



# Leadership for Good Employment

A discussion paper

GREATER MANCHESTER  
**GOOD  
EMPLOYMENT**  
CHARTER

# Foreword

**Ian MacArthur**, Director, GM Good Employment Charter

In 1988 Bobby Ferrin told us all “Don’t worry, be happy”, - a simple mantra to guide us. But his upbeat message was challenged like never before when the COVID-19 pandemic led to successive lockdowns and restrictions beginning in March 2020. Organisations of all sizes had to re-evaluate how they operated, how they communicated, how they could continue to deliver their objectives, how they managed their people and even whether they had the resilience to survive the buffeting of shocks and pressures that hit every household and every employer.

It brought pressures on organisational management, thrown into untried scenarios of remote and hybrid working and fully testing the depth of their communications and emotional intelligence skills. Moreover, leaders themselves faced burnout, juggling the daily pressures of keeping an organisation running with concerns for their staff’s wellbeing and an ever-changing operating environment.

The chaos wrought by COVID-19 may have settled down in the last few months, but the pressures of the cost of living and doing business crisis have seamlessly replaced the turmoil leaders have to navigate and attempt to steer calmly on.

And yet... through our engagement with many amazing employers as part of the Good Employment Charter we have revealed some phenomenal leadership teams and individuals who have ensured that their organisations not only survived but continued to thrive throughout the most difficult of times.

To celebrate, capture and share their insights and experiences we are indebted to Gillian Drakeford, formerly a Global Executive and UK CEO with IKEA, who has extracted key elements of leadership for good employment by working closely with a cohort of leaders from across Greater Manchester.

Gillian has led the development of a model for Leadership for Good Employment which was reviewed and tested at a Charter Leadership event held in September 2022.

This document not only sets out the core of the developed model but also expands on the various elements with contributions from, John Quinton-Barber, Founder and CEO at Social, Marie Mohan, MD of Common Purpose, Louise Brown, Vice Principal at Wigan and Leigh College, Daphne Doody-Green, Head of the North for CIPD, and John Herring, Director of Organisational Development at the GM Integrated Care Service. We are hugely grateful for their insightful contributions and continued support of the Charter.

This document is only the beginning of a stream of work on Leadership for Good Employment and more events and content will follow. It does however provide a solid foundation for us to start to support leaders in our ever-changing world of work.

# Introductions



**Ian MacArthur**  
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**Gillian Drakeford**  
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**John Quinton-Barber**  
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# Leadership for Good Employment

**Gillian Drakeford**, Adviser to the Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter and ex Global Executive at IKEA

Today's world is rapidly changing, and businesses and organisations are evolving as political, technological, and environmental landscapes changing at pace. This leads to greater levels of uncertainty and ambiguity for us all as individuals and the organisations and businesses we work with.

This new and complex world requires businesses and organisations to reset and rethink their purpose, values, and behaviours. This puts greater demands on our managers and leaders. The traditional work environment and ways of working have been and continue to be disrupted by digitalisation, hybrid working and the need to contribute to environmental and social change in a responsible way.

Leaders will need to learn and develop new capabilities that will enable them to deliver on their ambitions, by enabling those they work with to find purpose and an environment where they feel connected and valued.

When meeting senior leaders within the Greater Manchester community and discussing 'what is great leadership?' - they shared many traits that we all experience when we are fortunate to work together with great leaders.

Great leaders:

- Build trustful relationships with people by being authentic.
- Are good communicators who inspire and enable others to be a part of something bigger.
- Are humble, empathetic, and inclusive having the ability to connect with people inside and outside their organisations.
- Set and shape the culture of an organisation through shared values and behaviours.
- Unleash the potential of others by creating an environment where people can grow, develop, and contribute.

The above are some of the traits of the great leaders we experience today, and we believe that what sits behind these traits are capabilities, the ability to do something! These are capabilities that can be learnt and developed by many who are leaders now and those who aspire to lead in the future.

The Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter leadership model identifies 5 areas of capabilities which are interdependent: visioning, connecting with purpose, setting and shaping the culture, future thinking and transformation.

## Visioning

- Paint a compelling picture of the future, articulating how the vision connects and contributes to the overall core values and purpose of an organisation.
- Inspire and engage others in the vision, mission and aligned ambitions and goals - enabling connectivity to a shared purpose and meaningful work.
- Inspire, motivate, and empower others to contribute to organisational success.

