERGY, NOT ON FIGHTING THE OLD, BUT ON BUILDING THE NEW"

Socrates

- Slow down. You need to slow down to speed up the change. Leaders can sometimes operate at such speed, they are too far ahead of the rest of the team. Stop and reflect to ensure you are prioritising the changes, doing the right thing at the right time
- Recognise that you are not at the same stage as others in relation to the change; sometimes as a leader you are one, two or three steps ahead of your team. Demonstrate empathy. Putting yourself into others shoes forces you to acknowledge where they are
- Positively reinforce strengths. When change occurs, people often focus on what is wrong, not what is right. Using strengths is a powerful way of getting yourself and others through the change
- Communicate the change curve and help people to understand the predictable stages of change

- Demonstrate emotional intelligence. Be emotionally aware of the impact of the change. Have your emotional radar on so you can be aware of the effect of what you say and do at each stage
- Communicate. It's important to both listen and involve people
- Ask your team members to anticipate changes too - make it a team effort to be attentive to the changing world around you and give input on what the future might hold

How people feel impacts how connected they are to the change and therefore if the change occurs. Remember that people are convinced in different ways and get the team involved in decision making.

BEHAVIOURS

Behaviours are the differentiating factor in change.

They are the magic key to whether the change happens or not. To create change leadership, be proactive, reflective, positive, considerate and trustworthy. Show empathy, be sensible and demonstrate responsibility.

Don't be afraid to be courageous, brave, open minded and cooperative. Most importantly, stop and celebrate the success you've created.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability has become a popular word in business, but very few organisations do it well. Sustainability is taking the big picture view, to consider all the complexities of business, and to consider the impact of decisions, actions and behaviours – not just now, but also in the future. It's to think about the impact on the financial, human and natural resources a business needs to succeed – hence, creating sustainable, long-term success is something all businesses should aim for.

"THE WORLD IS CHANGED BY YOUR EXAMPLE, NOT BY YOUR OPINION"

Paulo Coelho





BRIDGING THE LEADERSHIP VOID

Lessons from the pandemic:
How to lead when the leader is gone

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

What happens in the leadership void, when all or several leaders resign or are let go?

The current COVID pandemic has certainly created leadership voids all around the world.

A leadership void creates a lot of uncertainty and concern, as well as potential drain on knowledge and experience, which an organisation (a country or a community) needs.

In the leadership void, unless someone takes charge providing some much needed certainty and reassurance, dissidence and discontent can grow quickly and out of control. And the long term impact of that can negatively affect long into the future if not led with care.

LEADERSHIP VOID PLAN A

The very best scenario is of course to have a solid succession plan in place.

Every organisation, large or small, should have such a plan – too much dependence on a single leader or a few leaders is irresponsible at best, grossly negligent at worst.

The most successful and powerful leaders are the ones with a good succession plan in place, who are also developing the next person to take over from them. They do this with pride.

The succession plan then needs to be supported by a strong set of shared values and a clear, healthy culture that helps everyone in the organisation to feel continuously supported and clear on direction and action regardless of a sudden disappearance of key leader figures.

With these two elements of the plan, the organisation shows all stakeholders that they are still in charge of the situation, that the organisation is still strong and that stakeholders can trust that their stake is not at risk.

LEADERSHIP VOID PLAN B

If there is no plan A when leaders leave, the organisation must move very quickly to restore calm, trust and a sense of certainty. All eyes are on them and every moment counts. Here are some key steps to take for the most senior person that is left:

- In these times of change the organisation needs direction, it needs clear leadership saying "this is where we are going, this is the direction" and people need someone to take the lead. They need to show the way and give some focus and structure. In times of change people need this security to steady the ship and show a way forward. And there needs to be a clear short and long term focus, so that people can see the links between where they were, where they are and where they are going.

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"THE PAST IS BEHIND, LEARN FROM IT. THE FUTURE IS AHEAD, PREPARE FOR IT. THE PRESENT IS HERE, LIVE IT"

Thomas S Monson

- Call together all the (senior) leaders that are left. Who this is, what level this takes place on is dependent on the size of the company, but typically it would need to involve the most senior people that are left (this may include several layers of leadership). If your organisation is geographically dispersed, set up a call to make sure those in other locations are equally involved.
- Keep in mind that rumours are created in the communication void (very common when key leaders are no longer around). Don't collude with that behaviour, if you see it or hear it, stop it. Don't allow for that communication void to take place – communicate immediately to employees and other key stakeholders, letting them know that despite the leadership drain, it's still business as usual – and that more information about leadership succession will follow as soon as possible.
- Create clear profiles (if they don't already exist) of the roles that need to be re-filled (together with HR) and start to list the possible temporary and/or permanent candidates.
- Identify what knowledge gaps have been created after the leaders that have left. Discuss and explore how these gaps can best be filled, potentially even better.
- Keep in mind that the (unexpected) leadership void may provide an opportunity for rethinking the role profiles – the old leader may for example not have injected enough new, innovative thinking so this could be an opportunity to find more 'new thinking'.
- Behaviours are important at this point. People look to the leader(s) and watch what behaviours they role model. It is a time to really think about how you are behaving, work out what are productive behaviours and what are unproductive behaviours.

