

● impact

September 2021 | Issue 14

A Leadership Magazine

FRESH START

Leading hybrid with culture

CULTURE & HYBRID

New poll on cultural habits

JOURNALING

6 tips for journaling & growth

COACHABLE

Make the most of coaching

A STORY

A leader's journal

IMPACT HACK #8

Avoid burnout



hello

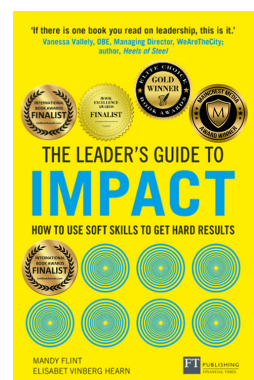
Welcome to the September/October issue of IMPACT!

In this issue, we focus on the new hybrid work setup and how crucial culture is in that. We share a recent poll on cultural habits in hybrid, and we explore how powerful journaling and being open to coaching is for real learning and growth.

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

And there's a story about a leader who writes in his journal after an unsuccessful team call.

We're also very pleased to share that our book *The Leader's Guide to Impact* has received its 5th book award! You can read the jury's comments at the end of the magazine.



Enjoy the read and thanks for reading!

Mandy Flint & Elisabet Vinberg Hearn

impact

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A FRESH START WITH HYBRID WORKING

Ideas for doing hybrid right with culture at the heart

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

A year ago, us and many others started talking about hybrid working and going back to the office following the covid pandemic. It was a useful conversation to have but in reality the return to the office has not really happened to any greater extent yet. And different countries are at different stages of return or plans for return. But it's definitely starting to happen.

SOME REALISATIONS; OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- The way work gets done has changed over the last 18 months, bringing both pros and cons.
- People and organisations have come to the realisation that a lot of roles can be performed either from work or from home.
- And those that have been able to work comfortably from home have reported experiencing a greater quality of life, not needing to spend time on long daily commutes and having more personal time available for family and friends and personal interests.

- Various studies show that people work more when working from home, hence risking burnout. People are "on" more, blurring the lines between work and home life.
- More and more people are making more conscious choices about how and where they want to work. increasing the war for talent.
- There have been many reports about people's mental health being impacted by the pandemic. The need for empathy and care for each other is greater than before.
- If an organisation decides to have some onsite team members and some offsite team members, it can create two disparate groups, where those offsite can feel particularly left outside the perceived 'main circle'. Neuroscience also shows us "proximity bias" exists, which means we pay more attention to those who are located closest to us.

SOME SOLUTIONS

Here are some ideas on how to make the new hybrid setup a success:

Think about PEOPLE first

The last 18 months have been challenging for most people, so focus on people, the individuals, the team. Everything else can take second place. Listen, care, empathise, connect.

You are a role model

How you behave, how you show up will impact people around you. Take the time to center yourself, putting yourself in a good state of mind. Leadership is contagious so lead yourself first.

Make diversity & inclusion a priority

Include everyone equally, regardless of where they are based or any other differentiator. This is the time to show through actions and behaviours that you are serious about having an inclusive workplace and culture where people connect and engage and can be creative together. Value differences as diverse teams are also the most successful ones.

....continued

Create an environment of psychological safety

It's always been important, but even more so now. The challenges are not over and everyone will need to be able to communicate and collaborate with each other, respectfully challenge each other in dialogue to identify issues and create solutions. And for people to want to do that, they need to feel safe to speak up, to share their thoughts, to try, fail and learn (fast) and move on. How you respond when people have the courage to speak their mind makes all the difference.

Create a Team Charter

Build the team intentionally by creating a Team Charter together. A Team Charter is a document that describes the purpose, framework and agreements of the team. Creating a Team Charter is a shared process (not just a leadership task), hence making it a powerful and visual shared commitment. A Team Charter that is created by everyone, is owned by everyone and therefore is carried out by everyone. Read more about how to do it [here](#).

Involve your team in creating the practicalities of hybrid working

Build your team charter further by discussing and agreeing how to work together and how to support each other in the new setup. Be proactive about it. Focus on output, not input. When you have people working remotely, you must trust them to deliver without micro-managing.