## Connecting with purpose

- Connect and understand others and what's important to them.
- Bring together people with diverse backgrounds and perspectives in an inclusive way.
- Adapt to diverse scenarios and alternative perspectives with a non-judgmental approach to finding common ground.
- Develop supportive relationships and effective ties, both within and outside your organisation.
- Influence, persuade, negotiate and understand the impact on others.

## Setting and shaping the culture

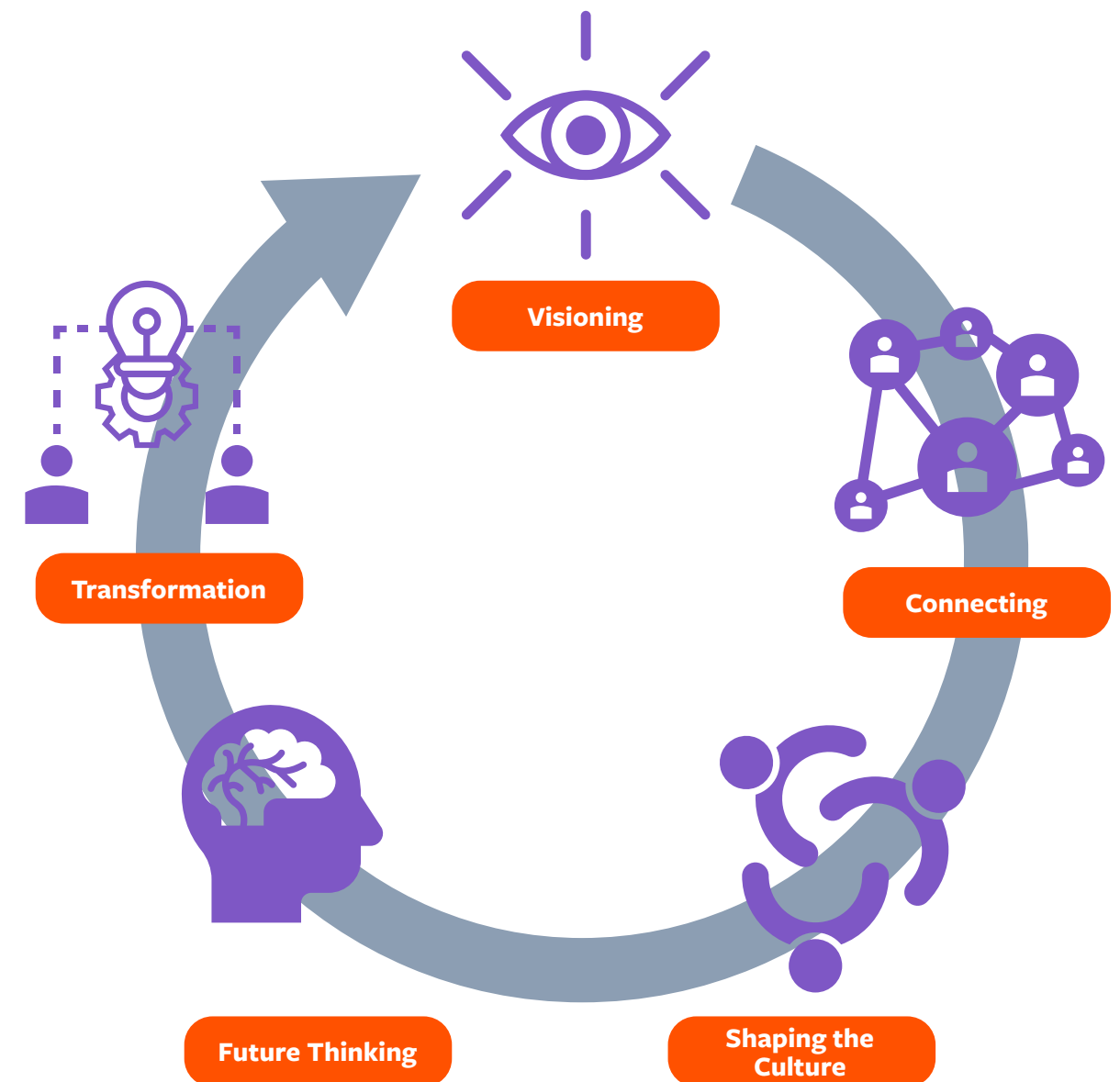
- Communicate transparently through values, beliefs, and behaviours
- Build trust and create an environment of psychological safety allowing people to be their authentic selves.
- Unleash human potential and build competence, skills, and capability for today and the future.
- Create a learning culture, where failures and successes are celebrated and learnt from.
- Model an environment where diverse perspectives across an eco-system, external and internal are valued and enable challenge and collaboration.

