



# CUTTINGS

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## LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

**A** new survey on Leadership promoted the view that learning should be focused on building on strengths rather than addressing weaknesses.

Training by HR.com summarised some observations on leadership effectiveness;  
**Great leaders make a BIG difference**  
There is a clear relationship between managers who were perceived as "great" and the associated employee commitment rates, turnover rates, customer satisfaction scores, and profitability of their divisions.

Managers who scored in the middle (30<sup>th</sup> to 70<sup>th</sup> percentile) compared to their peers had little to no impact on the business metrics. One of the clear indications of this research is the strategic value of moving managers who currently rank as average or good into the "great" zone. And making a move doesn't mean becoming great at everything. Just being perceived as "great" in three competencies was enough for good managers to move into the zone of perceived "greatness" with the resulting impact on business metrics is dramatic.

### **Leaders need to build on their strengths and shore up deficiencies**

As regular readers of *Cuttings* will be aware, The Gallup Organization, Positive Psychology and Appreciative Inquiry practitioners, and Zenger Folkman, among others, have long

This survey found consistent support of the idea that building on what a leader already does well can generate tremendous return from senior Leadership Development executives, coaches, and vendors.

People are easily motivated to pay attention to what is already working for them and make it even better.

### **Leadership development at all levels**

In the past, leadership development was often reserved for those in the executive ranks, or on the fast track. The term "leader" now is being expanded to include people at all levels of organisations. Amongst other things, leadership is a mindset or perspective, and providing some form of leadership development to individuals at all levels sends a clear message that leadership is valued and encouraged.

The direct link that has been proven between the effectiveness of a manager and their employees' job satisfaction, productivity, commitment levels and tenure is another strong business case for offering front-line leaders training and development. Many companies have increasing their leadership bench strength as a strategic priority.

Organisations are predicted to become much flatter, leaner and dependent upon relationships with an expanding range of contract workers, suppliers and channel partners. This new structure will require that individuals outside the traditional "manager" title have effective skills for managing groups, projects and effectively influencing action toward a successful outcome.

### **Leaders are born and made**

Do some individuals have a natural inclination to lead others? Yes.

Can leaders benefit from developing their leadership skills and abilities? Absolutely!

Can a person who has no natural inclination to lead others become an effective leader? Yes...But! Anything is possible, however an individual who does not have a desire and aptitude toward leading others will probably not enjoy the job.

Therefore, leaders are born *and* made – the debate now centres on how a leader acquires what he or she needs to improve, not whether they need it.

*Leadership training resource guide, Karen Elmhirst, HR.com/research Sept 2005*  
*Jack Zenger and Joe Folkman, The Extraordinary Leader*

## Employees Don't Trust Senior Managers

A chilling message for leaders from two surveys: your employees don't trust you, and the more they know you, the less they trust.

In one, senior managers at or just below board level used descriptions like "rules by fear", "arrogant", "dishonest and devious" and "yes men who wouldn't rock the boat" about at least one of their fellow senior managers, often with a link to poor performance "which begs the question of how these people got the job in the first place."

In the other survey only 36% of UK employees trusted senior managers to always communicate honestly (down from 39% in 2002, and compared to 40% in the USA) This survey also found a decline in trust with length of service: 57% of employees with less than a year's service trusted management compared to 26% for those with 15 or more years' service. Employees tend to be especially distrustful of management in times of organisation change when trust is crucial.

Furthermore, only half the employees feel their they are being kept informed about matters that affect them suspecting that far more goes on behind closed doors than managers let on. Only 48% think there is sufficient contact between managers and employees, and fewer than half think management behaves in a way which is consistent with company values.

*Senior managers behaving badly, People Management September 2005*  
*What's working, Mercer HR Consulting, October 2005*

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# Snippets

A collection of thought provokers and quotations ...