Design the hybrid setup carefully

Some job tasks can easily be done remotely and some can not. [This article from Harvard Business Review](#) provides good food for thought on how to assess tasks, handovers and other practicalities that indicates how and where the work is best done.

Encourage dialogue

Allow people to talk about their concerns, recognising that these disruptive times can be very stressful and that not everyone will react the same way. Just talking about a problem or concern, expressing how someone feels helps to ease said concern is a good first step.

And you can then support them in building strength and resilience to find the solutions they need. You need to make time and space for this in a virtual and office mixed world. So, ensure you have regular informal check-in points.

Build and work on Team Trust

The team dinners, chats and water cooler conversations are harder in this mixed virtual/office world, so recreate that by doing things like having stand up meetings with people in the office together (safely socially distanced as relevant) and include those working virtually by linking them in using technology. Get the office and virtual world mixed. Have some team meetings that are 'just' social check-ins too.

Focus on a healthy work/life integration

When working from home, the lines between work and home life get blurred. Help people overcome that by not sending emails around the clock. Be a role model for a healthy work/life integration, minimising the risk of burnout and turnover.

....continued

“WE THINK, MISTAKENLY, THAT SUCCESS IS THE RESULT OF THE AMOUNT OF TIME WE PUT IN AT WORK, INSTEAD OF THE QUALITY OF TIME WE PUT IN”

Arianna Huffington



Prioritise 1-to-1 time

To pick up on the office/work 'vibe' you will need to carry out and put into the calendar more informal 1-to-1 time to fill in the gaps and the void that the virtual /office mixed environment creates. Use the informal check-ins to pick up on how people feel, what they think and what they need.

Empower with digital tools

Make sure you all have the digital tools that will allow you to collaborate and communicate across the hybrid (remote and office) workplace.

OUR NUMBER 1 ADVICE: CULTURE

As you can see from what we've covered here, culture and behaviours are at the heart of success.

We recently did a poll on LinkedIn on this topic which you can read about in the article on the next page.

Focus on culture. Culture is "how things get done around here", it's how people behave, it's the habits that become the norm.

Like with everything else, this new way of working, the hybrid setup will not be plain sailing. And that's OK.

Be decisive about it, don't wait until you have all the answers - nobody does. This new reality is here to stay and we need to work with it now. Adjust and adapt to that.

Be intentional in your leadership of it, allow enough time in your busy schedule to manage the 'new normal'.

It's inevitable that you and your team will try things out (how to work) and realise that it didn't turn out exactly the way you wanted it to. And keep in mind that the 'new normal' will keep changing. Be agile and open minded. Listen and learn and move forward.

We don't know what it will look like in a year's time and beyond. The power lies in exploring that together and learning together. Your role is to lead your team through that.

No one can have all the answers, no one is an expert in this global pandemic. The power and the answers are in all of us, sharing and working on this together, and that needs to be led by a powerful leader who involves, enables and trusts their team. That's you.

"SPEED, AGILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS ARE THE KEYS TO FUTURE SUCCESS"

Anita Roddick



NEW POLL ON CULTURAL HABITS IN HYBRID



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Following on from the previous article, it's clear that the hybrid work setup will require a lot of thinking around work processes, tasks, office space and adaptability, people's preferences, digital tools and more. It's a complex strategic and practical dilemma.

But it clearly cannot be solved with these considerations only. The human, cultural, behavioural aspects of how people feel about work and their interactions with others need at least equal consideration. As culture is "how things get done around here" the best laid plans can be derailed by culture. Or "Culture eats strategy for breakfast" a quote often attributed to Peter Drucker.

No, there are no simple answers to hybrid, it's work in progress, we need to try, evaluate, learn and adapt.

And we need to consider diversity, we need to appreciate that everyone is different, there's no one-size-fits-all solution. People value different things, just like some have enjoyed working from home and some have struggled with it. What we know for sure though is that **how** we work is more on everyone's agenda than we have ever experienced before. And to get the best results, we'd better pay more attention to culture than before.

We haven't done this hybrid way of working before to this extent so we all need to be ready to change and flex based on the human dynamics at play.

And because we know that culture and habits are so important, we recently ran a poll on LinkedIn, where we posed the following question.