## Future thinking

- Demonstrate curiosity and openness to new trends, information, better methods, and opportunities they can create for the organisation to deliver its vision.
- Make connections to people, places, and events and translate what it means for the organisation.
- Make sense or attempt to make sense of ambiguous situations
- Have situational awareness and the understanding of high complexity or uncertainty to make decisions (sense-making, meaning making and decision-making)

## Transformation

- Devise ways to bring a vision to life through developing new ways of doing things, be it structures, processes, new business/operating models and ways of working.
- Learn and unlearn.
- Be agile to test, try and fail.





# Visioning

**John Quinton-Barber**, Founder and CEO at Social

An organisation without a vision is in danger of going nowhere.

That might sound like a harsh statement to introduce the importance of the theme of visioning in the leadership framework, but unless you have set the destination and you have clearly articulated it to all your stakeholders, your organisation is in danger of standing still or even worse, failing.

Your vision, written down, is arguably the single most important piece of paper in your organisation. Don't get it confused with values, which are often seen plastered over office walls. Your vision is your destination. It is the roadmap for growth, opportunities, certainty, and stability and overall, it is what will lead you and your colleagues to greater success.

Setting the vision for your organisation requires energy and an investment of time by those who can visualise and see the future direction of the business. This may not always be your top team or all your senior colleagues, but it should always involve colleagues from right across the organisation.

To set the vision, you need people who are massively bought into the organisation and who have the hunger and desire to see it succeed. And the very art of setting the vision requires everyone to get out of the day-to-day running of the business, and as a team, set aside time to reimagine the art of possible, think, challenge, visualise, agree, and look to the future.

Creating this time and space and moving into the visioning mindset, means that you are detaching yourself from the seemingly eternal business processes that often hold leaders back and trap them in a never-ending focus on short-term priorities.

When creating a vision statement for your organisation, answer questions about what your hopes and dreams are. What kind of future do you want to see, and how does the company play a part in making that happen? Are you aspiring to make some kind of change, and how will you make it?

When a clear vision is created, it provides a focal point for the whole organisation and helps colleagues to feel that they are part of a greater purpose. And when that vision is powerful, it creates energy, buy-in and enthusiasm which leads to a more motivated and committed workforce.

The best way to define your vision is to focus on positive outcomes. It shouldn't be broad. It should be detailed and should clarify direction and purpose. It also must be articulated clearly and point towards a better future. Most of all, your

vision needs to be ambitious. This is what will make it inspiring and motivating while setting a gold standard of excellence, which forces your business to stretch.

As leaders, it is your responsibility to lead on the vision building and inspire those that you lead. Being a visionary is one of the six key leadership principles that renowned business psychologist David Goleman sets out in his Emotional Intelligence paper for Harvard Business School (Leadership That Gets Results, Harvard Business Review).

In the paper, Goleman sets out the following characteristics of visionary leadership. The ability to mobilise people towards a long-term direction and vision; develop and describe a clear long-term direction; get input on the best way to achieve this; sell the vision; give lots of explanation about why the vision is important; give people the freedom to choose their means of achieving the vision; set standards against the vision and then monitor performance against it and give balanced feedback to build motivation.

Businesses and organisations from across Greater Manchester have also developed a series of characteristics for visioning

These include:

- Creating an environment where everyone belongs
- Doing business in a good way
- Be successful (and make profit) with good behaviours
- Be clear on how everyone contributes
- Keep your vision simple, and
- It must be lived out as the overarching Golden Thread

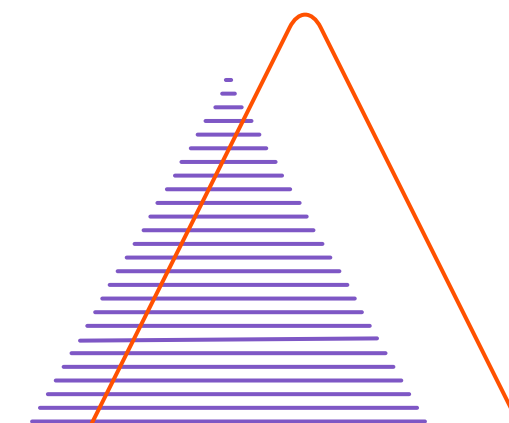
Once you have an agreed vision, you need to be able to communicate it effectively. Communication always needs to start inside the organisation first. Communicate it to colleagues along with the goals and the stories that will bring the vision to life.

