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### 1. SAVE nearly £1,000 if you book two people onto a Thinking Styles Accreditation with The Cognitive Fitness Consultancy during 2009.

This is a fantastic 2 for 1 deal: instead of the usual £950 per person we are offering two places booked at the same time for only £900\*.

In addition, if you then buy 5 Thinking Styles reports in advance we will give you another 5 FREE! Saving you £225!

If you or your organisation would like to take advantage of this great opportunity please call Fiona or Julia on 01476 861010 or e-mail us at [info@cognitivefitness.co.uk](mailto:info@cognitivefitness.co.uk) for more details.

*\* plus VAT and excluding all accommodation and extra expenses, subject to conditions*

### 2. Leadership: Is it Rocket Science?

Most, if not all of us often look for leadership role models in our own lives for guidance on our own leadership style, over time picking up examples of both good and bad leadership from managers, colleagues, our friends and even our parents. Researchers and leadership development consultants are always looking for the Holy Grail of leadership... be it Transformational leadership, Charismatic leadership, Distributed leadership, or Followership, to name but a few, and it can be difficult to tell these different leadership styles apart.

But how difficult is leadership? Is it possible, or even desirable, to reduce the theory of leadership down to a few simple concepts?

Having recently attended more than one presentation and read a number of very complex reports on the models and theories of leadership, Julia has decided to simplify the principles of Leadership for us. Well done Julia!

'So here are some of the key factors that have been recently identified as being critical in a successful leader. Reed Consulting, in their report 21st Century Leadership: Critical Success Factors, published in conjunction with the Institute of Directors, suggest that leaders need to provide clear vision and direction. They also suggest that leaders need to be able to motivate and inspire their staff and demonstrate high interpersonal and communication skills.

The McKinsey Quarterly 2008 Centred Leadership: How Talented Women Thrive stresses the value of leaders doing what they love, actively managing their personal energy and working within strong collaborative networks. A recent presentation I attended at the London Business Forum emphasised the need for leaders to focus on their strengths and their core values.

But I would argue that it can be even simpler than that. Tom Peters says:

*"Keep it simple, focus on getting the basics right and be transparent."*

This advice is all very well, but actually I need something a little more specific than that. So, what do great leaders do? Put simply, they:

- Get out and meet people: their staff, their customers - on a frequent basis.
- Believe that their people and their customers are the most important asset the business or organisation has and they act on that belief at all times.
- They make sure that they see critical actions through and actually get the job done!

If you are passionate about what you do, you will transmit that passion to your staff and also, equally importantly, to your customers. If you respect what others think, by asking them what in fact they do think about a particular project or issue and really listen to



their response they will engage with your vision. If you focus on using your strengths and the strengths of others, your team will perform and gladly. Focusing on the desires of your people and customers means needing to keep your ego in check, remaining humble and accepting that there is always something new to learn.

Of course, nothing is ever quite that simple; all leaders have to struggle with competing requirements, ethical dilemmas and difficult people. But if, every so often, we can remind ourselves that despite all the complexities of the situations we find ourselves in, leadership doesn't have to be complicated, maybe we can reduce one headache in our busy lives'.

### 3. Preliminary results from the ALQ

We asked 150 business leaders who were members of the Institute of Directors or the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development questions about their self-awareness and business ethics. 86% of leaders considered themselves to be ethical in business and thought that their followers trusted them. And yet 92% of them agreed that if someone got in their way that they would find a way around them! How ethical is that we wonder?

### 4. Are Leaders deluding themselves?

Yes of course they are! Do business leaders honestly think that their followers don't know that they will be circumvented if they are difficult or don't agree with their leader's opinions or actions? Our preliminary results also suggest that followers get to know their leaders very well, very quickly! Therefore leaders need to be consistent over time and across diverse circumstances if they are truly to be trusted by those people who work with them and for them.

Invitation - if you would like to complete the ALQ 360 4 Business as part of our data collection & piloting for Fiona's PhD research, please contact us. You should have a team working for you and also be able to include other colleagues and your boss as part of your rater group. Participation is free of charge.

### 5. FREE Cognitive Fitness Survey

Clients are finding that our FREE Cognitive Fitness Survey [www.cognitivefitness.co.uk](http://www.cognitivefitness.co.uk) is giving them and their clients great opportunities to learn about their awareness of different thinking styles and the benefits of developing mental flexibility, before moving on to Thinking Styles itself.

If you haven't yet used it yourself or with your clients or staff, visit our web site now. The survey only takes 10 minutes to complete and you will receive your personal pdf report immediately.

For more information call Programme Director, Fiona Beddoes-Jones on 01476 861010.