The new hybrid work setup is on everyone's agenda, and a lot of focus is put on the practical and technical aspects of the combination of remote and onsite working.

However, the culture and behaviours also need to be front of mind as it's much harder to keep culture healthy and alive when people work remotely/virtually. The behaviours and cultural change needed will be just as important as the technical.

With this in mind, what is the most important cultural habit that needs to be actively worked on to make the hybrid setup work?

Here are the results.

...continued

"CULTURE EATS STRATEGY FOR BREAKFAST"

Peter Drucker

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT CULTURAL HABIT THAT NEEDS TO BE ACTIVELY WORKED ON TO MAKE THE HYBRID WORK SETUP WORK?

MAKING IT EASY TO COLLABORATE

39%

MAKING OTHERS FEEL INCLUDED

35%

FOCUSING ON RELATIONSHIPS

18%

KEEPING UP TO DATE/INFORMED

8%

Results from global poll
Summer 2021

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2020
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**"WE CAN CHANGE CULTURE
IF WE CHANGE BEHAVIOR"**

Dr Aubrey Daniels

1. MAKING IT EASY TO COLLABORATE

We were not surprised to see that this was the most voted for habit. No one is an island and there is only so much we can achieve on our own, having a collaborative environment makes everyone feel and perform better. And in a hybrid world, where some may work from home and others from the office, collaboration needs to be worked at in a way that was not needed when everyone was in the same place.

2. MAKING OTHERS FEEL INCLUDED

Hot on the heels of collaboration, came inclusion. Inclusion was always important, but like collaboration it may not happen as naturally when people can't see each other. A considered approach to making others feel important and included needs to be top of mind for leaders and non-leaders alike.

3. FOCUSING ON RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships need work all the time, and the human dynamics will play themselves out when we work remotely. You can put in place all the processes and procedures and do that with a very logical mindset, the important human behaviours will come into play. For example, a team we are working with have great plans on a phased approach to allow people into the office and have plans to have a certain number of people in the office at any one time. They need to be ready to flex and change those plans as the human relationships will come into play and will mean team members may feel left out if they are not part of a certain group so favourites and peer pressure will naturally rise to the top.

4. KEEPING UP TO DATE/INFORMED

The relatively low percentage is likely to be an indication of how information has become increasingly accessible, over the last year in particular, as more and more organisations have invested in digital tools that simplifies information sharing and communication. Keeping people up to date and informed is now a 'given' and a necessity. It is not a nice to have it is part of working remotely so it has become embedded in our behaviours. A true transition.



LEADERSHIP JOURNALING

Make it part of your leadership strategy

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Don't fall into the busy trap. There is great value in pausing to reflect, as it provides an opportunity to recognise what's going on, evaluate results and consider options going forward.

And journaling is a great way to do this, because it also adds the power of the written word, putting pen to paper, or fingers to keyboard. As thoughts are captured in a visual way (or auditory, if you prefer to record your thoughts) they deepen further in our consciousness than if just thought or spoken. By looking back at them from a distance we can get a new perspective on those thoughts.

The best leaders are great self leaders.

They reflect on their own leadership and the impact they have and journaling is one way of doing this. And it's often combined with executive coaching where those reflections can be shared out loud and the coach can add their observations and offer insights as relevant.

Many of our clients go through a bespoke journaling process before each coaching session to focus their mind and recognise what they need to reflect on out loud and talk about in the coaching session.

Make journalling and coaching part of your continuous leadership development strategy.

Some of the opportunities and benefits of journaling

- Time out
- Slow down, hit the 'pause' button
- Reflection & self feedback
- Look more objectively at what you're experiencing
- Self awareness
- Bring order to perceived chaos
- Insights & learning
- Better decisions
- Stress relief
- Inspiration
- Creative thinking
- Mindfulness

....continued

"I WRITE IN A JOURNAL DAILY. THIS EXTRAORDINARY RITUAL HAS REVOLUTIONIZED MY MINDSET, TRANSFORMED MY HEARTSET, AND GENERALLY INFLUENCED IN MY LIFE EXPONENTIALLY"

Robin Sharma

Examples of Questions you could ask yourself in your journal

- What's happening right now?
- How am I feeling?
- What's going well?
- What are my/our challenges?
- What are my ideas?
- How am I using my leadership to make the most of challenges and opportunities?
- What are my strengths and how are they helping me?
- What's around the corner and how do I need to prepare?
- What have I learned, and how will I use this going forward?