The vision needs to empower your colleagues to be more effective, so don't let it become a statement that sits in a desk drawer. Instead, include it in all of your key messages and both internal and external documents.

You need to get everyone on board. Communicating your vision in a positive, excited manner will ensure your colleagues engage positively with what you have set out for the organisation to achieve. Do regular testing to ensure everyone speaks with one voice.

Once you have internal buy-in, make your vision front and centre of all your external communications. Communicate it through as many channels as possible to reach all your stakeholders. And keep repeating those success stories that demonstrate your vision.

Finally, creating a vision isn't a once-in-a-lifetime exercise. It should regularly be reviewed and evaluated to make sure that it is still relevant. Big external events, for example COVID, can knock the best-intended vision right off course. So don't be afraid to revisit your vision often and make big or small changes to it to make sure it remains relevant, and you reach your destination.





# Connecting with Purpose

Marie Mohan, UK MD of Common Purpose

I think we can agree that we are living in times of uncertainty and ambiguity that are creating real discomfort and anxiety for many of us. This in turn means that we are asking a lot more of managers and leaders in organisations, especially in terms of how they lead their people; people who are asking for inspiration, purpose and development and a workplace where they feel safe, connected, and valued.

Our world, whether at the Greater Manchester, UK or global level is beset by so-called wicked, complex, knotty problems – challenges around energy, the rising cost of living, the war in

Ukraine, the ongoing impact of Covid, the global refugee crisis... Seemingly intractable issues where there may be competing priorities, scarce resources and tensions between partners and stakeholders. Those systemic problems cannot be solved by any one person or one organisation – they require deep collaboration and team-working and new and clever thinking from a diverse range of stakeholders, people with different levels of experience and expertise. And this requires a different sort of leadership. At Common Purpose, we develop leaders who can cross boundaries who in turn help counterbalance the forces of fragmentation in society. Cross-boundary leadership



requires Cultural Intelligence (CQ), the ability to be able to cross divides and work with people who are not like you.

Many of us have learnt to lead in circumstances where our authority is fairly clear-cut, where we may have budget and line management responsibilities and, in some instances, where our job title and/or organisation carry a certain weight. We become more and more knowledgeable and competent (often comfortable too) in a smaller and more specialist field. As we progress in our careers, we learn that we need to take a different approach to make change happen, whether that's working cross-functionally in a bigger organisation and/or working with stakeholders in the wider ecosystem. In these instances, when we lead beyond our authority, we realise we can no longer rely on our positional authority and that the skills and traits that we need to be successful in the wider ecosystem are different.

As leaders who have a budget and people responsibilities, we understand the purpose of our organisations, the rationale and process of decision-making and we have clarity around roles and remits. When we move to lead beyond that, there is often no rulebook, there is no one to arbitrate, and we can't do anything without the commitment and support of others. We need to accept that genuine collaboration takes time and effort, but it will produce more meaningful partnerships which have the potential to deliver transformational change.

To lead beyond our authority, we need to learn how to influence, and we do that by being:

## Curious

- Asking questions as we begin to understand the broader context outside our own professional and organisational interests and how power works in other environments.

## Connected

- Within our organisations and beyond.

## Challenged

- So that we become more comfortable not just with difference but with ambiguity.

## Patient

- It takes time to build relationships based on trust. Decision-making can appear to be painfully slow when we have to consider other perspectives.

## Humble

- Appreciating that we won't always have the answers - but nor will anyone else.

Leaders who lead beyond their authority have well-developed cultural intelligence (CQ) and understand the imperative to be able to build relationships and connections with people who don't just sound, look and think like them.

Take a minute to consider your network:

- Who's in it?
- How inclusive is it?
- How different are the people in it from you?
- How many are from other disciplines, industries, sectors, geographies, and generations?

