Leadership By Design

A library of 30 modules designed to develop greater intellectual and social agility in leaders

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Leadership Development for 2015 and Beyond

The Leadership By Design Library encompasses four distinct leadership styles which emerged during our round of interviews between February and May 2015 with 23 business leaders and senior HR/L&D professionals based in Europe, the Americas and Asia.

We asked: "What is needed for leadership development for 2015 and beyond?"

Agile Leadership: Adaptable and Entrepreneurial

In order to better deal with uncertainty and complexity, leaders need to become more agile intellectually (able to think and draw conclusions quickly) and socially (able to connect with others easily). They need to be able to see opportunities where there were none before, resolve dilemmas through a dynamic and non-linear process that emphasises 'both/and' rather than 'either/or', to think the unthinkable, and to manage ambiguity through seeing the organisation from a holistic point of view, where everyone is interconnected and interdependent.

Horizontal Leadership: Control versus Autonomy

In today's heavily regulated environment of corporate governance and compliance, leaders need to balance monitoring performance with giving people the freedom to flourish. Making the shift from vertical leadership (hierarchy, command and control) to horizontal leadership (inclusive, participative, trust-based) will not only increase engagement and commitment from employees at all levels, it is particularly important for the retention of new generations as well as for global leaders who need to manage performance virtually.

Relationship-oriented Leadership: Meaningful and Quality Interactions

Due to the pace of change, leaders are struggling to make time for deeper dialogue, emotional connections, and meaningful and quality interactions. But in order to achieve high performance and get things done, it's about focusing equally on the task and the relationship. This also holds true when working in a matrix and needing to influence from a position of trust and empathy.

Authentic Leadership: Core Purpose

Leaders need to slow down and reflect on how their individual purpose links to their job, their team and the organisation, before being able to transform this reflection into making themselves and their teams the best they can be. Through greater self-awareness, leaders can learn to be coherent between what they think and do, and to not be overwhelmed with information which can easily sidetrack them. Focus on the goal and reject any unnecessary noise.

The interview data suggest that there isn't only one style of leadership that by definition makes a good leader. Leaders need to be able to apply each of the four styles and change according to circumstances and context.

For a free copy of all 30+ original interview comments, please email us at lilian.eilers@theblueocean-company.com.

A New Approach to Leadership Development

Each of the Leadership By Design modules incorporates five principles identified by The Blue Ocean Company. These principles reflect a radical shift away from traditional leadership development approaches which are no longer effective. They meet the needs of today's leaders who demand clearer links between learning and strategy, new inspiration and faster results:

Start at the root
Replace limiting beliefs with empowering ones before introducing new skills and behaviours.

Make it real and relevant
Work on actioning participants' real-world challenges and solving business issues.

Expand on existing strengths
Tap into the 'wisdom in the room' and put people in the driver's seat. Have them learn from each other.

Leave traditional thinking behind
Offer non-traditional, unorthodox sources as new fountains of inspiration.

Appeal to the whole person
Create a holistic experience that embraces head and heart.

Maximising Learning Transfer - Guided Application

Guided application activities outside the classroom environment are the most critical -- and often the most neglected -- factors for successful learning transfer. We often expect participants to leave the classroom and go straight into independent application, but this is a myth.

