

# ADDITIONAL READING: A CASE STUDY FOR THE ESSENCE OF GLOBAL DISCIPLESHIP

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## Heroic Leadership – A Summary

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After living for seven years as a Jesuit seminarian, practicing vows of poverty, chastity and obedience to the Jesuit general in Rome, Chris Lowney was transformed into a corporate man as an investment banker at JP Morgan. Lowney's years in business revealed that leadership challenges, especially how to recruit and mould leadership in your company's teams, is a universal corporate challenge faced by all companies around the world and throughout time. He realised that the super smart, ambitious and strong willed recruits at JP Morgan didn't always translate into long-term successes at the firm. Lowney noticed that many up-and-comers with raw talent and sheer ambition, either were terrified of making major decisions, or terrorised anyone who dared make a decision without them. Some were good at managing only numbers and not human beings and most were uncomfortable with change and taking personal risks. As he wrestled with the challenge of developing successful leadership in the corporate environment, Lowney was drawn to think back to the leadership lessons he had learnt from the Jesuit company during his time as a Jesuit priest. He realised that this 470 year old company had grappled quite successfully with many of the challenges confronted by companies today, including how to institute a 360-degree feedback loop, forging seamless multi-national teams, motivating inspired performance and remaining change ready and strategically adaptable. "Heroic Leadership" is a book which lay out a leadership approach that every company and leader should take seriously

Founded in 1540 by 10 men with no capital and no business plan, the Jesuits built, within little more than a generation, the world's most influential company of its kind. Over the years they have served European monarchs, China's Ming emperor, the Japanese Shogun and the Mughal emperor in India, unmatched by that of any other commercial, religious or government entity. Jesuit explorers were among the first Europeans to cross the Himalayas and enter Tibet, to paddle to the headwaters of the Blue Nile and to chart the Upper Mississippi River. In Europe, Jesuits built the world's largest higher education network, starting more than thirty colleges within a decade. By the late eighteenth century, 700 secondary schools and colleges sprawled five continents educating nearly 20% of all Europeans pursuing a classical higher education. Jesuit astronomers and mathematicians were among the leading scholars in Rome, China, France, Asia and Africa. The Jesuit founders launched their company into a complex world that had changed as much in fifty years as it had over the previous thousand years – a similar rate of change that is experienced in the world today. This innovative, wide-ranging company still exists and has become one of the world's largest religious order. Its 21 000 professionals run 2000 institutions in more than a hundred countries.

So why have the Jesuits been so successful and what can this religious company teach business today?

What often passes for leadership today is a shallow substitution of technique for substance. Most literature on leadership today focuses on what leaders do. Consult any of the current works unlocking the mysteries of leadership and management and you will see a long list of outputs that we want leaders to deliver, such as establishing direction, aligning people, motivating and inspiring and producing change. Despite all we know about what leaders should do, our societies and companies in general have a shortage of quality leaders.

In contrast the Jesuit team does not tell us much about what leaders do or what they achieve, but they have a lot to say about who leaders are, how leaders live and how they become leaders in the first place. In this way Jesuits offer a leadership model that flows against the tide of most contemporary leadership models. It rejects quick-fix approaches that equate leadership with mere techniques and tactics. It finds leadership opportunities not just at work, but in the ordinary activities of everyday life. *The Jesuits approach leadership in a totally different light revealing 4 main differences from modern leadership theory:*

### **1. We are all leaders, and we are leading all the time, well or poorly.**

The Jesuit vision that each person possesses untapped leadership potential cuts against the grain of the corporate top-down leadership model. The typical model has the 1% in charge (company presidents, generals and coaches) and the 99% as subordinates. This model focuses only on the top 1% as leaders and overlooks the challenges facing the other 99%. Ever narrower is the focus of the 1% of leaders on only key leadership opportunities that have the biggest impact and ignore the other 99% of everyday opportunities to make a leadership impact. That is 1% of the chances to lead enjoyed by 1% of the potential leaders, or 1/10 000 of the leadership pie. Think of what is lost and imagine the power of capturing that potential.

