

Leadership: developing your personal brand

Tuesday 28 April 2015
lloydmasters consulting

The setting of the evening was the RSA – Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce – whose mission is to enrich society through ideas and action. What a fitting venue for the evening where many ideas around the topic of 'leadership' were shared.

The evening was hosted by lloydmasters consulting, and was the 9th in a current series of such sessions, and over 50 people attended and listened to 2 expert speakers and participated in a 'taster' training session. Key points from each session are in the appendix in this document.

Champagne and canapés helped lubricate the networking element at the end of the session, with many people hanging onto the bitter end!!! Special thanks to our partner organisation, Hopkins Longworth –



www.hopkinslongworth.com – executive search specialists, who brought a number of their key clients.

lloydmasters next event – **How to Improve the Success of Complex Projects** – will be on **23 June** at **Asia House, London**; 2 clients will be presenting their views on how they have dealt with complex projects. Guest will again receive a 'taster' training session. Please register your interest with fiona@lloydmasters.com.

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Evening summary

Jane Owen Jones from Lloydmasters opened the evening with an interesting thought provoker on who the attendees thought the 'best' leaders were. The responses varied from political leaders (although not from the present day!), sports coaches, explorers and business leaders – interestingly, the common characteristics were identified as inspirational, highly principled, charismatic and the right style for the right situation.

Jane talked through the evolution of 'Leadership' as a topic and some of the defining concepts and authors on the topic such as Ulrich, Spillane and Peters.

Jane then introduced **Dr Craig Marsh**, Chief Academic Officer, UK Institutions, Laureate Online Education. Craig outlined that his discussion would follow 3 themes:

1. Leadership is dominated by Organisational Transformation
2. There is a dearth of people leadership
3. Leadership has a moral aspect to it

Indeed, Craig highlighted the growth in leadership texts with the quote '*never has so much been written about one subject to so little effect...*' – his initial argument highlighted that we are seduced by inspirational stories about transformational leaders parachuting into organisations and implementing change, the effects of which are hard to gauge within the current CEO shelf life. What is missing, Craig argued, is effective leadership at the operational level.

Craig then focussed on the types of relationship between the leader and the led and argued that the key was to understand whether people agree or disagree with you and why – he said there were 4 categories; as described by Dr Keith Grint:

1. Constructive consent
2. Destructive dissent
3. Destructive consent
4. Constructive dissent

Understanding the 'why' and letting people manage the 'how' themselves was the key to success.

The 3rd argument that Craig made was that people leadership always has a moral dimension, this was illustrated with examples from the police making decisions despite the constructs that the organisation puts in place then posed the question 'what freedom do we allow our frontline leaders to make the right decision in the context of understanding the 'why?'

Finally, Craig was very clear that leadership at this level requires sophisticated relationships and development of the frontline leadership through training and education not through performance ratings.

Craig's thought provoking discussion was followed by **Dr Urbain Bruyere**, a leadership expert and practitioner in high risk operations, latterly within BP (as a client of Lloydmasters). Urbain introduced the theme of a personal leadership brand and used the 'Life of Brian' to illustrate that we are all influenced by the group/culture within which we operate and that the role of the leader is to influence that culture.

Urbain then talked through some of the prevailing leadership theories from Taylor's Scientific Management to Gary Hamel, to current day trends from the Global Human Capital Trends 2015 and the importance of engagement to attract talent in a modern day organisation.

Urbain finished with a quote from Edgar Schein of the importance of *listening 'when I talk I don't learn'*.

Then came the whirlwind that was **Dave Moorcroft**, Principal Consultant – Organisational Culture at Lloydmasters. Dave gave an extremely energetic and thought provoking session covering a range of the latest theories and models that could be implemented for Leadership Effectiveness that will have a direct impact on organisational performance.

The session included discussion on system failure and what leads to a potential organisational system failure, the complexity of the organisational system and the millions of decisions that determine the mission and the brains ability to navigate this complexity and to make good decisions and to motivate and inspire.

These complex topics were explored through Daniel Kahneman's System 1, System 2 model and Dave clearly highlighted the ease with which we fall into System 1 thinking.

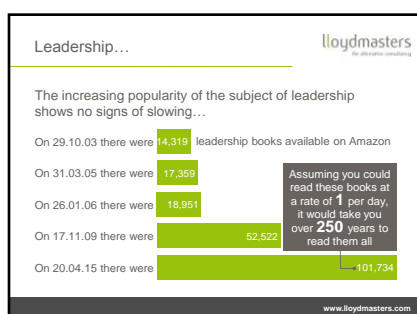
This was followed by a discussion around risk and our ability to accurately predict it.

The exhausting session finished with a review of how we can make leaders (and ourselves) more effective and what are the skills that we need to build.