Levels of Mastery
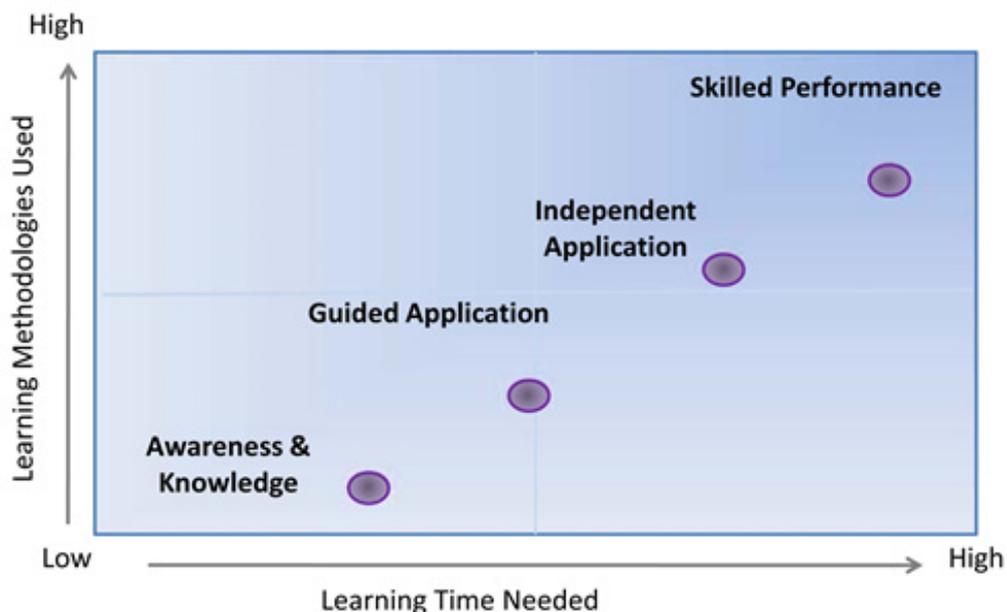
Source: Center for Creative Leadership

We recommend that you add any or all of the following Guided Application Activities to your initiative in order to maximise learning transfer:

On-the-job Assignments, Simulations & Scenario Practice
Additional experientials pre-and post-modules such as assignments, simulations and scenarios provide participants with a chance to practice skills and test mindsets in a safe but challenging environment that mirrors the real world. Participants learn to anticipate possible future challenges and devise possible solutions for sponsored projects that are strategic for the organisation. These experientials are one of the most potent methods for learning transfer, and can be designed for self-managed peer groups or facilitated by The Blue Ocean Company.

Application Sessions
Each module will result in participants acquiring critical knowledge, building awareness, and learning techniques in order to apply new behaviours to the specific challenges they are facing. However, for changes to become truly ingrained in an individual's performance, Application Sessions are needed. These are post-module phone sessions with the facilitator that provide participants with tactical support towards applying a new behaviour to a current real-life challenge. Application sessions are a key differentiator to creating lasting, substantive behavioural change.

Online Learning Transfer Platform
When launching any leadership development initiative, there are two major challenges: participants applying new behaviours back at work, and doing this in a sustainable way so that the new outcomes they achieve actually impact performance -- their own and their organisation's. Our recommended web-based platform extends the learning over time with pre- and post-assignments, and supports the involvement of the participants' managers. It provides a clear roadmap towards reaching the desired leadership behaviours, makes progress visible and clearly demonstrates ROI.

Online Leadership Forums
Increase participant ownership for personal development and growth by giving them ample opportunities to network with each other virtually -- an important skill for any leader. Organise online peer discussion forums after every face-to-face event whereby the participants choose the topic and then participate in a lively, interactive session led by certified virtual facilitators from The Blue Ocean Company. Technology platforms offered include Webex, Adobe Connect and GoToMeeting.

Leadership By Design: The Library

With Leadership By Design, you can easily enhance your current development initiatives or create a brand new development track and target those competencies that will make a significant difference to performance in today's work environment.

Choose from 30 different one- or two-day modules, each of them newly designed or reframed to meet the needs of today's leaders. Mix and match modules according to the learning objectives of your selected audience, ensuring sure that the modules are spread out over six months or longer in order to provide opportunities for repeated practice.

For clarity and organisation, the modules have been grouped into three categories: Leading Self, Leading Others, and Leading The Organisation. We highly recommend that any initiative you launch will need to include at least one module from the Leading Self category. Each module can be fully tailored to your specific requirements.

