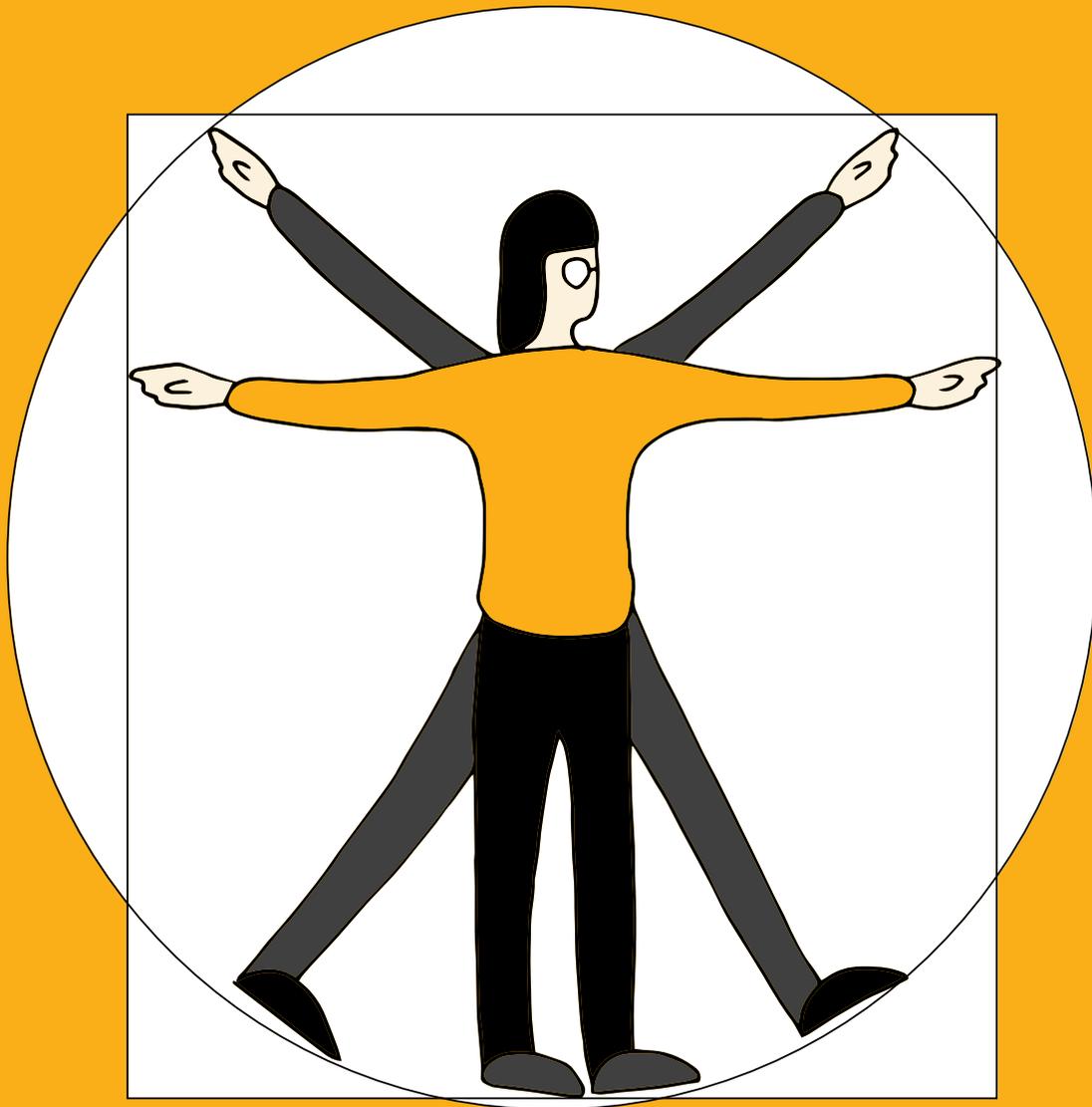


LEADERSHIFT: LEADING HORIZONTALLY AND VERTICALLY



ARTICLE II Leadershift: Leading Horizontally and Vertically II 2018

The role of leader is transforming.