OUR TOP SIX TIPS

Journal each day

Create a habit of journaling. It doesn't have to take more than a few minutes. Choose a time of day that suits you, morning or evening are popular alternatives.

Find a good place

Make sure you can be undisturbed and at ease.

Find a new place

If you feel stuck and need new inspiration, find a new place for that day. Go outside, sit on a bench, on the beach, in a cafe.

Put yourself in a reflective state

Close your eyes for a moment and just reflect on the day, week, month - what comes up for you? Pay attention to what comes to the top; what do you really need to focus on? Stay in a reflective state and allow yourself this gift of time.

Let go of any specific expectations

Don't push yourself to solve specific issues as this can block or limit your thinking. Just start writing and see where your thoughts take you.

Decide on a list of questions

If you find questions helpful to prompt your journaling, create a set of questions that work for you (see examples to the left).

**"DISCOVERY CONSISTS NOT IN SEEKING NEW LANDSCAPES,
BUT IN HAVING NEW EYES"**

Marcel Proust





HOW COACHABLE ARE YOU?

How to make the most of coachable moments

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

There is no such thing as status quo – at least not for any longer periods of time. No, the truth is that the world sure isn't standing still – neither should we.

We live in a changing world and we need to continuously learn and re-learn. What we knew yesterday may no longer be relevant or correct. What we once accepted as truths may since have been disproved. We need to be open to that, to accept that.

We're sure you would agree that everyone needs to change, adapt and evolve to meet the demands and expectations of the future.

This of course also means that we need to welcome feedback AND be able to take action to change and adapt our actions, behaviours and habits.

Many people say that they are adaptable and flexible, but when someone gives them constructive feedback (which could help them develop), they brush it away, or become defensive, they come with excuses and explanations – simply put; they don't take it in and so they don't change.

On some level it's more important for them to be "right" than to be willing to develop. They are not open to the coaching opportunity of the feedback. And each time they reject the feedback, they reduce the chances of others wanting to share feedback in the future – hence minimising the chance to grow and develop and be successful.

Winners are people who are coachable. It's as straightforward as that. Imagine a team in the world of sports where a player isn't coachable and won't take on feedback – well, they are pretty soon going to be off that team, don't you think?

What does it mean to be coachable?

When we are coachable, we let our guard down. We stand strong and open minded, knowing that feedback and coaching is the stuff of winners, of champions. We assume positive intent. We are eager to keep doing better and better.

There are many possible coaches around us all; people who can hold up a mirror and let us see what they see, and at times give us guidance too.

...continued

YOU CAN LEAD A HORSE TO WATER BUT YOU CAN'T MAKE IT DRINK

Proverb

They may be leaders, peers, direct reports, friends, and of course professional coaches.

You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink. Learning and coaching can never be forced on someone, it has to be the ownership of each individual to take responsibility for their learning. We have even seen examples of people who get themselves a coach, and then in 'clever' ways duck from feedback and consequent learning moments. It's ironic indeed, but it happens.

And a reluctance to be coached is often fear-based, not wanting to admit to not having all the answers, not being perfect. This reasoning is of course deeply flawed as there is no such thing as perfect - we are all work in progress, learning never stops - and good coaching is an extremely effective way of growing.

HOW TO BE MORE COACHABLE

Here are some ideas to ponder if you want to make more of those coachable moments available to you.

Check your ego at the door

It's a mindset. Go into meetings and coachable moments with an open mind, not just focusing on your own interests. Be prepared to be inspired and maybe even surprised.

Practise a growth mindset

Recognise that you have endless potential for development and growth. In fact, it would be boring and deeply non-motivating if you couldn't develop any further, wouldn't it?

Stay curious

Ask questions, listen, learn. Have questions prepared for meetings to prompt new insights.

Value the people you surround yourself with

Value their observations. Be open minded and grateful when you receive feedback. Assume that they want what's best for you. Why wouldn't they?