Leaders with CQ also understand that it's not just about who's in our networks, it's about our approach and mindset. Are we just in broadcast mode rather than being curious and listening to and learning from others? Are we connecting with purpose? Are we clear about our intent? As leaders, we need to be willing to flex from:

**Looking inwards** - towards our immediate team and our default network and those with whom we feel most comfortable to

**Looking outwards** - towards those who will challenge our thinking beyond our inner circle. Those in the wider organisation, industry, sector and community.

All of this will keep us agile and resilient and help us and our organisations survive and succeed in challenging circumstances. And what will guide us all is a deep sense of our purpose, that understanding of what's at the heart of who we are and what we stand for.

New connections open minds and opportunities to innovate. Breakthrough ideas come from the intersections where different people with a range of expertise and experience brush up against one another. When you next need to consider a complex problem, make sure that you don't convene the same group of people who always come together – consider who else needs to be invited. Involve customers and wider stakeholders, people from different levels and with different roles in the organisation. Keep bringing new people in as you need them and keep asking the question of who else needs to be present.

And finally, it's not always comfortable when we forge wider connections – we may hear some uncomfortable truths, and we may need to actively challenge prejudice and bias. It can be safer to stay put, but ultimately the power of diverse connections enables us to take better decisions. This is because we can view a complex challenge through several different lenses, and we can reach out to include others because we have invested in building trusted relationships.



# Shaping the Culture

**Louise Brown**, Vice Principal at Wigan & Leigh College

We've probably all heard the old adage 'culture eats strategy for breakfast' but really why is it so important? No matter how well-designed the strategic plan of an organisation is, it won't succeed in its mission if the people don't share the culture to deliver its goals. It's very much about behaviours.

Many theorists have published work on the relationship between performance and culture; Purcell, Ulrich and Pfeffer to name but a few. We find central to many of the theories is that it stands or falls on the capabilities of its leaders.

Culture defines an organisation's identity, how it goes about its business, how it interacts with others and how others perceive it.

A strong organisational culture is fundamental in the recruitment and retention of key skills, something critical in the current economic climate where skills shortages are in abundance and employers are scrambling to attract high-quality staff from competitors.

If you asked high-performing staff what keeps them with their current employer, they are highly likely to say 'the people'. A workplace culture focused on people has profound appeal, delivering a unique employee experience and buy-in to the central purpose of the organisation.

We must not overlook a key factor in positive organisational cultures, that of individual well-being. More so than ever the health and well-being of the workforce is paramount. Well-being strategies provide enormous benefits to an organisation for both employees and employers. However, these strategies need to be implemented and developed holistically, consistent with the organisational culture. This can mean managers that are supportive of the needs of their teams, flexible approaches to work and a strong commitment to listen and act on employee voice enabling this to shape the working environment.

Many organisations are often guilty of too much focus on the tangible benefits for staff, thinking that this is how you ensure a healthy culture across the workforce. Of course, it is important that the environment aligns with the culture, investing in the resources and surroundings to enhance the employee experience, however, this isn't the be-all and end-all. Ultimately culture is about behaviours across the workforce and how they respond in pressurised and critical situations, the creative energy they apply to their roles and operating with dignity, integrity, and respect in all that they

do. Fundamentally, evidencing a one-team approach – solving problems together and celebrating success; there's no room for a silo mentality within a positive organisational culture. A positive culture sees high levels of employee engagement, with staff buying into the central purpose of the organisation.

Now comes the challenge... Creating and shaping the culture can be far easier said than done. It can take many years to build a great culture and only minutes for this to be destroyed if managers don't buy in and align to the central organisational purpose and live and breathe the values that resonate within the organisation.

Communication is key in every element of a positive culture - from communicating the organisational values and ethos, to encouraging open and honest two-way communication both empowering employees and collecting staff voice. Positive

reinforcement of great behaviours and walking the walk is critical. The visibility of leaders is an essential ingredient in shaping the culture.

No definitive list exists for all the capabilities that leaders must demonstrate in a positive culture-led organisation. However, many themes focus on trust, honesty, integrity, openness and sincerity, but also challenge. High performers will look to this challenge. Leaders that see themselves as providers of service are also a commonly seen theme. Leaders also need to embrace creativity and innovation and focus on the team rather than the individual.

So, it all sounds easy in theory but where do you start and how do you do it?

Establishing trust will always be the central pillar, this takes time and a strong commitment to listening to your people and valuing their voice.

Determine the current position what the culture is now and what we need to change.