An ever-changing external environment has necessitated that modern organisations adapt to be more agile and customer-focused. Traditional, functional organisational structures are being replaced by highly matrixed networks of interconnected teams, where success depends on internal partnership and collaboration to deliver business outcomes. The leadership of the past, characterised by pyramids of power, fortified silos and internal competition is fast becoming obsolete.

Just as we have reinvented the organisation, so too must we reinvent leadership.

As leaders, you now deliver outcomes for your internal function, balanced with a considered understanding of what is best for your entire organisation. The leadership required is one that not only sees vertically, but horizontally as well.

Leading vertically and horizontally involves a shift in mindset: from “us versus them”, to “all for one, and one for all”. Enter a new age of leadership with a whole new set of practices to consider.



Traditional Leadership	Horizontal and Vertical Leadership
Siloed thinking (focused on my own team and function's success)	Whole systems thinking (considering the whole organisation's success)
Competition ("us versus them", achieve outcomes at any cost)	Collaboration and co-authorship ("we're in it together", achieve outcomes together)
Transactional relationships ("only if I get something in return")	Mutually engaging partnerships ("we're responsible for each other's success")
Directing ("do, because I said so")	Influencing ("do, because you believe in it")
One way communication (infrequent, closed, debate)	Two way communication (regular, open, dialogue)
Cynicism and Suspicion (assuming malintent, dishonesty, withholding knowledge and expertise)	Trust (assuming good intent, showing integrity, sharing knowledge and expertise)

Whole Systems Thinking: Understand your Network

Think of the modern organisation as a complex ecosystem. Your business function is just one “node” of a network of interconnected, interdependent parts that support the health of the greater whole. Leadership is no longer about simply meeting targets and executing your own strategy by drawing the straightest line from point A to B. Your new priority is to seek outcomes that are in the best interest of the entire organisation, the customer, stakeholders and the community. You now must think and execute end-to-end. This requires a deep understanding of your vertical and your horizontal network.

Before you act, switch to manual mode, take a step back and look across your entire network, end-to-end. Consider your place within the ecosystem, how you support the overarching strategy, purpose and vision. Think about your relationships with other constituencies, and how you might connect to, impact and rely upon each other. Look for both direct and indirect connections, understanding that each action can cause a ripple effect across the entire ecosystem.

Ask: *What are the strategic priorities? What do I see when I look across other functions, divisions or departments? What are the needs and priorities of*

others? How do we impact each other? What are the opportunities within my network, both internal and external?

Collaboration: Shift from Competition to Co-authorship

Within a connected ecosystem, collaboration is your operating mantra. Shift from a mindset of competition and winning (often at the expense of others) to a mindset of co-authorship. Seek to understand the goals of other departments, divisions and functions then find the intersection between your own goals. You are now all part of the one team. Proactively look for ways you can support each other and co-author shared outcomes for the benefit of the whole.

Effective collaboration requires joint agenda-setting at the outset, frequent engagement, shared ways of working and clear accountability. Get to know your network deeply and understand where your co-dependencies lie. Regularly and proactively communicate any decisions, progress updates or anticipated issues so people can jointly tackle obstacles together. Cut through any ambiguity by making decisions with conviction as early and quickly as you can. Make sure that all parties have agreed upon shared ways of working and engaging, and clearly understand what they are accountable for.

Ask: *Who needs to be involved? How are our priorities aligned? How can we identify our shared goal/s? What are the outcomes we need end-to-end? What decisions need to be made, and how soon can we make them? What are our ways of working? How can we hold ourselves and each other to account?*

Partnering: Shift from Transactional to Mutually Engaging Relationships

Co-authoring outcomes requires leaders to shift from transactional relationships (each party is in it for themselves) to partnering relationships (concerned with mutual outcomes). A partnership is defined as a relationship in which both parties feel responsible for the success of whatever project or process they are jointly engaged in. This type of relationship results in greater organisational efficiency through networked problem solving, aligned decision making and better sharing of resources.

Partnerships are grounded in empathy and [selfless independence](#). You can demonstrate these qualities by investing in people when you don't need anything in return. Do everything within your power to understand and support the needs of those within your network, yet balance your selflessness with complete intellectual, emotional and financial independence and a clear awareness of boundaries.