Make time for conversations with your boss

Ask for their time. Ask for their feedback and listen. Ask for clarifications if needed.

Feedback and coaching is the stuff of champions, of winners and needs to be not just accepted but embraced and welcomed.

Are you getting enough of it? Are you allowing yourself to be as successful as you can be by welcoming coaching? Are you letting yourself be coached? How coachable are you?

"IN A GROWTH MINDSET, CHALLENGES ARE EXCITING RATHER THAN THREATENING. SO RATHER THAN THINKING, OH, I'M GOING TO REVEAL MY WEAKNESSES, YOU SAY, WOW, HERE'S A CHANCE TO GROW"

Carol Dweck



A STORY: A LEADER'S JOURNAL



Stephen reflects on his leadership

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

Damn it! I'm so angry. I hardly know where to start! What happened? What's wrong with Samuel? How is he making me look in front of the team?

I don't know what to do about him. I know I should have done something today, but I just froze. I just didn't know what to do, again. Maybe I've just been very lucky so far in my career and just not had to deal with these kinds of problems?

But I'm not a bad leader, I must be able to deal with this too. I know that I didn't want to have a bust-up on the call. I don't want to be seen to lose my temper. His arrogance just gets to me and gets in the way of me being a good leader. I know it's disruptive; it's affecting the team and the teamwork. Plus, it's making me really anxious, because what happens now? I can sense the team was disappointed and rightly so, I realise that. Wow, that's quite a realisation...but it doesn't feel good. Now what?

Alice would like that though: the 'realisation'. Maybe she's right. With this realisation things are looking a bit clearer to me. It's like I can see the situation more objectively.

I can see that this is affecting the teamwork, which in turn is affecting our productivity. I don't want Helmut to make that connection, and I certainly don't want him on my back about this. I need to sort it out, I need to address it, when I'm calmer, and I can feel myself calming down now.

I have some great people on the team, but I seem to focus all my attention on Samuel and the rest of the team is too. I have to change this. And I will, starting now.

Whatever I have done so far is not enough. Or maybe it would have been if I had stood up to Samuel today? I didn't though and it's time for me to take a long hard look at myself, and how I'm managing this team. I haven't done great so far, I confess. I have made some assumptions that everyone will just play by the rules and now that Samuel isn't I'm not holding him to account.

I feel more insightful now for sure. I will talk to Samuel tomorrow and I will think some more about how to address this with the team too.



ANALYSIS

In this journal entry Stephen, a leader of a global team, reflects on a team call gone wrong where he didn't hold one of his team members to account on something they had agreed as a team.

In the process of reflection, as recommended to him, he goes from anger to realisation as he puts down on paper what has actually happened and how he as the leader responded to the situation. It encourages him to think about what he can do to redress a situation that didn't go well.

Stephen is reflecting honestly and openly, finding it OK to say it wasn't a good meeting and analysing the role he had to play. He is taking a step back and looking at it objectively. Some time has elapsed since the situation which allows him to distance himself and take the role of an observer. This is powerful for him.

**"IT IS NOT ONLY WHAT WE DO, BUT ALSO WHAT WE DO NOT DO,
FOR WHICH WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE."**

Moliere



IMPACT HACK # 8 AVOID BURNOUT

**6 proven hacks
for dialling up
your impact by
avoiding burnout**

**BY MANDY FLINT &
ELISABET VINBERG HEARN**

Burnout is a reality for many people during busy and stressful times in life, often work related.

Here are 6 proven impact hacks to consider when wanting to dial up your impact by how you manage your mental health and avoid burnout.

SAY NO

You can't do everything, nor should you. Prioritise. Do what matters most, not just here and now but long-term too.

BREATHE

Intentionally take a couple of deep breaths here and there through the day, breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Breathe in like you are smelling rose and breathe out like you are blowing out a candle.

TAKE BREAKS

Take regular breaks (at least one per hour). It can be a quick 2 minute break if that is all the time you have. Take digital breaks too - block time for non-computer work and life. There's no need to always "be on".

EXERCISE

A busy mind needs the balance of a busy body. Make time for some exercise - a walk, a jog, a swim, a workout class - whatever it is, do something each day.