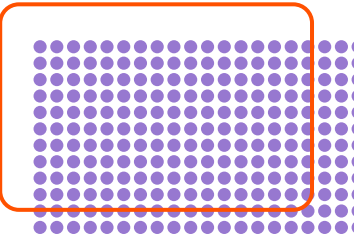
Defining the perfect workplace culture is a great starting point – you might not reach the dizzy heights of perfection but if you aim in that direction, even if you miss the target, you'll be in the realm of achieving your goals.

Clarity around expectation and what you are trying to achieve is fundamental to generating that common theme and sense of

purpose, enabling targets to be met and achievement measured along the way. Regular feedback is another essential ingredient to keep people engaged and motivated and on track.

Don't forget reward, recognition, and a commitment to Continuing Personal Development. Again, all elements can be intrinsically linked to a strong and successful employee engagement strategy.

Building strong employee relationships through strong leadership is ultimately the foundation for a meaningful employee experience. Leaders play a central role in shaping a culture where both the employees and the business will thrive.





# Future Thinking

**Daphne Doody-Green**, Head of CIPD Northern England

Future thinking expands our horizons and helps leaders to understand the macro and micro challenges and opportunities within our organisations - and societies too.

Future thinking helps leaders identify the potential warning signs that could disrupt an organisation and its activities, providing valuable insight to potentially adapt or transform areas of the business, to remain competitive and resilient.

Ultimately, future thinking is a gift that allows leaders to critically think about what they want their organisation to look like months ahead, and in years to come.

Why is it important?

Being a leader is more complex than it has ever been as the changing world of work has altered the way we lead, and now global events such as the war in Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis, have made it hugely challenging to navigate uncertainty. As a result, many organisations have had to reset and rethink their purpose, values, and behaviours.

These economic challenges, amidst an increasingly digital and remote workforce, bring a new level of complexity that many leaders can find overwhelming. Therefore, leaders must prioritize horizon scanning to ensure they understand the potential impact of these challenges on their organisation and people. Future thinking will help leaders to make better, and more informed decisions, about the direction of the business and its approach to important workplace issues such as sustainability, wellbeing, inclusion, and diversity.

Leaders have a responsibility to make ethical and responsible business decisions, so it's important they consider the impact of all their decisions not only on their people, but also societies, and economies more broadly. This will help build a mutually beneficial culture of collaboration and trust between an organisation and its local communities.

It's more important than ever during these uncertain times that leaders play an active role in our societies and use their courage and influence to challenge the 'norms' through reaching out, connecting, and collaborating to create social impact and better working lives. This involves being innovative and creative to ensure workplaces and management approaches benefit both employees and the wider community in equal measure.

If leaders choose to only do that from within and not integrate with the broader ecosystem, they lose the ability to be a 'future thinker.'

Leaders, or anyone for that matter, can't predict the future but they can paint a canvas which is detailed enough to bring purpose and clarity around how we bring our people and customers with us.

What does future thinking mean?

**Demonstrate curiosity and openness to new trends, information, better methods, and what opportunities they can create for the organisation to deliver its vision**

- inform your judgement by paying close attention to evolving trends, theory and human behaviour to better understand future challenges and opportunities for your people, organisations, and customers.

**Make connections to people, places, and events and translate what it means for the organisation**

- aspire to develop relationships with your broader ecosystem, seeking those connections that will give you a wider context to what is going on. Bring them closer to you, and collaborate with a purpose to ensure you consider the views of external stakeholders enabling you to be truly inclusive in your approach.

**Make sense or attempt to make sense of ambiguous situations**

- make complex and timely decisions and align the strategic context and values when there are unknowns as well as creating cultures where others are empowered to take decisions.

**Have situational awareness and the understanding of high complexity or uncertainty to make decisions (sense-making, meaning making and decision-making)**

- anticipate changes in the organisation and broader environment to manage complexity and ambiguity enabling a better grasp of what is going on around you to inform vision, purpose, and transformation.

## Summary

- Future thinking requires a level of nuanced thinking and an appreciation of complexity so allow yourself the time to do it.



- Create environments, cultures and leadership that allow you to rapidly respond, test and learn and take decisions under pressure.
- Promote an inclusive culture of trust that recognises the value of measuring outcomes and evaluating the impact of decisions.
- Strike a balance between focusing on vision and ambition and making sense of what is in front of you – this is both a leadership challenge and organisational responsibility.
- Look outwards and inwards to understand how your organisation can go for growth, whilst considering the adjacent communities and customers you serve.
- Invest in developing great people managers that can deliver the organisation's purpose and values through your people.
- Invest in your continuous learning as a leader.