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LEADING SELF

Greater awareness of personal strengths, values and core purpose will provide leaders with the foundation from which they can be agile and adaptable, and manage whatever comes their way

Key Leadership Competencies:
- Developing Agility and Adaptability
- Displaying Drive and Purpose
- Seeking New Perspectives

Mental Toughness: Learning How To Stay Resilient and Resourceful
1.1 (Developing Agility and Adaptability)

Sometimes leaders may feel overwhelmed by things that are out of their control such as the economic situation, their corporate culture, or the speed at which their competitors are invading their market share. By managing their motivation and mindset, leaders can stay resilient and resourceful, and become the drivers of a distinct performance environment that will enable the organisation to adapt, innovate and ultimately win competitive advantage.

- Become conscious of and tap into your personal 'resourceful state' in order to deal with the complexities of modern business more effectively
- Learn how to access self-belief when the pressure is on and pro-actively manage memory, past experiences and mental self-talk
- Discover how to influence the outcome of most events by managing your own emotional response and respond quickly to change

Constructive Mindset
1.2 (Developing Agility and Adaptability)

Today we are facing more volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity than ever before. Our strategic challenge as leaders is how to keep increasing motivation and engagement within our organisations. We believe that a constructive mindset is needed in order to be able to navigate through all of these challenges successfully.

- Change your emotional state of mind so that it can remain positive in any situation
- Sustain your attention and energy on the most important activities in order to achieve results in a more creative and impactful way
- Apply practical and easy-to-use tools to implement a constructive mindset in your own team and organisation

Personal Power and Presence: Inspiring Trust & Commitment
1.3 (Displaying Drive and Purpose)

Leadership is about creating followership - and a key component of this is creating trust. Leaders who are seen to be trustworthy exhibit behaviours that are congruent to their deeply held beliefs and values. However, we live in a VUCA world (Volatile, Unpredictable, Complex and Ambiguous) and in an attempt to live up to organisational norms and expectations, leaders may feel that sometimes their behaviours appear to be at odds with their own values.

- Gain an opportunity to reconnect with your 'true authentic self': understand who you truly are, what elements of you are at your core and how those elements show up in your leadership
- Discover how to stay true to your values and still be able to adapt your behaviours as needed depending on what you want to achieve
- When creating followership, find out which elements of you (values, beliefs, emotions) are negotiable versus non-negotiable

Reframing: Turning Obstacles into Levers for Success
1.4 (Seeks New Perspectives)

When facing conflict or obstacles, leaders typically tend to narrow their focus and go into "survival-mode" behaviour. Instead, they need to learn to stay open, curious, to see opportunities and solutions where there were none before and to communicate this effectively with their teams.

- Discover how you can reframe your current assumptions and inferences of 'how things are done' (beliefs based on the past) that may be hindering your ability to turn obstacles into opportunities
- Learn how to communicate with others when different opinions make it difficult to find a solution
- Make a mindset shift from problem analysis towards a solution-focused approach that will help release new ideas and energy to take action

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LEADING OTHERS

Today's leaders must work collaboratively and be excellent communicators to thrive in a complex environment.

Key Leadership Competencies:
- Participative Management
- Building and Maintaining Relationships
- Influencing Others
- Leveraging Diversity and Difference
- Coping with Pressure and Adversity
- Managing Effective Teams and Workgroups
- Managing and Leading Projects

Moving From Compliance to Commitment
2.1 (Participative Management)

Due to the pace of change, leaders often struggle to make time for deeper dialogue, emotional connections, and meaningful and quality interactions. But in order to achieve high performance, leaders need to be able to engage and communicate with others using their heart, head and guts.