COMMUNICATION

The leadership void may not have been wanted, it may even be perceived as disastrous, but keep in mind that disaster is only a label for how you experience the situation. Only you remember it the way you remember it.

If it's happened, it's happened – it's a fait accompli – and the only way forward is to actively look for the opportunities that arise as a result of it. Look for them, find them, engage people in the process and communicate like you've never done before: frequently, confidently, repeating that things will be okay – while not glossing over people's concerns and feelings. Give people hope.

When people recognise that things will indeed be okay, you are creating a confident workforce to support you on the new journey forward. Then go ahead and simply lead it from the front – and where relevant, be ready to hand over to the new senior leaders that get appointed – and give them your full support.

"GOOD LUCK IS WHEN OPPORTUNITY MEETS PREPARATION, WHILE BAD LUCK IS WHEN LACK OF PREPARATION MEETS REALITY"

Eliyahu Goldratt



...AND RELAX



You're worth it

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Everyone needs time off at regular intervals, to relax, recharge and forget about work for a while.

Over the last 18 months or so of a global pandemic which has for many meant working from home, the lines between work and home have become blurred. And it has for many potentially raised the question: Am I working from home or living at work?

Even if you love working from home, valuing the flexibility it gives you and the time and money you save, it may also bring some challenges.

So switching off from work during your time off is likely more important than normal this year. How will you ensure you can do just that? How do you make your time off count? How do you build recharging into your busy life throughout the year too, not just during your official annual leave?

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO CONSIDER

FOR YOUR TIME OFF

- If possible, identify someone at work who can cover for you, and who you can refer any requests to
- Use an out-of-office message on communication tools and devices with reference to your cover person
- Make a list of all the things you will need to focus on when you're back from holiday (so that you can rest assured that they won't be forgotten and you can let go of them for now)
- If work pops into your mind, make note what it's about and put it in your calendar for when you're back at work (and let it go)
- Make sure you do things that inspire and recharge you

- If possible, have at least two weeks off in a row. It can take a few days just to wind down, so one week may not be enough to really relax and recharge

FOR ALL YEAR ROUND

- Think about how you can work smarter, not harder. Working all hours just makes you tired, not productive
- Have set office hours, even if you work from home. Have a deadline for when you switch off your computer at the end of the day. Only extend that if absolutely needed
- Schedule daily recharge moments; go for a walk, have a nap, listen to music, be on your own, be with others, talk, be in silence. Know yourself well enough, honour your preferences by knowing how to best recharge

....continued

"SOMETIMES THE MOST PRODUCTIVE THING YOU CAN DO IS RELAX"

Mark Black

- Take a few moments at the end of each day to think about the positives and what you have achieved today and how you can take those positives with you into the next day and the future.

Overall, it's about allowing yourself to hit the pause button at regular intervals. You don't need to be "on" all the time.

When you pause in a busy day (or by taking time off work) and allow time for personal and executive reflection, you gain access to more of your inner wisdom and insights.

Reflection helps create insight, better decisions and better results.

When you stop for a while, you can gain new perspective, new ideas, renewed energy and determination.

So don't just run, run, run. Being busy is not necessarily the same thing as being productive and successful.

Being busy is not a badge of honour. Unless we are doing the right, relevant things – the things that really make a difference – we maybe shouldn't be doing them at all.

Think 'do less, achieve more'. Choose carefully.

Some of the most successful people we've encountered are not those that are always "on" but those who can really focus while at work and equally really focus on being off when they're off. They are good at being 100% present wherever they are, whatever they are doing.

So allow yourself to chill now and then. Relax. It's a crucial life strategy. And you deserve it, you're worth it. Enjoy.

“REST IS NOT IDLENESS, AND TO LIE SOMETIMES ON THE GRASS UNDER TREES ON A SUMMER’S DAY, LISTENING TO THE MURMUR OF THE WATER, OR WATCHING THE CLOUDS FLOAT ACROSS THE SKY, IS BY NO MEANS A WASTE OF TIME”

John Lubbock





A STORY: I CAN DO IT MYSELF

How going it alone is rarely
a great strategy

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Sophia was great at putting together presentations. She enjoyed it and she somehow assumed that others wanted her to take on that role too.

There was a big client meeting coming up where most of the responsibility resided in her area. Sophia wanted to be in control so she spent hours and late nights preparing, with data input from her own team.

Some of her peers would be in the client meeting and definitely had a role to play, but Sophia was keen to figure it all out on her own, thinking that her colleagues would appreciate that she took care of it and took ownership of the whole client proposition.

Sophia was used to seeing her peers as competitors and as she had some doubt about her own capabilities, it was important to her to show everyone that she was as good as the next person.

This meant doing plenty of research into all aspects of the subject, so that it would be obvious that she knew about even those aspects of the proposition that sat outside her area.

