



# Authentic leadership – focusing on strengths and solutions

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[www.oneworldconsulting.com](http://www.oneworldconsulting.com)

# Overview

- What is authentic leadership?
- Different approaches to authentic leadership and how to apply it
- Different management approaches and their influence on leaders
- Kaizen – Continuous Improvement
- Solutions Focus
- Strengths based management and development

Who am I?

# OneWorld Consulting Services

- **Retained Executive Search**
- **Leadership & Development**
  - Executive Coaching
  - Mentoring Programs
  - Leadership Team Development & Facilitation
  - Coaching Skills Programmes
- **Career Transition**
  - Onboarding Coaching
  - Career Coaching
  - Outplacement
- **People Consulting**
  - Salary Benchmark Surveys, Talent Surveys
  - Management Audits / Assessments
  - Cross-cultural Coaching / Training

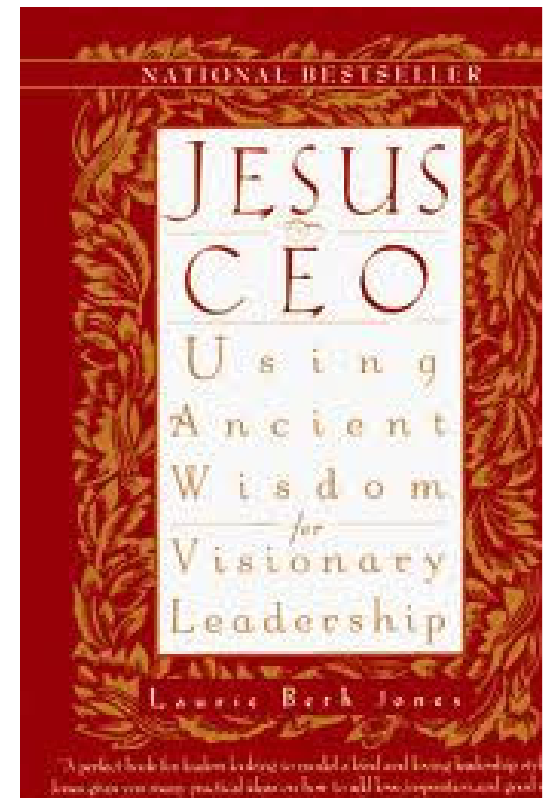
# Some of our clients



# The Leadership Industry is in crisis

- Not clear agreement on what leadership is
- Scandals in leadership over recent years
- “Charismatic” leaders – globally and in Turkey
- Is leadership an art or a science?
- Leading like others –  
Jack Welch, Richard Branson,  
sports people,  
religious figures!

Doesn't work... fake and you can't keep it up



# Leadership

- Leadership is an art.
- The context or situation is key.
- Leadership is different in different sectors.
- Effective leaders are very different from each other.
- There are no rules of leadership that apply to all cases.
- Except one...



**“Be yourself – more - with skill”**

Robert Goffee & Gareth Jones

[www.whysouldanyonebeledbyyou.com](http://www.whysouldanyonebeledbyyou.com)

# Different views of Authentic Leadership

- Warren Bennis, Bill George – 5 criteria for authentic leaders –
  - a clear purpose
  - strong values
  - leading with heart (demonstrating passion)
  - engaging in effective relationships
  - demonstrating self discipline
- For Bennis and George, ‘authentic’ = ‘good’.
- I think ‘authentic’ = ‘true to yourself’ – not about good or bad ethics.

# Goffee & Jones on Authentic Leadership

- **“Why should anyone be led by you?”**
- Great managers and leaders are authentic. Welch, Branson, Kent,...
- **“Be yourself, more, with skill”**
- The skill is choosing what to share about yourself, and how. Is not just do and say what you want all the time.
- **“Managed authenticity”**
- **To be yourself you have to know yourself first.**

# Authentic Leadership

## Get to know yourself and your origins better by:

- **Exploring your autobiography.** Familiarize yourself with your identity anchors – the people, places, and events that shaped you. Share these discoveries with others who have had similar experiences.
- **Avoiding comfort zones. Step out of your routines,** seek new adventures, and take some risks.
- **Getting honest feedback. Ask for 360-degree feedback** from close colleagues, friends, family, and so on.