- ✂ “Whatever actions a leader performs, common man will follow! Whatever standards he sets by his exemplary acts, all the world pursues! *Bhagavat gita*
- ✂ “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.” *John Quincy Adams*
- ✂ “We can only see when a crisis opens our eyes. We cannot see what is emotionally difficult to see. We can only see what is relevant to our view of the future.” *Arie de Geus*
- ✂ “Physiologically, it simply doesn't matter whether your anger is justified or not. The body doesn't make moral judgements about feelings; it just responds.” *Doc Childre and Howard Martin*
- ✂ “It is particularly worrying that long-serving employees - who know most about their organisations - trust management the least.” *Dr. Patrick Gilbert*
- ✂ “Not everything that can be counted counts, not everything that counts can be counted.” *Einstein*
- ✂ “Theory is forever grey, but the tree of life is green.” *Goethe*
- ✂ “In the thousands of moments that we string together to make up our lives, there are some where time seems to change its shape and a certain light falls across our ordinary path. If we stop searching for purpose, we become it. Looking back, we might describe these moments as times when we were at our best, when the gifts we were born with and the talents we have developed were braided with what we love and the needs of the world.” *Dawna Markov*
- ✂ “Remember, you cannot leap over a precipice in two easy smaller jumps. While in the air, you are gripped by the panic, the anxiety, that are the inevitable companions of true growth” *Peter Koestenbaum*
- ✂ “The trouble is, if you don't risk anything, you risk even more” *Erica Jong*
- ✂ “It is well to remember that the entire population of the universe, with one trifling exception, is composed of others” *Andrew J. Holmes*

## Excellence in Executive Coaching

Mike Turner, a.k.a. Mike the Mentor, produces an excellent newsletter on mentoring and coaching. A recent edition gives us a practical guide to excellence in executive coaching that has been developed by Ginny Kidd by researching excellent coaches.

A summary of the six competencies she developed are:

### *Psychological underpinning*

How coaches incorporate a psychological foundation into their practice; the extent to which they work on their own personal development and their own supervision; and their contribution to the personal development and supervision of others.

### *Business acumen*

How coaches understand and empathise with their client's situation through their acumen gained as an executive with, or consultant to, large organisations. How their practice is informed by board-level strategic and leadership experience.

### *Coaching scope*

How coaches make meaning. The extent to which they tolerate or embrace complexity; extreme crisis and conflict; differing worldviews; global issues; and issues of meaning and purpose.

### *Coaching process*

How coaches gather data on clients and help clients tell their stories, recognise blind spots, choose issues that will make a difference to their lives, look at possibilities for change, develop a change agenda, and make a commitment to a lasting plan.

### *Professionalism*

How coaches create peer relationships within organisations; how they use their personal styles and ability to create an appropriate impression. How their presence helps the client to change.

### *Reputation*

How coaches use their own publications, public speaking engagements and involvement in training other coaches to further the coaching profession. How they contribute to the accreditation debate.

### *Mentoring for Change 31*

You can subscribe to this newsletter at <http://www.mikethementor.co.uk>.

And look out for the article by Ginny Kidd using this framework in coach selection in the *Sloan Management Review* next year

## 2005 Public Programmes

### **Managing Technical Professionals**

–for anyone moving from a technical job into management or in a role that manages technical professionals.

London, UK: 24-25 November

**Internal Consulting Skills** –focusing on consulting and interpersonal skills for people working as internal consultants in an organisation.

London, UK: 17-18 November

### **Information and booking:**

Frost & Sullivan +44 (0)20 7915 7878

[www.training.frost.com](http://www.training.frost.com)

## Focus in Influence 2006 Public Programmes

Booking is now available for the 2006 public course programme on Focus on Influence run by Learning Consortium.

**Focus on Influence** –developing interpersonal skills, reflection and insight, assuming responsibility, personal commitment, enhancing flexibility and achieving goals together with others.

Netherlands dates (English language):

7-10 February

6-9 June

12-15 September

21-24 November

Belgium dates (Dutch language):

24-27 April

26-29 September

### **Information and booking:**

Learning Consortium

[www.learningconsortium.net](http://www.learningconsortium.net)

**In company** versions of these and other programmes are also available. For details call me direct (details below)

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