

Strategic Leadership in the 21st Century

There is no doubt that in the world today leadership has never been more highly scrutinised and is perhaps less understood and in too many examples, less respected than ever before.

World leaders are seemingly on the brink of war at every turn and the threat of terrorism seems at odds with a willingness to invest in a secure deterrent.

For years, business leaders in finance, and more recently the automobile industry, challenge our values on integrity, trust and respect. The reputation of many institutions is destroyed by deceitful policies that hoodwink customers and whole nations.

Never before has the psychological contract of what we say we do and how we actually do it seemed so far apart.

And we seem to consistently put the woes of our world down to a 'lack of leadership'.

Leaders are here to stay

Leaders get people moving. They energise and mobilise. They take people and organisations to places they have never been before. Leadership is not a fad, and the leadership challenge never goes away.

One thing we can't do is let the 'bad guys' win.

So what can we do?

As most of us don't control or even influence what others do – we are left with what is close to us, ourselves and those we work with that we can, ethically, in some way control or influence.

It is in our firms, our companies and organisations that we can work towards more transparent and honest business principles that engender trust, warmth and relationships that matter.

We can build on our mission statements, our values; likely integrity, trust and respect – and we can practice and live those values. We can model the way. In doing so we will have displayed a behaviour that can be admired and replicated. And we can earn respect by giving it to others.

And our rewards can be shared; rewards that are the consequence of our actions, taking like-minded people with us, working in harmony, together and motivated, to deliver exceptional customer outcomes.

The leadership challenge – how to make extraordinary things happen in organisations

Modelling the way is a key leadership behaviour identified by Kouzes and Posner. It is one of five key leadership behaviours or practices that are not only relevant but critical to a leader's success.



Leadership is a relationship

When leaders are at their best credibility is the foundation for success.

The five practices of exemplary leadership

Practice 1 **Model the way**

- Clarify Values
 - Find your voice – affirm shared values
- Set the example
 - Live the shared values – teach others to model the values

Practice 2 **Inspire a shared vision**

- Envision the future
 - Imagine the possibilities – find a common purpose
- Enlist others
 - Appeal to common ideals – animate the vision

Practice 3 **Challenge the process**

- Search for opportunities
 - Seize the initiative – exercise oversight
- Experiment and take risks
 - Generate small wins – learn from experience

Practice 4 **Enable others to act**

- Foster collaboration
 - Create a climate of trust – facilitate relationships
- Strengthen others
 - Enhance self-determination – develop competence and confidence

Practice 5 **Encourage the heart**

- Recognise contributions
 - Expect the best – personalise recognition
- Celebrate the values and victories
 - Create a spirit of community – get personally involved

Leadership Strategy will naturally flow from these practices; engaging your people for success in a transparent, credible organisation, motivated for good, where discretionary effort is the norm and where existing customers are retained and new customers are attracted.

Catalyst delivers programmes to support senior leadership agree the vision and implement the strategic plan. If you would like to know more contact Nick Horan at nick@catalystld.co.uk or call 0203 743 2323 to discuss how we can help your leadership team.