- Identify the attributes and characteristics of top performers and what these mean for your own preferred style of communication
- Discover your personal persuasion style and the impact you have on others
- Practice flexing your communication and persuasion style to be more effective with different stakeholders in the midst of an uncertain and fast-moving environment

Inspiring High Performance: Having the Right Conversations
2.2 (Participative Management)

The majority of leadership and management issues are people issues. Many leaders feel they are not getting the highest level of performance from their followers. Leaders feel reasonably comfortable having conversations about underperformance (not achieving the task), but are less comfortable about addressing poor attitude and behaviours (how they are working with others to achieve the task).

- Learn how to step up and have the robust conversations with followers that are an essential part of a leader's responsibilities
- Be equipped with the tools and mindset to drive higher levels of performance from your followers through honest and respectful performance conversations
- Be able to coach others in how a seemingly unattainable task can be accomplished through applying an unusual experiential tool

Emotional Intelligence: Stronger Relationships and Greater Engagement
2.3 (Building and Maintaining Relationships)

If you have high emotional intelligence, then you are able to recognise your own emotional state and the emotional states of others, and engage with people in a way that draws them to you. You can use this understanding of emotions to relate better to other people, form healthier relationships, achieve greater success at work, and lead a more fulfilling life.

- Identify the 3 to 5 personal changes you can make that will have an immediate impact on your professional relationships
- Understand how to manage emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathise with others, overcome challenges, and defuse conflict
- Explore the topic of motivation for you and others and how you might better understand how to influence and motivate outcomes and performance

Managing Upwards
2.4 (Building and Maintaining Relationships)

Leaders have many opportunities to develop their skills with direct reports, but what about needing to engage with the people above them? Leaders can develop new communication and inquiry skills and become more confident and skilled in building and managing collaborative relationships at higher levels.

- Understand the power of persuasion and apply simple techniques to engage more easily at the executive agenda
- Have a good understanding of your senior leadership team and of yourself, your strengths, weaknesses, work styles, goals and pressures
- Reflect upon your personal brand and reputation and learn tips and habits for improved senior management relationships

Fundamentals of Influencing
2.5 (Influencing Others)

Influencing is often cited as the number one competency for leaders. Knowing how to persuade others is key to getting things done in situations where positional power or authority is obsolete. Becoming skilled in recognising the different motivation and persuasion patterns in themselves and others will help leaders to gain support for their own projects and ideas.

- Learn how to develop your key messages, build relationships and adapt your communication style to influence others
- Be more confident and better equipped to influence business decisions through applying a deeper understanding of your own and others' personal motivators
- Reflect on how you can expand your sphere of influence and build new relationships when back at work

Positive Impact: Getting to Ten
2.6 (Influencing Others)

The ability to harness visible attributes (voice, body language, style) to affect a team or group can make a huge impact in a leader's effectiveness. Whatever the leader wants or needs to do – be it changing someone else's view, stimulating them, challenging or provoking them, inspiring or motivating them - developing these visible attributes ensures that leaders can deliver their messages with the right level of impact.

- Adapt how you come across to others to get buy-in to your ideas and strategies
- Create a positive impact and impression with clients, colleagues and your team
- Raise your profile when needed and make the most of the opportunities available to you

Leveraging Diversity for Top Performance
2.7 (Leveraging Diversity and Difference)

We all strive towards being more skilled in working and collaborating together, but often our inability to recognise different personality types and how to deal with them effectively form a barrier to success. When we become more skilled, we can begin to leverage diversity in our teams or workgroups, break down silos and build trust.

• Gain a deeper understanding of your own personality type and acceptance of other types in a fun, memorable and non-threatening way using the Persona Method
• Practice applying strategies for dealing with potentially sensitive situations when encountering personality types different from your own
• Build stronger relationships with the people you work with

Diversity Reloaded: Working Across Boundaries
2.8 (Leveraging Diversity and Difference)

Working in a diverse environment can be like Mission Impossible: always in danger of making a wrong move. So what does it take to not only be more aware, but also to shape your and others' performance in such a setting?