# Transformation

**John Herring**, Strategic Lead for Organisational Development and System Leadership at Greater Manchester Integrated Care System.

In identifying transformation as one of our five key leadership capabilities, we have identified that effective leadership of change is crucial for all employers. It is important to note how interdependent the 5 areas of leadership are, and transformation is, in particular, driven by its four counterparts:

- A strong vision for the organisation which is 'infinite' in nature will enable transformative leadership to move beyond transactional change when required for the organisation, workforce, and people you serve.
- Connected organisations understand the landscape in which they are operating and as such these connections can effectively drive transformative change.
- Whilst the culture of an organisation is not a fixed point itself, change of culture is most often driven by a change of vision or drift in implementing culture. Transformation must always be informed by the culture of the organisation and only enable culture change when a new vision, mission or culture is a requirement for the future.
- Future thinking informs the kind of transformation we want to make for our organisations. It is, in effect, the strategic planning for our transformative work.

## What Do We Mean by 'Transformation'?

Transformation can refer to a fundamental shift in an organisation, but as a leadership capability, carrying out fundamental changes in an organisation continuously is not a healthy position to be in. Fundamental change is disruptive and whilst this can be necessary and fruitful, when it is continuous it can destabilise the workforce and what you are trying to deliver. Instead, the transformation we refer to here should be iterative, measured, embedded across the workforce and inclusive.

One of the pre-eminent scholars on transformational leadership was D. W. Edwards Deming whose 'System of Profound Knowledge' cited that transformation is everybody's job and should be hard-wired through an organisation. A culture where everyone is looking for improvement and supporting and delivering change. Deming argued for continuous transformational change which was underpinned by SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely) goals – hence iterative transformation.

## Models of Transformation

A useful way to view transformation in an organisation is in relation to Lewin's Change Management Model - a three-step model which describes the process of change management. You will see indicators of other leadership capabilities in each area which demonstrates just how dependent any transformational change is.

In terms of continuous improvement and transformation, W. Edwards Deming put forward a System of Profound Knowledge underpinned by the PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) Cycle to support leaders working in transformative environments. The System of Profound Knowledge proposes that leaders have an appreciation of four components to create effective and sustainable change:

## Appreciation of a System

- The leadership of a system in which organisations deliver their products and services requires knowledge of the relationships between processes, sub-processes within the system, and everybody that works and interacts with it.

## Knowledge of Variation

- It is important to remember that there is always variation acting in the system. It is important to understand the type of variation before taking action.
- Common causes of variation come from within the process. They generate outcomes that are different, but not significantly different. Special causes intervene from outside the process and produce outcomes that are significantly different. It is crucial for all leaders to understand how to avoid mistaking common causes for special causes and vice versa as this determines an appropriate improvement strategy for their businesses. For common cause variation, the appropriate strategy is to change and improve the process. For non-random and special cause variation, the appropriate action is to find, remove and prevent the recurrence of the special cause. No amount of work on a process will address a special cause because uncontrolled variation comes from outside of the process.

## Unfreeze

- Be clear on what change you want to make
- Ensure everyone understand why the change is being made
- Connect, Consult with and Inform
- Plan - objectives, timescales, budgets
- Be clear on who is leading and involved in delivering the change

## Change

- Communicate clearly and often
- Coach
- Dispel rumours
- Involve people in the process of change
- Help people to learn the 'new way' of doing things

## Refreeze

- Anchor changes in culture
- Sustain the change
- Further support and training
- Celebrate successes

## Theory of Knowledge

- The third component of profound knowledge promotes learning as individuals and as an organisation. The process of learning is embodied in the Deming Plan Do Study Act cycle, a systematic and dynamic process covering theory and application that helps gather knowledge, not simply data or information. It is a means of achieving a never-ending cycle of valuable learning for the continual improvement of a process or product.

## Human Behaviour

- Psychology helps us to understand people, interaction between people and circumstances, interaction between a manager and his/her team and any management system. Managing these interactions between human emotions and the system is critical.

The PDSA Cycle provides a framework in which leaders can ensure that transformation is sustainable, reflective, and effective in the organisation. It is a systematic process for gaining valuable learning and knowledge for the continual improvement of a product, process, or service.