The Jesuits threw aside the blinders that forced people to focus only on those in command and developed every recruit to lead. They shunned the one great man theories in order to focus on the other 99% of potential leaders. Everyone is a leader, and everyone is leading all the time – sometimes in immediate, dramatic and obvious ways, but more often in subtle, hard-to-measure ways.

Who invented the yardstick that measures some as leaders and others as merely teachers, parents, friends or colleagues? And what are the dividing lines? Does one have to influence at least a hundred people at a time to be a leader, or will fifty do? Or what about twenty, ten or even a single person? And does a leader's impact have to become apparent within the hour? Or within a year? Are there not also leaders whose impact is barely perceptible within their own lifetimes, but manifests itself generations later through those they raised, taught, mentored or coached? The confusion stems from an inappropriately narrow vision of leaders as only those who are in charge of others and who are making a transforming impact and who are doing it in a short amount of time.

But this model of top-down, immediate, all-transforming leadership is not the solution, it is the problem. The Jesuit model reveals that everyone has influence, good or bad, large or small, all the time. A leader seizes all the available opportunities to influence and make an impact. Circumstances will present a few people with world-changing, defining-moment opportunities, but most will enjoy no such big time opportunities in their lifetimes. Leadership should not be defined by the scale of the opportunity but by the quality of the response.

## **2. Leadership springs from within. It is about who I am as much as what I do.**

No one ever became an effective leader by reading an instruction book, or learning one-size-fits-all rules. Rather, a leader's most compelling tool is who he is: a person who understands what he values and wants, which is anchored by certain principles, and who faces the world with a consistent outlook. Leadership behaviour develops naturally once this internal foundation has been laid.

A leader's greatest power is his personal vision, communicated by the example of his daily life. Vision is intensely personal and is the hard-won product of self-reflection: What do I care about? What do I want? How do I fit into the world? Company mission or purpose statements don't take root simply because they are elegantly worded. They take root when subordinates see managers take a personal interest in the purpose and it springs from within them. The techniques of how to win buy-in from your team and fashion long term goals can amplify vision, but can never substitute for it.

## **3. Leadership is not an act; it is a life – a way of living.**

Leadership is not a job, not a role one plays at work and then puts aside during the commute home in order to relax and enjoy real life. Leadership is real life. Your way of doing things should flow from your worldview and priorities. By knowing what you value and want to achieve, you will always be able to orientate yourself in a new environment, and adapt confidently to unfamiliar circumstances.

## **4. I never complete the task of becoming a leader. It is an ongoing process.**

Personal leadership is a never ending work in progress that draws on continually maturing self-understanding. The external environment evolves and personal circumstances change, as do personal priorities. Some personal strengths erode, even as opportunities arise to develop others. All these changes demand consistent balanced growth and evolution as a leader. The strong leader relishes the opportunity to continue learning about self and the world and looks forward to new discoveries and interests.

The Jesuits trained every recruit to lead, convinced that all leadership begins with self-leadership that springs from personal beliefs and attitudes, therefore, each person must first decide what personal leadership legacy they want to leave behind. The Jesuits success was based on four guiding principles which can clearly be identified in their words, actions and writings. These four principles infused their work and achievements and leap from their writings and dominated their carefully mapped training programme.

These four leadership principles guided individual Jesuits and formed the basis of Jesuit corporate culture. They are:

1. **Self-awareness** – understanding your strengths, weaknesses, values and worldview.
2. **Ingenuity** – confidently innovating and adapting to embrace a changing world.
3. **Love** – engaging others with a positive, loving attitude.
4. **Heroism** – energising themselves and others through heroic ambitions.