• Experience the difference when working with an open mind and an attitude of inquiry
• Learn about your own prejudices around stereotypes regarding not only national culture and gender, but also corporate functions, departments, external partners, etc
• Reach out and create new working relationships beyond all differences

Using Aikido to Transform Stress into Energy

2.9 (Coping with Pressure and Adversity)

We live in hectic times -- changes, crises, reorganisations -- which often make people feel stressed. Dealing with stress in real-time is a key leadership competency. Instead of 'freezing' under pressure, leaders need to be able to stay open to what's happening around them, help their direct reports and teams do the same, and keep engagement and productivity high.

• Using the Japanese martial arts Aikido, experience alternative ways of dealing with stressful situations whereby you make the shift from feeling drained of energy to feeling full of energy
• Learn to remain open and approachable so that you can support people who may be struggling
• Become more confident and skilled in making the right decisions when under pressure

Dealing with Difficult Situations
2.10 (Coping with Pressure and Adversity)

In any organisation or department, leaders may find that they have to deal with difficult situations, people or behaviours which can be extremely challenging. There is a well known expression: "Never argue with an angry man (or woman)." So what exactly should leaders do? Is confrontation the right option? And what is the difference between aggressive, assertive and passive responses?

• Recognise how to read potential conflict situations by understanding the basic psychology behind behaviours and reactions
• Know how to manage and control your own responses to those around you
• Be able to resolve conflict situations with confidence, diplomacy and respectful consideration for all those involved

Teamscan: Identifying Team Performance Factors
2.11 (Managing Effective Teams and Workgroups)

Team performance depends on many factors and aspects. It is therefore critical to identify what is working well and not so well, so that improvements can be targeted and implemented.

• Get clear feedback on how your team members currently see the functioning of the team by completing an online TeamScan pre-module
• Identify and experience first-hand which factors are important for good team work
• Return to the workplace with a simple and clear action plan to strengthen your team

Team Alchemy: Developing Results-Oriented Teams
2.12 (Managing Effective Teams and Workgroups)

Teams are more complex, more diverse and more demanding to lead and manage than ever before. They are the link between individual and organisational performance.

• Explore a 21st century team performance framework that combines outstanding results, synergistic relationships and deep fulfillment from working and learning together
• Understand the importance of involving external stakeholders to measure true team performance
• Identify the interdependencies between teams and plan for collaboration across teams

Effective Project Leadership & Risk Management
2.13 (Managing and Leading Projects)

Leading teams is one thing. Leading project teams, especially ones that are external to the organisation, is quite another. This involves being skilled in managing stakeholders without having any positional authority, taking responsibility when things don't go right, and tracking and reporting progress to senior managers. Leaders need to be savvy about minimising unacceptable risks by clarifying and managing outcomes, identifying potential issues in a timely manner, and assessing the vulnerability of the project to specific threats.

• Manage performance effectively with external stakeholders by developing a shared vision, clarifying expected outcomes, respecting diverse capabilities and building trust through an open communications tool
• Learn how to build trusting relationships with stakeholders with whom you have no authority, flex and focus on outcomes instead of process
• Build a common understanding of risk management with external stakeholders and use collaboration to achieve the performance you seek

LEADING THE ORGANISATION

Today's leaders must have the foresight to see where they are going, but must also remain flexible about how to get there. They need to hone their strategic, complex critical-thinking skills, and be knowledgeable about their organisation beyond their function.

Key Leadership Competencies:
• Leading in Times of Change
• Developing Future Leaders
• Being Resourceful & Innovative
• Managing Organisational Politics & Influencing Others
• Negotiating
• Business Ethics and Integrity
• Health and Well-being at Work
• Financial Management
• Customer Excellence

Leading Change for High Performance Results
3.1 (Leading in Times of Change)

21st century business results are achieved by organisations that continually change, adapt and review and so the only constant is change. Leaders must understand how to plan for change, lead change, push for change and pull for change. They must be savvy about the principles to and the success factors of managing change projects.