The cycle begins with the Plan step. This involves identifying a goal or purpose, formulating a theory, defining success metrics, and putting a plan into action. These activities are followed by the Do step, in which the components of the plan are

implemented, such as making a product. Next comes the Study step, where outcomes are monitored to test the validity of the plan for signs of progress and success, or problems and areas for improvement. The Act step closes the cycle, integrating the learning generated by the entire process, which can be used to adjust the goal, change methods, reformulate a theory altogether, or broaden the learning-improvement cycle from a small-scale experiment to a larger implementation plan. These four steps can be repeated over and over as part of a never-ending cycle of continual learning and improvement.

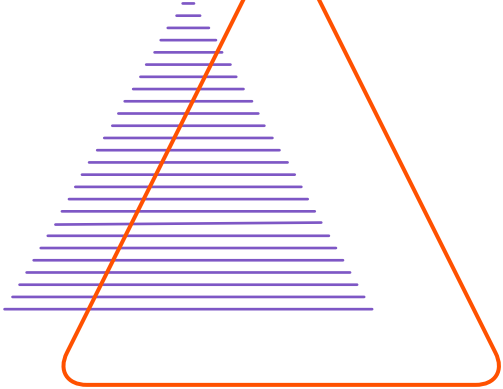
## Conclusion

Transformation, as a leadership capability, is a particular skill with many models on offer to take leaders and organisations through a process of change. If you have in place visioning, connecting, culture and future thinking capabilities across your leadership then the implementation of models of transformation becomes much easier. In addition, organisations should aspire to a culture of continuous improvement where the whole workforce is involved, if transformation is truly embedded as a core leadership capability.



# Leadership Reflections

Sharon Amesu, Director of SA Consulting and Board Member of the GM Good Employment Charter



The 15th century is described as the Age of Discovery. A period when many ships set sail for distant lands. A cursory glance of maps drawn up by cartographers of the period reveals geographical areas marked out as ‘Terra Incognita’. This Latin phrase translates as ‘unknown territory’. These territories became synonymous with the idiom ‘Here be Dragons’, the uncharted waters that invoked fear.

In many ways, modern leaders can be likened to cartographers. Leaders are required to map out new territories and navigate uncertainties. This is especially the case in recent years, where

turbulence has become commonplace. We have encountered the 100-foot waves of the COVID virus, the economic downturn, talent shortages, challenges with technology, a climate threat, and a cost-of-living crisis.

Many leaders are finding these times VUCA times (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous), tough and stress-inducing. Psychologists tell us that stressful periods often have the effect of sapping our energy, our motivation, and sense of purpose. And, during these times of tension and uncertainty, we are most at risk of defaulting to poor habits and behaviours,

both individually and at an organisational level. So then, how do we stay anchored? How do we hold to our North Star, when we are awash with the navigational pull of hard-hitting seas? How do we continue to grow and evolve in the face of obstacles?

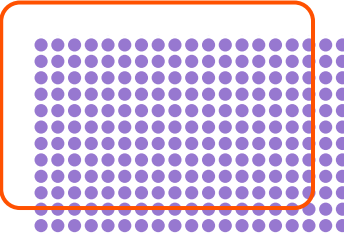
I believe that we do so by rooting ourselves in the central tenets of good leadership. It is here that we rediscover our moorings. Tenets adapted to the modern age and circumstance, yet holding universal relevance and application, are the bedrock for these times of unrelenting challenge and change. The Good Employment Charter model for leadership offers the

leaders of Greater Manchester, a compelling distillation of these central tenets. Each of its pillars serves to remind us of what will matter most in the days ahead. Visioning, Connecting with Purpose, Setting and Shaping Culture, Future Thinking, and Transformation, bond together to form the iron that will give us the weight and heft to stand strong.

It also reminds us that if are to ride these waves, stay afloat and experience sustainable growth, we will need to harness the best that our region has to offer, namely our diversity. We must commit to being a region where the rising tide raises all ships and no-one of any background is left behind. Put another way, good employment is only good employment when it serves the needs of all our constituents.

After all, this sits within our DNA as a region. Our history of driving social and political change, is both a reminder and a clarion call to each of us, to live into our regional identity of doing the right thing- full throated, surefooted, unbowed.

The time is now, the opportunity is here. Let us lead on to a brighter future together.







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