### **Self-awareness: To order one's life**

Leaders thrive by understanding who they are and what they value, by becoming aware of unhealthy blind spots or weaknesses that can derail them, and by cultivating the habit of continuous self-reflection and learning. Only the person who knows what he wants can pursue it energetically and inspire others to do so and only those who have pinpointed their weaknesses can conquer them.

Leaders invest significant time and money to acquire the professional credentials and skills needed to succeed. Leaders need to invest equally in their human skills and their capacity to lead. No one lacking the requisite technical skills would naively waltz into a company and expect to succeed. Yet we remain naive enough to believe that those who don't know themselves – their strengths, weaknesses, values and worldview can achieve long term success. As the world becomes an even more complex place and change takes place faster than ever, it becomes increasingly clear that only those with a deeply ingrained capacity for continuous learning and self reflection stand a chance of surfing the waves of change successfully.

An introspective journey should involve: appreciating oneself as talented; indentifying personal derailing baggage that could prevent the realisation of one's full potential (especially those that manifest as habitual tendencies); articulating personally motivating goals and ambitions; determining what one stands for and what impact one wants to make; developing a worldview that guides interaction with others; and acquiring the habit of updating oneself regularly on all these areas.

The Jesuits of the 1500's faced a similar predicament to that faced by companies today.

Decreasing birth rates in developing countries since the 1990s is creating a worldwide war for talent that will only worsen over time. As a highly successful, rapidly growing company in the 1500's the Jesuits too faced painful staffing constraints, however their response to this problem could seem somewhat unconventional. Instead of accepting greater numbers of recruits into the society to deal with the staff shortages, the society founder Ignatius Loyola was most concerned about admitting people too freely and so made the screening process even more selective. Recruits underwent a longer, more rigorous orientation than any other religious order or commercial enterprise. While these actions did bottle neck efforts to reinforce operations and many opportunities slipped through their fingers in the short term, they remained committed to personal development. This may have seemed counterproductive, but what transpired was far from a loss of momentum. Instead, membership swelled from 10 members in 1540, to 1000 in 1556, and more than 5000 by 1580.

The Jesuits realised that an organisation can grow only as fast as available capital, talent and management capacity to oversee the growth. Many an enterprise has imploded from unsustainable growth. The Jesuit policy was to "recruit as many as possible of the very best." Jesuit leaders recognised their company's flourishing reputation as the direct result of unique high-quality services. Their reputation for selectivity, high standards and outstanding results was precisely what attracted the most-talented recruits. By reining in overly aggressive growth, and rejecting 'bottom-fishing' recruiting practices, they sustained both their reputation and their steep growth trajectory. Or paradoxically, the Jesuits kept growing rapidly, by not growing too rapidly. The Jesuits realised that ongoing success depends on turning recruits into leaders. Solve that problem and the leaders you have moulded will solve all other problems.

Management and leadership pioneer Peter Drucker writes on the ramifications of our changing economy, particularly the technology driven shift toward a knowledge economy. In the past bosses gave out tasks and employees just needed to follow orders and performed the assigned tasks. This is not so today. Work roles have become largely self-managing.

With fewer supervisors to give direction, most workers are on their own most of the time, independently prioritising and ploughing through responsibilities. In a more competitive and changing marketplace, companies must respond with increasing speed and urgency, further decentralising decision making to workers. Skills once critical only for top management have become essential for everyone. Each employee is increasingly a self manager, making decisions on his own. With the accelerated pace of change, roles and tasks change constantly, requiring continuous judgement and the ability to learn on the job. Individuals who thrive in this environment are those who can learn, innovate, exercise good judgement, take responsibility for their actions and take risks. These skills come from self-understanding, not vocational training.

Daniel Goleman, in his research in managerial self-awareness, has noted that the more senior ones role within an organisation, the less critical to success are intellect and technical skills compared with the bundle of skills making up emotional intelligence. According to Goleman, emotional intelligence is made up of 5 core competencies:

1. **Self-awareness** – the ability to recognise and understand your moods, emotions and drives.
2. **Self-regulation** – the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods, to think before acting.
3. **Motivation** – a passion to work for reasons that go beyond money or status.
4. **Empathy** – the ability to understand the emotional makeup of other people.
5. **Social skill** – proficiency in managing relationships and building networks; to find common ground and build rapport.