• Learn to systematically prepare, initiate, implement and anchor change initiatives
• Be capable of anticipating the emotional impact of change and handling the reactions of the people concerned
• Become acquainted with a toolbox of practical methods that can directly be applied in your own area of responsibility

Leading in a Complex Organisation
3.2 (Leading in Times of Change)

Not only is our economic and societal fabric so complex that we may feel overwhelmed by the magnitude of unpredictability, also modern organisations with their global reach create a working environment that is difficult to master. Understanding the dynamics of the complex system -- especially a matrix organisation -- and the need to contain ambiguity and uncertainty enables leaders to lead in a way that will produce greater followership, a more resilient organisation and better long-term results.

• Distinguish the difference between complicated problems and complex systems, and understand why classic analysis and problem-solving are inappropriate tools for leading complex organisations
• Gain greater awareness of your own behaviour around leading in uncertainty and complexity and identify your personal inventory of behaviours and attitudes that will support you in shaping an atmosphere of followership
• Examined the strongholds of resilience in times of change inside your organisation, and identify measures to improve your response to unforeseeable challenges

Increasing Employee Engagement & Implementation of Change
3.3 (Leading in Times of Change)

How can leaders increase employees' understanding and acceptance of change, and shorten the time for employees to implement that change? One way is to develop a powerful facilitative approach that encourages maximum involvement from everyone, whereby the vision of the future is created using the 'the wisdom of the crowd'.

- Learn how to establish employee engagement as a journey that involves all relevant stakeholders
- Because everyone is involved, the journey itself creates the commitment for change
- Learn how to inspire employees work together to take ownership, leading to a shared and supported vision

Modern Mentoring: A Learning Alliance
3.4 (Developing Future Leaders)

In our knowledge driven society, every employee possesses a unique set of knowledge and skills that is needed in order to create results for their department and for the organisation as a whole. To ensure that the organisation is able to perform today and in the future, leaders need to be able to develop the talent of each individual in the organisation.

- Learn about the 10 different mentor roles and how you can use them to maximise the impact of your mentoring conversations
- Develop the skills for having effective mentoring conversations using a practical tool, and support the learning processes for employees/talents from other parts of the organisation
- Understand how to make the mentor/mentee relationship a two-way street, in which not only the mentee, but also you the mentor, benefit from the experience

Solution-focused Decision-making
3.5 (Being Resourceful & Innovative)

Most of us are capable of being more solution-focused and innovative than we think. But many of us have been taught to be cautious, afraid to make mistakes. Leaders and their teams need to rekindle their ability to see opportunities where there were none before.

- Make the shift from problem analysis to a solution-focused, strength-based approach that will help release new ideas and the energy to take action
- Resolve dilemmas through a dynamic and non-linear process of "both/and"
- Tap into your own and your team's solution-focus potential and co-create a new path

Making the Invisible Visible: Uncovering Patterns of Unknown Market Driving Forces
3.6 (Being Resourceful & Innovative)

Organisations who make serious efforts to stay close to the market sometimes end up with disappointing results, such as stagnating or even decreasing market shares. It can be puzzling when, despite robust research and lots of customer data, there are no satisfactory answers about the reasons why this is happening, nor any clear insights into the right strategic action to take.

- Discover unconscious forces influencing your customers' buying decisions through an innovative tool called Space-Balance Analysis that operates with implicit knowledge and intuitive perception
- Gain a deeper understanding of the market dynamics which your product is part of
- Experience a structured method of discovery and analysis that will help you to redefine your product innovation strategy

Navigating the Organisation: Advanced Influencing Skills
3.7 (Managing Organisational Politics and Influencing Others)

The flattening of the organisational structure means that the old rules of power and influence -- based on status and hierarchy - have changed. We increasingly find ourselves in situations where we need to be able to influence without authority.