Jane Owen Jones, from Lloydmasters returned to sum up before the networking session began and as the champagne began to flow I think we all agreed that the mission of the RSA was upheld – we all felt thoroughly enriched.

Jane Owen Jones Director, lloydmasters consulting

- Practising consultant for 30 years
- Ex industrial relations specialist Marconi and BP
- Culture change specialist in PWC
- Key focus on projects and leadership/team development in lloydmasters



Key focus: history of leadership theories and current new trends

- Main stream theories for last 40 years:
 - Trait theories (i.e., characteristics of successful leaders)
 - Behavioural aspects (i.e., what do successful leaders do?)
 - Contingency approaches (i.e., situation driven behaviours)
- Flurry of adaptations of these theories in 1990's
 - Ulrich and leadership continuum transactional – transformational
 - Spillane et al distributed leadership
- Kai Peters – global leaders of tomorrow and focus on complexity and connectedness
- Link into culture as evidenced by Edgar Schein's work
- Latest trends focussed on the effect of the brain on leadership decision making

Dr Craig Marsh

Chief Academic Officer – UK, Institutions Laureate Online Education

- \$4 billion turnover
- 80 universities
- 14, 000 students
- Managing a faculty of 550



'... never has so much been written about one subject to so little effect' xxxxx

Key focus: premise that current working theory of leadership is built around top charismatic leadership

Clearly this can exist – an example is shown by Andy Harrison, CEO Whitbread, who has overseen an increase on share price from £14 to £53 – but while we are seduced by such success stories, there clearly has to be something else going on.

Effective people leadership is key and this is given at the operational level, not the senior level.

Professor Keith Grint has categorised 4 types of leaders based on the support they give the top leaders:

- Constructive consent (leadership inspired by a guru)
- Destructive dissent (no belief)
- Destructive consent (support because it's coerced)
- Constructive dissent (own interpretation of execution of objectives, etc.)

This latter type of leader is what we need in order to make organisations successful.

HR structures should support this type of decision making and train in it. It improves engagement and gives operational 'leaders' some degree of autonomy while delivering the organisational mission.

Dr Urbain Bruyere Leadership Expert and Practitioner in High Risk Operations

- 20 years experience in oil and gas
- Managed largest global site review in BP
- Doctorate in organisation effectiveness and safety culture

Key focus: the need for leaders to provide deep employee engagement

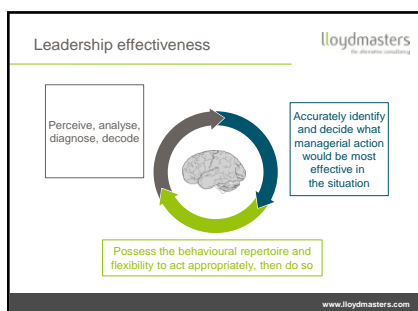
- Individuals influenced by culture in the organisation, and the norms
- Getting engagement from staff in the organisation is the biggest issue facing HR professionals currently
- Leaders need space to drive the relevant culture required to deliver performance

'When I talk I don't learn'

Edgar Schein

Dave Moorcroft Principal Consultant – Lloydmasters Consulting

- Practising consultant for 10 years
- 25 years experience in oil and gas operations
- Ex Sustainability Director of BP



Key focus: leadership effectiveness was driven by the complexity of the organisational system and by the brain's ability to navigate the complexity

- The complexity of organisations mean leaders have to manage 3 conflicting requirements – risk, workload and economics
- Leadership effectiveness is thus judged on leaders ability to decode these complex situations, decide on action and display relevant behaviours to motivate others
- The brain, working in 2 systems (Daniel Kahneman) system 1 and system 2 drives the decision making, and if the leader is operating in system 1 decisions are based on experience rather than original thought, so it could limit effectiveness
- Human's have an inability to fully understand and predict risk

lloydmasters is an energetic and innovative team who share more than 240 years of extensive consulting and business experience. We remain small, maintaining no more than 20 in the organisation to ensure that we are flexible, unfettered by bureaucracy and thus more responsive to our clients' needs.

Since the 1980's we have saved our clients over £4 billion, worked with over 24,000 people and developed our project management methodologies and our approach to leadership development with 30 FTSE 100 companies.

Working in partnership is our basic philosophy of how we engage with our clients. We believe it's key to making a difference and ensuring that changes are sustainable.

We like to think that we are not archetypal consultants, producing lengthy reports, using business buzzwords or confusing management-speak. What we can guarantee is a collaborative and stimulating environment in which we will provide: original thought; a challenge to established thinking; vast experience; flexible delivery; long term relationship that grows to meet all the demands.

We work with some of the world's largest and most successful organisations throughout Europe, America, the Middle and Far East, Australia and Africa.