Most companies today want to find people with these skills, but these skills do not show up on a candidates CV. The Jesuits are one company that did look for emotional intelligence potential in candidates and then crafted a program to engender it in recruits. Rather than cycle through self-awareness approaches haphazardly, the company developed and promoted one universal

tool for all Jesuits: the Spiritual Exercises. Each Jesuit recruit emerged from his initial 30-day Spiritual Exercises programme with invaluable personal strengths. The exercises encapsulate the company's vision and serve as each Jesuit's preeminent personal development experience. Engaging in the exercises is the uniquely unifying experience of Jesuit life, shared by recruits from Rome to India and from the founding generation to this year's entering class. Developed by the Jesuit founder Ignatius Loyola, they were called Spiritual Exercises as they are actions to be done not rules to be studied. The individual undertaking them is like an athlete building his own internal resources. Each individual needed to work through the exercises on his own, with only the help of an impartial director to guide him through his experience. This is because all men are more delighted and moved by what they find out for themselves than what they are taught by others. So the purpose of the director is just to "point his finger at the vein in the mine," and let the individual dig for himself to discover what is inside him. Loyola understood what every competent therapist understands about self-discovery, and what every quality manager understands about motivation: that the switches are on the inside and so nobody can tell you what is inside of you, or motivate you to do anything you don't want to.

Recruits who successfully absorb the exercises were injected back into the world as self-aware, ingenious, loving, heroic leaders. But no month long introspective journey is enough to fortify someone for a lifetime. Immersed in the world with all hell breaking loose around them, Jesuits – like everyone else – risk slipping away from their goals and values when faced with pressures, distractions, and competing demands of everyday life. Loyola anticipated this and made sure that the exercises could also be used as a daily follow-up tool to maintain focus on newly embraced values. The exercises were specifically designed for those immersed in a busy lifestyle in an ever-changing world. Every day, upon arising, Jesuits are to remind themselves of key personal goals. Then twice each day they make a short mental pit stop called an examen. Each examen begins by recalling their positive loving worldview, and then recalling to mind all the events of the day so far, the opportunities and challenges presented, and how he reacted to them. This self-reflective habit is as powerful as it is simple. Ambitious goals become manageable when broken down into smaller goals. Moreover, the examens create an ongoing feedback loop. Relevant new information is incorporated and assessed in real time as the individual reminds himself of key goals each morning, not every 6 months, and extracts lessons learned and failures twice each day, not once a year. Few people are willing to set aside even one day a year for self-reflection, but anyone can carve out 5 minutes 3 times a day.

Self-awareness is never a finished product. As our world keeps changing, so leaders must keep changing too. Every early Jesuit dedicated an intensively focused week each year to revitalise his core commitment and assess his performance during the previous year. Moreover, Jesuit self-awareness techniques accommodated change by instilling in recruits the habit of continuous learning and of daily reflection on activities. These techniques remain relevant today precisely because they were designed to allow busy people to reflect on the run. Jesuits employed these techniques in order to remain recollected while all hell was breaking loose around them – just as everyone else has to do today. Recent research is validating the Jesuit emphasis on self

awareness showing that IQ and technical skills are far less crucial to leadership success than mature self-awareness.

### **Ingenuity: The whole world will become our house**

Ingenuity appears nowhere in Jesuit regulations or correspondence, but every early Jesuit would have instantly recognised its attitudes and behaviours in the way they did things. Ingenuity is the readiness to cross the world at a moment's notice in full-hearted pursuit of a good opportunity. It is the willingness to work without a script, and to dream up imaginative new approaches to problems that have baffled others, and it is the creative embrace of new ideas and foreign cultures.