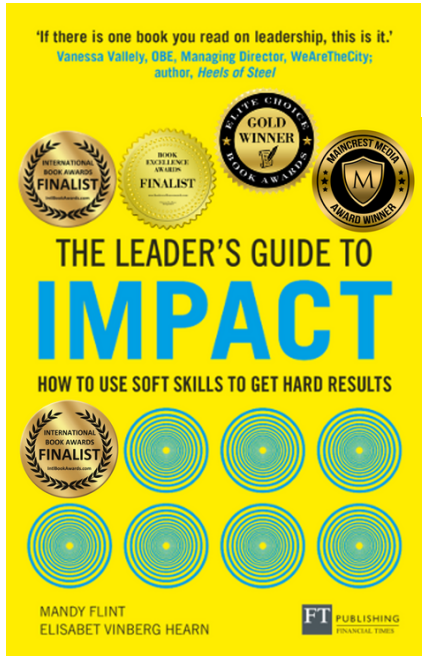
BUDDY UP

Find a buddy, an accountability partner whom you check in with at regular intervals to keep each other on track for your commitments to work/life balance.

HONOUR THE WEEKEND

As far as it's possible, don't work at the weekend. Ensure you get complete work-free time each week to focus on the people and activities that matter to you outside of work.

CHECK OUT OUR AWARD-WINNING BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP



NEWS FLASH

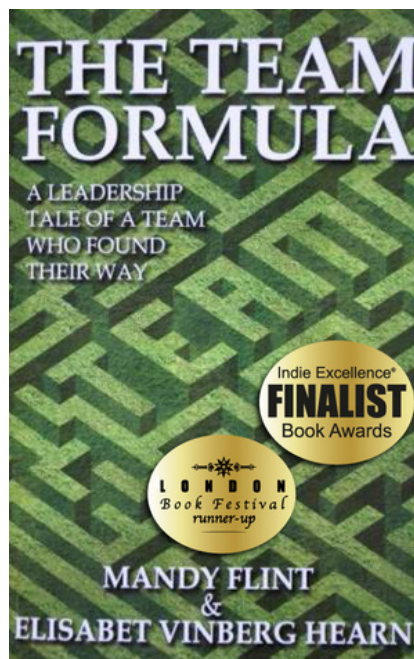
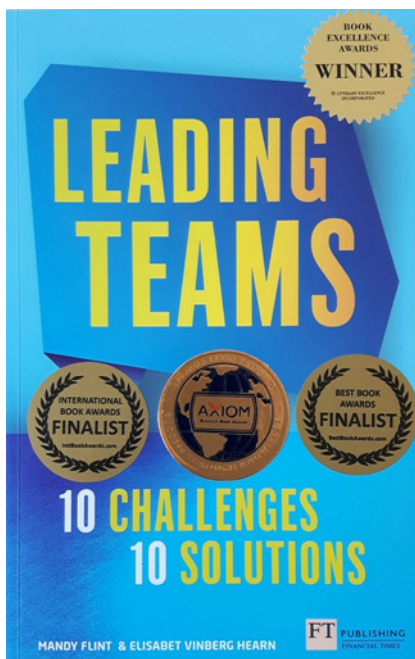
**5TH BOOK
AWARD FOR THE
LEADER'S GUIDE
TO IMPACT**



"The Leader's Guide is a pioneering book that combines modern principles of mindfulness and positive psychology to create a manifesto for successful leadership and life. The contents of the book helps readers create a strong direction, vision and strategy so they can become more impactful leaders in both corporate and domestic spaces.

The book progresses in a logical fashion, focusing first on inner work before moving outwards to colleagues, stakeholders and the community as a whole. This cleverly mirrors the overarching theme of the book – the ripple effect – where one's impact is bigger than oneself."

Maincrest Media Jury



"THE BOOK TO READ IS NOT THE ONE THAT THINKS FOR YOU BUT THE ONE WHICH MAKES YOU THINK"

Harper Lee

A modern, minimalist office space with a large conference table and chairs. The room features a high ceiling, large windows offering a panoramic view of a city skyline (including the Empire State Building), and a mezzanine level with a glass railing. The floor is made of light-colored wood. The text "impact a leadership magazine" is overlaid in white, bold, lowercase letters.

impact a leadership magazine

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