



We are now taking bookings for the conference and places are strictly limited, so if you would like to come, please contact us via email or call Julia on 07713 621672 to pre-register and reserve your place.

For more about the conference visit <http://authenticleadershipconference2011.wordpress.com>

or see the conference flyer at:

http://www.cognitivefitness.co.uk/courage_to_lead.pdf

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1 Authentic Leadership Conference: The Courage to Lead, London 14th September 2011

You may have noticed that we've changed the main title of our September Leadership Conference! We've done this as a direct result of the work that Fiona has been doing with the RAF, a major UK bank and Airbus (*see below*).

Courage from old French cuer meaning heart

- 1 *The quality of mind and spirit that enables a person to face danger with bravery.*
- 2 *(obsolete) The heart as the source of emotion. Compassion, empathy.*
- 3 *Acting in accordance with one's beliefs and values in the face of criticism or danger.*

As you read the definitions above you will notice that having courage encompasses things such as physical and moral bravery, but it also includes the heart as the source of emotion. "Have a heart guv'nor" isn't the kind of thing that we hear very often nowadays, however empathy and compassion are pro-social values which sit at the very heart of courage and also at the heart of Authentic Leadership.

To learn more about Authentic Leadership and having 'The Courage to Lead' in today's complex business and military environments, join us in London in September.

2 Authentic Leadership Development: The Airbus Experience

Fiona has recently been working in Toulouse for Airbus (where they make the A380, pictured left) delivering a series of Authentic Leadership Development workshops. The theme that has emerged from these, and other client workshops, is that the critical requirement for Authentic Leaders is having the courage to really lead.

There is a difference between leading and really leading? One is more passive and the other more pro-active. Sticking your head above the parapet may mean that someone will try to shoot you down. And it takes courage to be a voice of dissent in an organisation, with all the associated risks. This theme emerged from an internal dilemma that was shared across the entire middle management structure and brought up by those on the workshop. For them, the value lay in the debate, and the multiple perspectives that everyone could bring to the situation, giving them a shared appreciation that they were all feeling the same way and therefore less isolated.

The main concern was a feeling of lack of fairness, leading to potentially divisive behaviour, which in turn leads to low morale within teams and lack of motivation. So the managers took three key actions:

- 1 **Find the courage to say 'no' to the divisive action.**
- 2 **Find another way to reach a similar outcome that was acceptable to the senior management.**
- 3 **Engage the whole team in making the decision in a transparent way.**

So, the lesson that the Airbus team drew was: 'If you need to take a stand, draw courage from others, tell yourself that there is always another way and that this way may well ultimately have unforeseen beneficial consequences.'



The best Christmas present Julia received this year was a Kindle (other e-book readers are available...), which allows her to switch from classics to crime at a click, whilst avoiding Ryanair's excess weight charges for carrying over a hundred books with her all times... But some of the most thought-provoking books she has read since Christmas are not available on Kindle and, in fact, relate to her least favourite, or indeed least successful, academic subject of all time: Physics.



Watching the floppy-haired Mancunian, Professor Brian Cox, explaining the Second Law of Thermodynamics and entropy whilst building a Namibian sand castle, definitely did not remind Julia of her schooldays, but it did remind her of a book she had read recently, 'The Watchman's Rattle' by Rebecca Costa.

Rebecca never mentions entropy, but the central tenet of her book, suggesting a link between man's rate of evolutionary change, the modern human condition and the tendency of civilisations to collapse because progress reaches a standstill, describes the law perfectly.

Entropy states that an isolated system, deprived of any help from the outside, is incapable of putting its own affairs in order (think teenage bedrooms...). Disorder creeps up slowly until the situation worsens into total disintegration. Rebecca Costa argues that societies reach their cognitive threshold, where multi-layered problems with too many variables become too complex for humans to think their way out of, leading to inevitable collapse, citing the Mayan civilisation as one example among many.

We see entropic effects all around us at a personal level but there is a school of thought that suggests that human relationships and organisations also conform to the principle of entropy - that is, you need to work at being together as a social unit or relationships and organisations ultimately and inevitably fall apart.



Just as Brian Cox's sandcastle is blown away in the wind unless he maintains it, so our professional relationships need to be continuously re-assessed and worked at, or the natural process of entropy leads to disorder and, ultimately, to chaos. Authentic Leaders understand entropy. This is one of the reasons that they stand out from the crowd and are trusted by others. It is also the reason that people want to be led by them.

The more we understand about people and about Authentic Leadership, the more we are coming to the conclusion that Authentic Leaders really are the future.

If you would like to see Professor Brian Cox explain entropy, follow the link below:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQSoaiubuA0

Have a good Easter!

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