Today's modern world is tumultuous and always shifting and changing. Succeeding in this world requires individuals to cultivate the personal skills needed to thrive in an environment of near permanent change. The abilities to adapt create, and respond quickly are core personal leadership skills for the twenty-first century.

There are two vital ingredients for ingenuity. Firstly, indifference which frees individuals from the prejudices, attachments, fears and narrow mindedness that can block the enthusiastic pursuit of new ideas and opportunities. Secondly, a profound trust and optimism that the world presents plenty of opportunities to pursue. Imagination, creativity, adaptability and rapid response become the keys for finding and unlocking these many opportunities.

Ignatius Loyola described the ideal Jesuit as "living with one foot raised" always ready to respond to emerging opportunities. Indifference is key to successfully living with one foot raised. A leader must first rid himself of ingrained habits, prejudices, cultural preferences and the 'we've always done it this way' attitude – the baggage that blocks rapid adaptive responses. Of course, not everything is discardable baggage. Core beliefs and values are nonnegotiable, the anchor that allows for purposeful change. The leader is able to adapt confidently knowing what is negotiable and what is not.

Early Jesuits were able to make themselves immediately and totally comfortable in a world that had changed as much in their lifetimes as it had over the previous thousand years. Jesuits prized personal and corporate agility. They were quick, flexible and open to new ideas. Loyola's spiritual exercises instilled indifference and freedom from attachments to places and possessions which could result in resistance to movement or change.

Another key to ingenuity that might not be very obvious is obedience. In order to move quickly, Jesuits needed to not only be willing to move on a moment's notice, but be able to take orders sending them on a new mission. Jesuits needed to be flexible enough to do whatever the situation calls for – to give an order, to take an order or to plot one's own course. The spirit of indifference helped young Jesuits not to worry about who got to give orders or who had to take them, but to do either well in order to deliver results. Obedience confers speed to the enterprise,

allowing managers to recognise and respond to opportunities aggressively. Anyone in today's fast paced competitive business environment will recognise the power of having team members who can take orders, give them, plot their own course and do all these quickly.

Loyola also resolved the complicated management challenge of building responsive, innovative, globally focused teams. Speed and a global mindset in today's fast paced economy often require centralised authority to weigh opportunities and mobilise resources quickly against emerging opportunities. There is often not time to call everyone together to discuss what to do when an opportunity arises. Therefore, oftentimes centralised authority needs to be able to take a decision in order to maximise the opportunity available. But once the decision has been taken, employees need to be freed to make decisions in order to arrive at the agreed upon outcome. In other words, speed, innovation and global focus happen only when lots of delegated authority sits alongside lots of centralised authority.

### **Love: with greater love than fear**

The early Jesuits faced the same obstacles to unity that any large global company does. Ignatius Loyola exhorted Jesuit managers to govern with greater love than fear. Love was the glue that unified the company – a motivating force that energised their efforts. Love was also the lens through which individual Jesuits beheld the world around them. Through this lens they saw each individual's talent, potential and dignity and had the courage, passion and commitment to unlock that potential. What separated Jesuit teams from the rest was that they were willing to hire talent that other religious orders shunned, and saw human talent and potential where others didn't even look for it. Love was the guiding vision that enabled them to do this.

Love in today's business world, drives the manager who takes the time he does not have to help the passable employee to do better, to help a promising junior employee chart a career path through the company, to initiate the awkward conversation that forces the high-performing colleague to confront his grating behaviour. Love sometimes even causes confrontation in families and teams.

For Loyola, leading was about helping others "run at full speed towards perfection." It was about the commitment to see others realise their full human potential. His motivation was developing others to achieve a common Jesuit agenda, not using others to achieve a self-interested agenda. Love-driven leadership is a combination of great affection coupled with the passion to see others run at full speed towards perfection. It is not urging others forward without concern for their aspirations, well-being or personal needs. Nor is it being the nice-guy manager who overlooks underperformance that could damage a subordinates long-term prospects. Instead, love-driven leaders hunger to see latent potential blossom and to help it happen.