Christine had been thinking about the presentation and what to say and had some great ideas and was waiting for Sophia to contact her about it. But being very busy, she had not got around to chasing her.

The day had arrived. Sophia, Christine and their other 3 colleagues were all gathered in the meeting room together with the client group.

Sophia confidently presented the data and the clients loved it, they wanted to hear more and they wanted to carry on exploring it with her. Christine and the rest of her colleagues on the other hand were more frustrated about what wasn't there. The presentation had been OK but it could have been better with their input. They also felt excluded and snubbed.



ANALYSIS

As we can see, Sophia didn't tell her colleagues what she was doing. She should have involved her peers or at least kept them updated, but she didn't. She didn't fully trust the others, and she thought she *should* be able to do it on her own and as she thought the others were smarter than her she felt she needed to have all the answers before involving them. She also didn't involve them because she was so busy and ran out of time, which of course could have been resolved if she had asked for help. Sophia's peers got frustrated because it had felt like a 'tell' not an 'ask' when she finally, just before the meeting, updated them. She had, in theory at least, already thought about everything. But in reality she hadn't, she needed their input and hence the results were not as great as they could have been. This has an impact on her peers, they didn't feel included and they were not likely to rush to help her next time. She had started to erode trust, rather than gain trust. If Sophia, instead of thinking she needed to be a 'know-it-all', had taken on the mindset of a 'learn-it-all', inviting the knowledge and experience of others, she could have built her own capability further and been more successful.

"A GROUP BECOMES A TEAM WHEN EACH MEMBER IS SURE ENOUGH OF HIMSELF AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO PRAISE THE SKILLS OF OTHERS"

Norman Shidle



IMPACT HACK #7 TIME

**4 proven hacks
for dialling up
your impact by
managing your time**

**BY MANDY FLINT &
ELISABET VINBERG HEARN**

Don't wish you had more time, make more instead of the time available to you. Make it count.

Here are 4 quick proven impact hacks to consider when wanting to dial up your impact by how you manage, and make the most of, your time.

VALUE YOUR TIME

Choose how you spend your time.

Dare to say no to meetings where you are not needed. Plan your time enough so that you have time for the things you enjoy (your strengths that energise you) and where you can add the most value.

BE REALISTIC

Don't overcommit. Assess how much time is needed before you commit to something. Take a pause, stop and reflect before you commit. Make sure you are in the moment to allow you to make good decisions.

DON'T MULTITASK

Do one thing at a time.

Multitasking is more time consuming than performing each task separately.

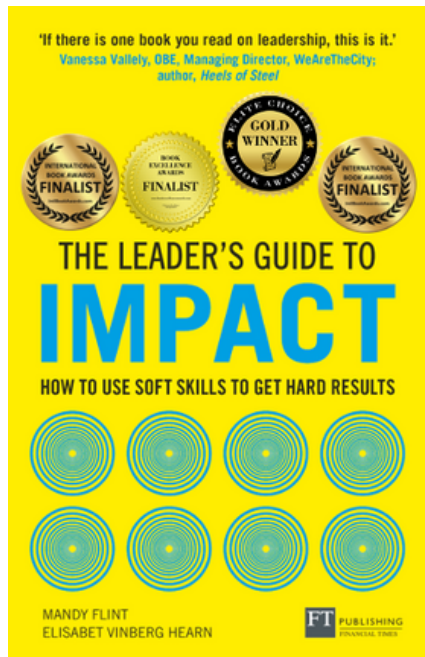
Focus and get there quicker.

Whatever you are doing, be 100% present in the moment.

BLOCK TIME FOR THINKING

Have at least 30 minutes each week blocked for pure thinking. Ring fence it. Don't let the urgent things trump the important stuff. Take a step back, think, reflect, observe - and watch how clarity of thought increases and wisdom grows.

CHECK OUT OUR AWARD-WINNING BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP



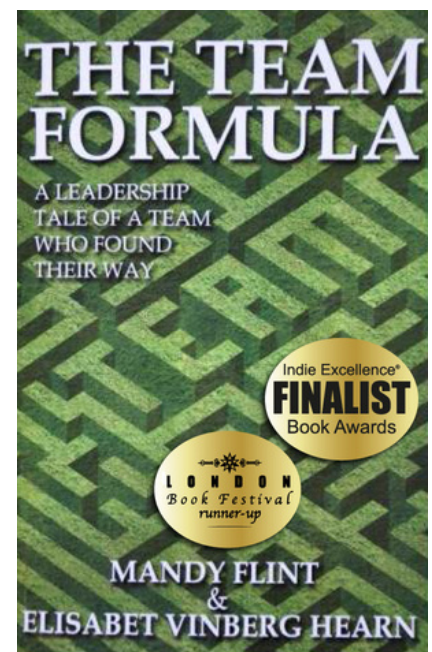
"A COMPELLING READ FOR THESE DISRUPTIVE TIMES"

Amazon reader review



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

Amazon reader review



"A WRITER ONLY BEGINS A BOOK. A READER FINISHES IT"

Samuel Johnson



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

Amazon reader review



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