An effective partner is always looking for new ways to add value. Seize opportunity and broaden your knowledge base by strategically engaging with those both inside and outside of your network and organisational boundaries. Exercise skill in judgement and synthesis to quickly identify key insights and make decisions with conviction. This enables you to continually add value at speed.

Ask: *What is the investment I need to make in this relationship? How can I develop an astute understanding of my partner's needs and motivations? How can I contribute to their success? What boundaries, guidelines and constraints exist? How do I constantly add value? What opportunities exist in both internal and external networks?*

Communication: Engage in Appreciative Dialogue

Communication is everything. Dialogue or two way communication is the key to fostering mutually engaging relationships, establishing understanding, anticipating issues, and showing your ability to co-author outcomes. Kickstart a culture of dialogue by proactively, consistently and transparently sharing information across the matrix using multiple platforms.

When speaking with others, be highly descriptive. Do not assume or expect understanding. Be clear about facts and opinions, and be open to and interested in a response of any nature.

True dialogue involves seeking, listening to and engaging with others' points of view instead of just pushing your own agenda. This shows that you value your partner's point of view, further strengthening your relationships. Make sure that your conversations are constructive and equally participative. Actively encourage people to share their honest views, even those that conflict with your own or dissent from majority opinion.

Understand that great value can be found in conflict. It increases authenticity, enables you to make more informed decisions, provokes new ideas and can lead to innovation. Suspend your judgement, let diverse views emerge and ask curious questions to clarify and unearth insight. Use your skills in synthesis to find common themes and points of alignment. Leverage these commonalities to explore possibilities and solutions that benefit both parties.

Ask: *How well do I understand those in my network? How can I help their understanding of me? What are the curious questions I need to ask to move us forward? How can I create a*

safe space for exploring dissent? What are the win / win solutions?

Influencing: Engage for Impact

The art of influencing is essential to modern leadership. Once upon a time those with position held power, now those who can influence have the power. Influencing allows you to motivate others without using authority as the key driver. It enables you to shape agendas and impact decisions for positive business outcomes.

There are many ways to influence. Good influencers can both plan and think on their feet. They are empathetic, attuned and highly socially aware, accurately interpreting the motives and actions of others through observation and inquiry. They confidently stand for something and speak with conviction, but remain curious and open to other perspectives. They understand that influencing often takes time, and invest in relationships and networks to sow the seeds of thought.

Influencing also requires a level of charisma. Develop your presence, interpersonal style and an authentic personal brand to build rapport and win people's allegiance. Inspire and move people through story: sharing an exciting narrative for the future and instilling a sense of shared purpose to bring it about.

Ask: *How can I develop an astute understanding of other people's needs and motivations? What is my personal brand? What stories can I tell to communicate the key messages? What are the seeds I need to sow that will ignite engagement? How do I communicate with conviction, clarity and curiosity?*

Showing, Giving and Earning Trust: Practise "Show, Ask and Tell"

Trust is a vote of confidence and reliability in a relationship and is the catalyst for high performance in teams and across organisational functions. Without trust, there is no shared accountability and there is no foundation for an organisation to accomplish its goals. Trust builds over time as a result of consistency, mutuality and transparency in behaviour and action.

"Show, Ask and Tell" is a useful framework to ensure consistent, mutual and transparent behaviour. "Show" refers to showing integrity. Having integrity means you never let your actions compromise your core beliefs. Be authentic, play fair, and do what you say you will, and over time you will be seen as credible, reliable and trustworthy. "Ask and Tell" is a reciprocal "heads up" and "show of cards": if you are going into your partner's business function in any way, ask; and if you hear information coming

out of their area, tell. This shows that you both have each other's back. To work, you must assume good intent and step back from any initial visceral reaction to issues that may arise.

Do not be afraid to be vulnerable and pioneer a culture of transparency. [Recent studies](#) indicate that when you show others trust, you motivate them to do the same in return.

Ask: *What is the transparency and clarity others need from me? What do I need to pay attention to in my actions and behaviours to invoke trust and reliability? How can I "Show, Ask and Tell"?*

Interested in learning more about horizontal and vertical leadership? Get in touch with our team: info@performancefrontiers.com

Or, let us know how you are pioneering a leadershift in your organisation. Let's share those big ideas.

Further Reading:

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