The team that almost everyone has participated in is a family. Few would suggest that loveless families function as efficiently as loving families do, or that they are supportive, motivating or



satisfying. Nor would anyone argue that threatening or brutally competitive schools are our most successful ones. Students learn best and produce most in environments that provide genuine support, care and encouragement. Then why do we think that the needs of adults working in companies are any different?

Teams cemented by love and mutual regard effortlessly outdo most other organisations which settle for the basic teamwork behaviours of respecting colleagues, listening to their views, sharing information proactively, giving others the benefit of the doubt and mentoring newcomers. Anyone who has worked in a close-knit, loyal, trusting team knows that such minimal teamwork standards pale when compared with the behaviours of unified, love-driven teams. Unlike energy-sapping workplaces riddled with backstabbing and second-guessing, environments of greater love than fear generate energy. Team members in such environments are supported by colleagues who want them to succeed and help them to do so. Individuals perform best when they are respected, valued and trusted by those who genuinely care for their well-being. Loyola was wise enough to perceive this bundle of winning attitudes as 'love' and eagerly tapped its energising, unifying power for his Jesuit team.

Leaders face the world with a confident, healthy sense of themselves as endowed with talent, dignity and the potential to lead. They find exactly these same attributes in others and passionately commit to honouring and unlocking the potential they find in themselves and in others. They create environments bound and energised by loyalty, affection and mutual support. The Jesuit approach stemmed from their worldview that saw each person as uniquely endowed with talent and dignity. Out of this worldview, love-driven Jesuits worked with passion and courage so that individuals could thrive in environments of greater love than fear.

### **Heroism: Eliciting great desires**

The challenge for individuals, teams and companies today is how to move from clinical, going-through-the motions performance to motivated, even heroic performance. While many companies aspire to outstanding performance within their fields the Jesuit team did 3 distinct things to turn their aspiration into a reality (and it was not writing out and printing a mission statement).

1. They invited recruits to turn a corporate aspiration into a personal mission.
2. They created a company culture that stressed heroism, modelling the virtue themselves.
3. They gave each person the opportunity to enlarge himself by contributing meaningfully to an enterprise greater than his own interests.

Loyola's most powerful practical insight about heroic leadership was that it is self-motivated.

The Spiritual Exercises enabled each recruit to personalise the company's mission. The recruit was not simply handed the company's vision. Each person considered, accepted, shaped and transformed a general mission into a personal one, and were supported in constant reinforcement from the top.

Indifferent Jesuits stood poised waiting for a heroic ambitious goal to inspire them to spring into action. Once they committed to a goal, total victory was the aim. Jesuits were exhorted to go further than wholehearted service. Early Jesuits captured this aggressive drive, this relentless energy, in a one-word motto: magis which is the Latin word for 'more'. Magis is the restless drive to look for something more in every opportunity and the confidence that one will find it. Jesuits are exhorted to always choose and desire the strategic option that is more conducive to their goals. But it also captures a broader spirit to imagine whether there isn't some even greater project to be accomplished or some better way of attacking the current problem.

Not only were Jesuit teams encouraged to achieve heroic acts but every young Jesuit heard of other such heroes from all over the world modelling the sentiments they preached. Letters from the field, copied in Rome, were circulated throughout the Jesuit world so early Jesuit teams could hear of heroes walking the walk.

If making the mission personal and creating a supportive culture were two ingredients for instilling heroism, the third was giving each individual the opportunity to contribute meaningfully. The Jesuits believed what behavioural psychologist Frederick Herzberg would later observe "You cannot motivate anyone to do a good job unless he has a good job to do." The Jesuits had many good jobs to do and heroes emerged to fill them.

For any organisation to reach a performance plateau of heroic and visionary acts is enormously challenging, but remaining on that plateau is even harder. A restless countercultural instinct to keep challenging the status quo had to be built into Jesuit heroism.

