



The delegates were welcomed by Bob Mackenzie of Benchmark for Business. Andy Lothian of Insights introduced the first speaker, Steve Radcliffe. Leadership is about inspiration, the internal spirit and how to inspire others. He urged the audience to consider their purpose here today and what they wanted to get from the event. Steve's simple and clear approach to the question of leadership was introduced as 'less is more'. In his presentation Steve showed how working with people's energies and engagement can build leadership skills. But it works best if you are up to something that engages your passions and vision for the future.

Steve Radcliffe –Leadership Plain and Simple

Steve recalled his last stay at the hotel. On that occasion he had been chatting to the Chief Executive of First Direct only to discover later that at the same time a murder was taking place upstairs. So, he felt, the important thing to consider is what else might be going on in the Landmark Hotel.

He began by asking people to look inside themselves and discover what gives you energy and what takes it away. Also consider how you want to be at the end of the session and concentrate on the quality of your thinking. Becoming the best you can be does not come from looking sideways at others.

Only 38% think that their organization is well led and 66% believe leadership to be a rare quality. But, it is essential to shake off the idea that leadership is only at the top. To do this people need to believe that they can make a difference and to see that as a natural human activity. Leadership can sit anywhere and it should be nurtured at all levels. Consider how good you are at developing others as good quality leaders.

Noel Tichy: *"Winning orgs win because they have good leaders nurturing the development of other leaders at all levels of the organization"*

Leadership skills can be seen as complicated in reality they are quite simple and can be reduced to three ideas: Future, Engage and Deliver.

This means imagining the future and having a tangible and clear about it. We might dress it up as a 'mission' but really it's a simple picture. The next step is to interact with others and get them to come with you. It is about getting away from the telling mode and on to engagement. Delivery is about travelling with people to the imagined future. But, we limit ourselves in these three areas and there are few leaders who are really good at all three parts

Here are two ideas on the approach

1st idea - From operator, to manager and to leader

This is a big challenge. You probably started your career as a doer, an operator. You got good at this and so came to manage other operators. Because you excelled at this your bosses wanted you to step up again and become a leader. But this is tricky because you can get two messages. One is to lead and the other is to attend to the hundreds of tasks you are expected

to complete. The tasks can feel a lot safer and much more familiar because this is where you feel competent, so how do you make the transition to leader complete?

The audience were asked to discuss in pairs how they see this challenge and to think about when and how they move between the three modes:

“There can be a skill gap and this forces you back to the operations mode – getting past the resource scarcity is a challenge.”

Steve suggested that thinking there is no way out can trap you. As a leader you need to start in the future but imagining it can be hard if you feel trapped by the present.

Making it authentic - Someone described “the bungee jump moment” when you literally have to let go of your former role, trust in who you are and be yourself.

Steve reinforced this perspective and said that if you want to be good in the leader mode think about what you are like in operator and manager modes. How clear are you about who you are and what you do?

“I move naturally toward the leader mode but I’m not sure my organization values this”.

Steve: It is essential to find a good home at work and an environment that is both nurturing and liberating. This contributes to generating a sense of who you are and who you could be and how you can create and shape that environment. People fail to lead because the present day stuff gets in the way drawing us into operating mode.

2nd idea - Be up to something

One common feature among capable leaders is that they are all up to something. It’s a dream, an ambition, something in the future that they want to create. What they want in the future is strongly connected to what they care about so, you need to make sure you are up to something.

The foundation question issue here is ‘what do you care about and what is important to you?’ People were asked to discuss this in pairs. Many described the conversation as liberating and felt that they were connecting at a deep level while at the same time acknowledging the need to tread carefully in this sensitive area. Steve stressed the significance of this conversation by quoting the phrase “How can I know what I’m thinking until I’ve heard what I’ve said”.

A Harvard Business Review showed successful leaders to be purposeful, trust in their own judgement and to adopt long term big picture views. It is about breaking out of the perceived boxes to fulfil personal goals that tally with those of the organization as a whole. This is the place to start with what matters to you.

The audience were then asked to talk about what they are up to at work and what would make it even better. They should think of the conference as a safe place where they can imagine and fly. Here are some of their thoughts:

- “I feel passionate about it, I now want to get back and do it.”
- “I put barriers in the way of what I should be doing”.
- “Life is about what you create, think about how to positively discriminate to create and preserve the time to do it.”