• Build relationships based on trust rather than on status to get things done
• Discover your personal influencing style so that you can play to your strengths
• Learn how to recognise and successfully navigate the most common political games and resistance strategies, while retaining your integrity

Targeted Communication: Getting Buy-In for Your Proposals
3.8 (Influencing Others)

Leaders need to be skilled in presenting and selling their message, both internally and externally, and especially upwards, in a way that engages the audience and achieves their goals through a precise choice of words, stories and arguments used to "win" the audience's approval and acceptance.

• Learn how to understand, manage and control the audience
• Create a clearer, more effective message for any audience using PACCOPEP®, a presentation compilation method which has been tried and tested successfully around the world
• Deliver complex arguments with simplicity and influence, and gain support and buy-in for your proposals

Negotiating Around Obstacles Successfully
3.9 (Negotiating)

In today's tough markets, leaders need to be highly skilled negotiators in order to handle difficult people, situations and deadlocks. They need to understand how to control the three key variables in negotiations -- power, information and time -- and manage complex and challenging negotiations with confidence.

• Apply a Six Step Strategy to break down barriers in any negotiation
• Recognise ploys, threats and dambusting and know how to counter them effectively
• Discover key interests and drivers in a negotiation in order to move away from positional bargaining

Compliance & Ethics: Driving Business Performance
3.10 (Business Ethics and Integrity)

Compliance is frequently seen as a burden on business. However, generating economic value and leading a business in an ethical and sustainable way are compatible and possible. Through a better understanding of how compliance and ethics drive better business performance, leaders can promote transparency and discussion about these topics, ultimately boosting engagement and high performance in the organisation.

• See the impact of your own operational compliance and ethics decisions on the business in real time using an innovative business simulation
• Practice discussing challenging compliance and ethics topics so that you can do the same back at work
• Be better prepared to deal with business dilemmas in your own organisation

Creating a Healthy Organisation
3.11 (Health and Well-being at Work)

A healthy life is very much in vogue today for individuals -- but what about shaping a work environment that supports health? And what is the leader's responsibility in creating and maintaining the well-being of employees? Based on Aaron Antonovsky's Salutogenis, leaders will learn about attitudes such as coherence and meaningfulness that go far beyond classic stress management.

- Understand that health is a continuum; create your personal inventory to support your well-being
- Strengthen your individual sense of coherence and your ability to cope, and understand how these contribute to the well-being of others
- Explore ways in which you can create and maintain a work environment that promotes Salutogenis across all levels in the organisation

Red Thread Finance: Better Business Plans and Results
3.12 (Financial Management)

An understanding and command of financial numbers is fundamental to being an effective leader in today's environment of rapid change and complexity. Every non-financial leader needs to "talk finance" with conviction to better plan and influence business results. One of the most neglected leadership competencies today, it is critical to a company's profitability and financial health.

- Understand how your actions impact the bottom line: what are the "red threads" between strategic and operating priorities, financial measures of performance, and creation of value added
- Know how your decisions can make or break your profit and cash flow
- Identify financial risks and apply practical tools and techniques to drive greater financial results

Customer Excellence
3.13 (Ensuring Customer Satisfaction)

Customer satisfaction, both internally and externally, is a key performance indicator in business. However, staying close to customers and in touch with what is valuable to them is an ongoing activity -- and when things don't always go as well as they should, leaders can easily become drawn to the negative. In fact, research in neuroscience shows that we are all hard wired to register and remember negative events more quickly and deeply than positive ones.

- Using a strengths-based approach, change your focus from "what's wrong here, what needs to be fixed" to "what is working well "
- Find ways to replicate "what is working well" in order to meet and surpass customer expectations
- Feel more confident and resilient to face unpredictable changes and remain creative and innovative

For more information or tips on how to mix, match and adapt modules to address your specific development objectives, please contact Lilian Eilers, Managing Director, The Blue Ocean Company at +32 (0)476 552 108 or email lilian.eilers@theblueoceancompany.com