The built-in energy of magis pointed always toward some better approach to the problem at hand or some worthier challenge to tackle. The daily self-reflective habits denied Jesuits the luxury of going with the flow, and when a better path presented itself, their change ready posture of living with one foot raised inclined them to leap into action. Good leaders share this restless, eternally questioning posture that keeps them a little ahead of the curve. It also keeps them pointed toward the future, toward solutions and opportunities that others might overlook or be too timid to tackle.

Heroic, out-in-front leadership became a less compelling choice as the Jesuit company had more and more to lose. It was no more difficult than it is today: risk taking comes easier to the edgy, nothing-to-loose start-up company than the well established everything to loose mainstream player. And many a well-established mainstream player has begun to sink when they decided to stick with what was working rather than pounce aggressively on untested, high-risk ventures – even though most companies first gain prominence by innovating and taking risks.

Few companies maintain the leadership edge necessary for success from generation to generation – let alone across centuries. Consider that only 16 of the top hundred US companies of 1900 were still around at century's end. Why do so few successful companies survive? Success breeds complacency or market leaders turn defensive, conservatively glancing back rather than looking forward for new opportunities or threats on the horizon.

Magis-driven leadership, the continued focus on what lies ahead and on what more ambitious goals can be achieved, remains the only reliable way to ensure that important parts of the vision and mission remain vital and are not overlooked or discarded. Leaders imagine an inspiring future and strive to shape it rather than passively watching the future happen around them. Heroes extract gold from the opportunities at hand rather than waiting for golden opportunities to be handed to them.

### **Four core values – one integrated life**

By figuring out what he is good at, stands for and wants in life, the leader positions himself to choose a career and lifestyle that draw on those strengths, values and goals. The leader's values keep his life feeling pulled together in a complex world. The leader is recognisable to self and others as the same person, animated by the same principles at home and at work. Leadership is a way of living in which basic life strategies and principles reinforce one another.

If a strong set of individual beliefs, goals and values is key for individual success, is a strong corporate culture of shared values and practices key for corporate success? Researchers have found the answer to be yes and no. Harvard Business School professors John Kotter and James Heskett noted in *Corporate Culture and Performance* that strong cultures sometimes damage company performance by causing employees to reject new ideas and approaches: a culture can blind people to facts that don't match its assumptions. But a strong corporate culture can also spur outstanding results when 3 key characteristics fall into place:

1. The culture is strong, not just on paper, but in a tangible way that guides day-to-day employee behaviour.
2. The culture is strategically appropriate, and
3. Most critically, the culture doesn't block change, but promotes it.

Successful corporate cultures tap the motivating power of deeply held beliefs, but also encourage change and innovation. Energising power lies precisely in the combination of nonnegotiable core beliefs and a willing embrace of change. Warren Bennis in his book *Leaders* describes the importance of a clear vision that enables confident risk taking, autonomy and creativity like this:

"A shared vision of the future helps individuals distinguish between what is good and what is bad for their organisation and what is worthwhile to want to achieve. And most important, it makes it possible to distribute decision making widely. People can make difficult decisions without having to appeal to higher levels in the organisation each time because they know what end result is desired."

We are all leaders and we are all leading all the time, often in small, unintended ways. The hundreds of casual encounters with fellow humanity that one experiences each day are all opportunities to convey respect or not to. Innumerable fifteen second transactions turn into

hours of interaction over a month. Few stop to consider the message they are sending in these passing encounters which add up to most of one's waking life. The leader embracing the one great moment theory is always searching for the defining dramatic opportunity that will qualify as a leadership moment. But in reality more attitudes have been shaped, for good or bad, by a CEO's manner towards employees in the elevator. Heroic leadership invites people to assess their daily impact, to refocus if necessary, and to articulate the leadership mark they want to make. It invites them to replace accidental leadership with purposeful leadership of self and others.