The conversation here is about the extent to which people are living their lives centred on what they care about. What you care about builds your foundation as a leader.

Self-imposed limitations

There are three ways in which people commonly limit their potential to achieve leadership in this way:

1. Drowning yourself in the future
2. People achieving far less than they want to because they cannot see how to do it. People tangle what they want to achieve with the 'how' thus causing the strength of their ambition to drop. This means you will stop soaring as an eagle because you can only see life as a sparrow
3. Limiting our belief, what are those thoughts that hold you back from imagining the future you can have? Wondering whether you are worth it and if you can do it.

Steve Radcliffe part 2 – Managing the energies

Harnessing your energies

Think of yourself as contagious and famous and having an impact on all those around you. Drucker states that “Your first and foremost job as a leader is to manage your own energy and help manage the energy of those around you”.

Four energies

- (1) Intellectual energy – logic, agreement, caution, analysis.
- (2) Emotional energy – human relationships.
- (3) Energy of the spirit – linked to inspire and aspire and from the Latin “spiro”; to breathe life into something. This is strongly connected to your sense of the future and where possibility and optimism sit.
- (4) The three above do not get anything done so the 4th is physical energy, action, doing, vitality, focus and stamina.

These four provide a useful lens for looking at your organization and where you place, or could place your energy. The audience were asked to view their organizations through an energy lens:

- “I was completely opposed to what my company does, I have a very spirited approach but my company is much more physical and intellectual.”
- Steve spoke of an engineering firm with a big focus on action during their global meeting. But an evening awards session brought out the spiritual and emotional in the same people. All four are always there but what emerges when and why?
- “Everything starts with the physical, if that’s not there the others can’t follow”
- “We use all four most of the time. Some in a conscious state and others less so. But when under pressure I usually go to ‘intellectual’ to protect myself but it’s not where I prefer to be”

Steve goes to intellectual with a “let me be right” approach when clients are unwilling to engage in the emotional. Energies provide an angle on who you are and what you are bringing. As a facilitator you note the energy and work with it to change it if necessary. This calls for fluency in handling energies as a leadership skill.

Going back to the three modes of operator, manager and leader the first is dominated by the ‘physical’. Managers are dominated by the ‘intellectual’ followed by ‘physical’, ‘emotional’ and ‘spiritual’. For Leaders ‘spiritual’ comes first, followed by ‘emotional’ then ‘intellectual’ and ‘physical’. This makes for a big jump between manager and leader in shifting ‘spiritual’ from fourth to first. Tichy finds that “the most effective competitors... will be the orgs that learn how to harness the emotional energies of employees”.

Energies play on how and why people engage. Viewing the world as a series of human interactions the audience were asked to think about 4 or 5 key people at work that they would like to have engaged in future focused activity and consider where they are on the engagement scale below.

Future	Engagement levels
Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed – continuous engagement and ownership of the idea – wanting to take it on
Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolled – I’m engaged but only up to a point
Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willing compliance – a good org but not a great one
Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grudging compliance – the tooth suckers, that’s not a good idea but if that’s what you want we’ll do it.
Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apathy Resistance – can be robust opposition

Audience contributions:

- Using joining a gym, as an analogy, helps us with understanding the difference between enrolled and committed. ‘Enrolled’ could be intellectual energy but committed is about the spirit.
- Connecting energy with engagement some organizations talk about engagement on a purely intellectual level. This discussion takes us into the spiritual idea of how people engage rather than thinking about engagement as simply a numbers issue.
- Reflecting on the point that all the energies are there and the question of how many are brought to your work. I gave a coaching client the challenge of becoming a people person at work. His colleagues can’t believe the transformation it has made in the way he is at work.
- Making ‘safety’ the common cause in an aluminium company connected people across a spiritual theme.

This takes us on to the contribution of relationships to energy and engagement. *“Power in organizations is the capacity generated by relationships. It is a real energy that can only come into existence through relationships, ever since that conversation I have changed what I pay attention to”*. (Margaret Wheatley)

This means having relationships that are big enough to get the job done and it requires driving the relationships and the task at the same time. Think about what is going on in the relationships within the room. There will be a plan but the relationships in the room may not be big enough to bring it off. Arrive with the intention to engage and build relationships as a conscious practice. But, make sure you manage your shadow. In other words what impact do you have on the energy in the place? If you are casting a shadow inviting people to tell you about it is worthwhile.