(From Goffee & Jones, *Authenticity*, Harvard Business Review, December 2005)

# Authentic Leadership

## Get to know others better by:

- **Building a rich picture of your environment.** Don't view others as one-dimensional; find out about people's backgrounds, biographies, families, and obsessions.
- **Removing barriers between yourself and others. Selectively** show a weakness or vulnerability that reveals your approachability to your direct reports, assistants, colleagues and so on. Share your mistakes.
- **Empathizing passionately with your people. Care deeply** about the work your people do.
- **Letting others know what's unique (and authentic) about them.** Give people feedback that acknowledges and validates their origins.

# Authentic Leadership

- **Leadership is a relationship.** Simplest definition of a ‘leader’ – someone who has followers.
- **You don’t decide if you are authentic or not, others do.**
- **Being authentic is about meaning.** Look for meaning for yourself and others. **A key role of leaders is as meaning-makers**
- Look for **‘something bigger’**. What is the **purpose** of what you and your organisation are doing?
- **Start with ‘why?’** – Simon Sinek

TED Talk <http://www.startwithwhy.com/>

Changing approaches to  
management –

from Kaizen to Solutions and  
Strengths

# Continuous Improvement Process

- Kaizen (the translation of kai (“change”) zen (“good”) is “improvement”). This method became famous by the book of Masaaki Imai *Kaizen: The Key to Japan's Competitive Success*.
- The core principle of Continuous Improvement Process (CIP) is the (self) reflection of processes. (Feedback)
- The purpose of CIP is the **identification, reduction, and elimination of suboptimal processes**. (Efficiency)
- The emphasis of CIP is on incremental, continuous steps rather than giant leaps. (Evolution)



# Classic 'engineering' approach

- Identify what is not working – weaknesses and problems (root cause)
- What is the least efficient part of the process?
- What's the bottleneck?
- What's the weakest link?
- Remove it, and you will improve performance.
- This works brilliantly – production lines, machinery, etc.
- What about when trying to improve people and organisations?

Instead of focusing on Problems,  
focus on Solutions and Strengths

*The Solutions Focus Approach*

# Why Solutions Focus?

- What you focus on is what you get
- People are experts on their life/work
- Future talk is hopeful – detailed future talk is more helpful and useful
- Find out what has worked already – amplify this
- Find out when the problem didn't happen
- Start with a small change

Berg IK & Szabó P 2005 *Brief coaching for lasting solutions*. Norton, New York

# Solutions Focus approach

- Change a negative into a positive possibility
- Clarify what a solution would look like.
- How will you know that... ?
- What's the first small change... ?
- On a scale of 0-10 where are you now?
- What have you done already?
- What is working well now?

Together with Solutions, focus on  
Strengths

# Why focus on strengths?

It is all about performance-

It doesn't work to ask people to be something they're not,

instead ask them to do more of what they do best- naturally.

# Reflection

- In the past 6 months to 1 year, when were the times that you had a superior performance?
- Which of your strengths played a part in these instances?
- How far back can you trace these strengths?
- Do you have any memories of your strengths acting itself out as a talent or a strength?
- Currently, where and how do you use these strengths?

# Try strengths based development dialogue

- When have you been at your best in the last year?
- What strengths did you use when you were at your best?
- How are you going to build on your strengths in the coming year?
- What strengths do you need to develop further?
- What will you be doing when you are at your best next year?
- *How can I support you to be at your best?*



# Evidence supports strengths focus

- Many pieces of research suggest focusing on strengths improves retention, engagement and performance.
- Gallup research results -
  - Focus on strengths increases engagement by **33 %**
  - Feedback on strengths increased the performance of sales representatives by **11 %**.

# In summary

- Learn from Kaizen, but for people and teams focus on **solutions** and **strengths**.
- Look for what's working and do more of it
- Look at what you are good at, and do more of it, as well as fixing critical weaknesses. Get tough **feedback** and act on it.
- Help your teams identify and develop their strengths.
- Raise your **self awareness**, what makes you who you are?
- Share more of yourself with your organisation. Let them know who you really are.
- Or, in a one sentence summary.....

Be yourself – more - with skill

# Thank You

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