

A Personal Post From Ian...

WHY IAN SAMPSON DOESNT READ MANY BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP ANY MORE

Every month a management magazine shows up at home.

Last month's edition reviewed several new books on **Leadership**. No doubt they have contributed to the 641,000,000 items that came up when I recently Googled "Leadership".

One book modestly professes in its title to tell us "what you really need to **lead**." Another promised in its subtitle to help in "taking the guesswork out of **leading leaders**." Yet another proclaimed in its title that I could learn how to "influence, motivate and **lead** high performance teams" by adopting one of the Four Mindsets.



One book concludes that "management is more art than science, with empathy being the critical attribute. In the end it is not about receiving adulation but about getting the job done." Evidently it's like sincerity: if you can fake that, you've got it made!

One tome opines that "over reliance on training programs can be a trap, especially as they often depend on a one-size-fits-all approach", having instead blown the problem up by declaring that there are actually 12 sizes of solutions to fit problem employees who can't be lead.

It advocates that as a leader you should engage in active listening and having a capacity at an emotional level to identify what to do about which one of the 12 types of problem employee they are. I'd like to be a fly on the wall to see how the subsequent interactions with employees goes once they get wise to the game and somehow learn to manage their escalating fear and sense of loss of self.

The common underlying but unspoken theme of these and similar books seems to be: follow these tips and tricks on how to control and manipulate others in order to get what the company expects and advance one's own career. The perks of personal advancement then reveal themselves to occur at the cost of fenangling the people one is charged with the responsibility of leading.

This is not what leadership is about.

Leadership is about first knowing **Who** one is as a leader, **What** one chooses to do to be the effective leader you are and only then **How** you might go about that. Most of the current guff wades straight into the How without doing the character defining and building work that will determine how the How gets done.

If it is time to get off the treadmill, come to an event at The Leadership Foundation (www.theleadershipfoundation.com.au). In meeting with other leaders you will uncover for yourself

- Who you really are as a leader and Why,
- What choices you will make to personally take your leadership forward,
- How to deal with barriers to your leadership and
- How to build a trusting network with other leaders who are all committed to being leaders and effectively exercising leadership in their organisations, communities and families.

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