Deliver

“Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision is merely passing time. Vision with Action can change the world” Mandela

In working out how engagement and spirit are brought to the task it is useful to decide whether you are inviting people to carve a stone or build a cathedral. Robust dialogue though is an essential component both in acknowledging progress and in challenging performance. Also, consider how good you are at developing others as leaders.

Questions and contributions

- I experienced an unintended consequence of my shadow. As an extrovert leader of an organization I got everyone together for a brain storming session but did not get good results. I really tried to engage people but on reflection I realised that I needed to enable people to engage differently as brainstorming aren't for everyone. Instead, by giving people time to reflect I reduced the size of my shadow.
- I like the model of energy and jump from manager to leader but how would it work in a modern organization such as Google?

Steve: I don't have an answer but I'll make one up. The four energies are there and spirit may be needed in abundance. Intellectual plus spirit energy can make it work. It's really about being conscious of what is needed rather than having a right answer.

- There is a barrier between the enrolment and commitment. How can it be addressed?

Steve: Make a request for action as this generally flushes out where they are. Develop the leadership muscle of making big requests.

Summary from Steve

- (1) Be up to something.
- (2) Put in the conscious practice. Practice rather than complex leadership ideas is what will make the difference

(3) Don't do it alone, work with a great support team. You need their feedback on your impact. When you step out to be bold and get knocked off the bike your support team can get you back on.

(4) Take what you have picked up today and share it with others. Work on lifting their spirits.

Simon Sinek

Andy Lothian introduced Simon as believing in the power of purpose and that people should be able to love their job as a right. He believes in service as an important part of leadership.

Simon began with the story of a marine awarded the Congressional Medal of Honour for rescuing wounded and killed marines. The President asked him "did you think you were going to die?" He replied, "No, I knew I was going to die".

The marine did this because he knew that the other marines would do the same for him. In business however we give rewards to people who are willing to sacrifice others.

The marines are not unusual; they are simply a product of their leadership environment. Good people will do bad things in the wrong environment.

We have thrived and evolved because we are social animals; we work in groups and have a natural inclination to trust. In fact we have no choice other than to trust when we are brought into the world. With trust comes cooperation and shared confrontation of the dangers and seizure of the opportunities.

In the business world there are many others threatening your organization.

The human body works like an organization. It contains chemicals responsible for all the emotions we call happiness. These are:

Endorphins – They hide physical pain and enable endurance. Because of them laughter is experienced as enjoyable rather than the physical pain it would deliver without them.

Dopamine – This provides the feeling of accomplishment, making the goal, winning the game. We are visual animals and need visual goals. Most vision statements are no good because they are not visual. Dopamine can be addictive and it is released by activities that can become compulsive e.g. gambling, smoking, and your mobile phone. We can become addicted to the feeling we are making progress where another example would be computer game. If you walk around the house with your phone it means you are an addict. We are not better at multi-tasking, just better at getting distracted and addicted to performance, it makes us selfish. It's the other chemicals that are needed for building the circle of trust.

Serotonin – This is released through feelings of pride and being valued. Parents watching their child receiving an award will share pride with their child and therefore all will experience a serotonin release. Simon calls Serotonin the leadership drug. We evolved into hierarchical animals, we always create a hierarchy and we will always defer to the Alpha. But the benefits do not come free, leadership is a choice. Authority and leadership are not synonymous; leaders have to put their comforts aside when there are threats. When leaders help us to feel trust and safety we repay them and the subsequent rewards of pride release the drug.

Oxytocin – This releases feelings of love and friendship and the feeling of safety that we get from being with people we like and want to be there. Oxytocin can be obtained through physical contact. Business is about the building of relationships. Imagine making a deal and not shaking hands, if that happened you would scupper the deal or go into it with doubts. Another way of releasing Oxytocin is by giving something for nothing, for example to charity. Time and energy has to be given with no expectation of anything in return. Acts of generosity is what builds trust.

It is an incentive for getting us to do nice things for each other, a way of looking out for the tribe. It also boosts your immune system, the more Oxytocin you have in your body the less likely you are to become selfish and addicted. It can also make us better problem solvers as working with people we trust can make us smarter.

Cortisol deals with stress and anxiety. It provides an early warning system. There is danger out there and sensing that danger triggers a heightened alertness. It becomes worse because you then start evaluating everything. In getting ready for fight and flight the body turns off things you don't need e.g. immune system. If you are working in a setting where you don't trust people and it produces low grade stress and anxiety Cortisol acts as an Oxytocin inhibitor and makes us less capable of empathy. We have the opportunity to choose to be the leader we want to be. If you get people to believe that safety is more important than numbers they will do it for love.

Questions

How do you trigger the oxytocin response – change the game?

Only work with the things you can control. The closest thing to good leadership is being a good parent. This demonstrates the gains and immense feeling that we get from parenting make the sacrifices worth it. With leadership the process of building trust is the same in the undying belief that they can achieve more than we can achieve for ourselves. But leadership cannot be measured in discrete packets.

Given social media, platforms for being liked for generations Y and Z such as Facebook, and the addiction to dopamine what should be done about the management of this?

We are creating dopamine addictions to social media. Most alcoholics discovered alcohol when they were teenagers. When we are teenagers we build approval outside the family. In times of anxiety teenagers should learn to gain support from their friends. Alcoholics don't do this. When teenagers are feeling isolated they can turn to social media because this is where they get their dopamine. It's short terms hits and it doesn't last. Bullying and suicides among people are products of social isolation. If we don't do something these effects will just increase because of the incapacity to create proper social bonds.

Q How did we end up with leaders in business where things seem to be out of balance?

We could root it way back. The early to mid-twentieth century experiences of war and economic depression meant that by the 1950s a generation of parents, that had gone without, felt their children deserved better. It became a "me" generation that in the 1980s and 1990s, when this generation took over business and politics, dismantled the regulations to make more money for themselves. We have since seen three stock market crashes and have raised another generation (X and Y) that have very high expectations for themselves.

Simon Sinek part 2

Simon asked people to do an exercise in pairs. One person told the other of an unresolved problem at work while the 'listener' spent the time dealing with texts and emails on the phone. People found this to be a deeply devaluing experience. Simon used the exercise to explain the necessity of active and engaged listening. It also demonstrates the social engagement opportunities missed by being on the phone. The whole audience would have felt undervalued if he had given the presentation with his phone in his hand as it signalled his willingness to have his attention drawn away from them. Showing people attention makes a huge difference to how they feel. Simon then moved on to final questions.

Q. Working for an investment bank, I recognise your description of us as dopamine dependent, where do we start with the change?

You have one big obstacle which is that you deal with the abstract. You talk about the value of it as supporting the economy but it's not visible. But, I am sure that there is someone outside who has benefitted from what you have done. Seeing the beneficial results of work can have a dramatic impact and evidence from lifeguards who have testimonials for saving other people's lives demonstrates this. Giving your colleagues that kind of exposure and taking the risk of putting other interests first can make the group cohere and look out for one another. David Marquet's "Turn the Ship Round" is recommended for shifting the culture and moving away from a command and control outlook.

Q. Do you think people join the forces because they believe that leadership is about sacrifice?

Leadership is taught. People join the marines for all sorts of reasons. The recruits work hard to show how good they are. They learn that they are better with each other. When people do not work with the group they are ostracised until they become part of a group. For US Navy Seals the one who delegates doesn't make it through but the ones who can dig deep down are successful.

Q Would you change this talk if you gave it to politicians?

I have and the presentation is the same. The good thing about democracy is that we elect the Alphas and they treat being a politician like being a job they don't want to lose.

Q. What about faith and values?

Faith provides the sense that there is someone watching over me. It provides me with a belief that I will always be in a group that will look out for me. There is good data on the value of faith in the Milgram experiments where the relationship between obedience and authority was explored through seemingly ordering students to give others electric shocks. People found it easiest where they had no direct contact with the people affected by their decisions. All those who had some sort of faith resisted going all the way with what they were ordered to do.

Q Why are there more male leaders than female leaders?

Men are bastards, women get my message quicker. Good leadership is balanced across traditional gender characteristics – e.g. empathy, gratitude, patience. We need more leaders to act like females.

Steve was strongly and persistently challenged by a marine officer during a presentation. His senior officer apologised and said he would deal with it. Steve asked him not to and instead suggested that he ask the officer what was wrong. He found out that he had just emerged from

some horrific experience in Afghanistan and ended up giving him a hug rather than a reprimand.