THE CORE COMPONENTS OF ETHICAL AND MEANINGFUL LEADERSHIP! HOW DO WE CULTIVATE SUCH LEADERSHIP?

1. Title Clarification

The title of this paper refers to **ethical** and **meaningful** leadership. '**Ethical**' relates to **credible** and a **moral code of leadership conduct.** Morality is concerned with the right and wrong, the good and the bad of human character and behaviour. **Meaningful leadership** refers to **inspiring empowering** leadership. The 'em' in empowering stands for 'within'. Leadership, therefore, should enable power within. Moral leadership should build credibility.

In essence, then, this presentation is about the core components of credible leadership.

2. Challenges for moral credible leadership – low trust

As a global society, we have a crisis of trust on our hands. Low trust is everywhere. It permeates our society, our government, political parties, health care, churches, leadership and management, relationships, and even individual or self trust.

Some of the key challenges of credible leadership are:
- Lack of integrity – incongruence: a gap between our intent and our behaviour
- Lack of truthfulness – often a lack of courage to be honest
- 'White collar' crime in the form of corruption, bribes and irresponsible management of budgets
- Lack of moral courage to stand up for what is right

Trust statistics

In the **United States**, for example, a 2005 Harris poll revealed that only 22% of those surveyed tend to trust the media, only 8% trust political parties, only 27% trust the government, and only 12% trust big companies, (Covey, 2006). Only 34% of Americans believe that other people can be trusted. In **Africa**, the figure is 18%. Only 31% **South African workers** trust their colleagues (Access Point Survey, 2003). Only 36% of employees believe their leaders act with honesty and integrity. In **South Africa** only 34% employees trust their immediate managers (Access Point Survey, 2003).

Society, organisations and relationships aside, there is the even more fundamental challenge of **self trust**. Often we make commitments to ourselves – such as setting goals or making New Year's resolutions – which we fail to fulfil. As a result, we come to feel that we can't even fully trust ourselves. **Truly, we are in a crisis of trust**. It affects us on all levels – societal, institutional, organisational, relational and personal.

What is the foundation of trust?

The foundation of trust seem to be a consistent behaviour of three **C**'s: **C**haracter (Moral Values), a **C**aring mindset and **C**ompetence as a leader in what we do.
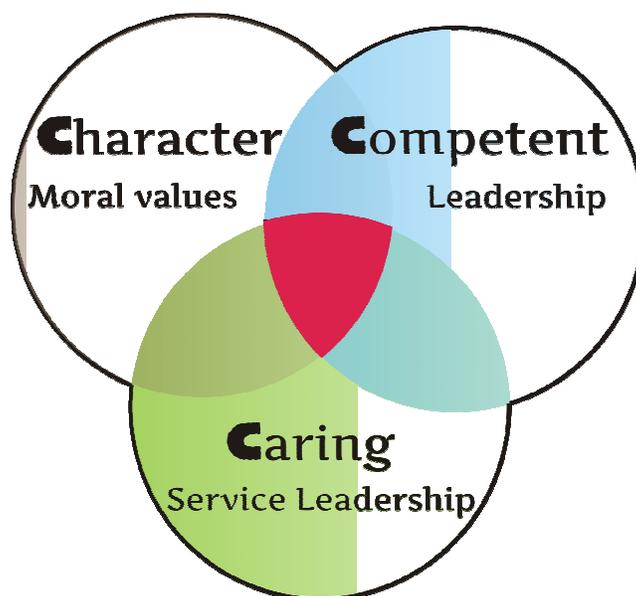
Activity

What do you think are the main moral behaviour challenges in your industry/work?

_____

_____

_____

3. What is good leadership?

We often associate leadership with high-profile leaders characterised by dynamic personalities, who make headlines and become celebrities. However, Jim Collins, author of the book "Good to Great" discovered that the type of leadership required for turning a good company into a great one seem to be **leaders that are humble, quiet, reserved, even shy, respectful, caring and competent in their role**. Such leaders demonstrate an almost paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will and commitment.

Activity

Can you think of great leaders displaying these traits?

_____

_____

_____

Who qualifies as a leader?

- Leadership is not reserved for politicians, executives or managers. **Every person is a leader**, firstly a leader of one's own life, of becoming the best YOU you can be. Secondly of one's relationships and thirdly of one's professional effectiveness.
- Leadership is synonymous with influence. Effective leadership means leaving a **mark**, a **footprint** or a **trail** of contribution, also called a **legacy**.

LEADERSHIP QUALITIES SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Assess the extent to which you possess each leadership characteristic, using the 5-point scale. Circle the appropriate number. Then add up all the circled numbers to get your total.

A. INTRAPERSONAL TRAITS

	Not typical of me				Typical of me
1. Taking responsibility for choices and actions	1	2	3	4	5
2. Lead by example	1	2	3	4	5
3. Walk their talk (integrity)	1	2	3	4	5
4. Credibility and honesty	1	2	3	4	5
5. Live and act inside-out	1	2	3	4	5
6. Demonstrate internal locus of control (emotional stability)	1	2	3	4	5
7. Commitment to goals and code of conduct	1	2	3	4	5
8. Sense of humour	1	2	3	4	5
9. Energetic and enthusiastic	1	2	3	4	5
10. Courage – to stand up for what you believe in	1	2	3	4	5

TOTAL: ☐

B. INTERPERSONAL (RELATIONSHIP) TRAITS

	Not typical of me				Typical of me
11. Caring for others, e.g. team members	1	2	3	4	5
12. Appreciation of others	1	2	3	4	5
13. Ability to connect with others	1	2	3	4	5
14. Effective and open communication style	1	2	3	4	5
15. A helping supportive attitude (service leadership)	1	2	3	4	5
16. Valuing colleagues at work	1	2	3	4	5
17. Respect for others	1	2	3	4	5
18. Ability to recognise and acknowledge good performance	1	2	3	4	5
19. Patience and tolerance	1	2	3	4	5
20. Skilful in collaboration and teamwork	1	2	3	4	5

TOTAL:

C. COMPETENCIES

	Not typical of me				Typical of me
21. Competent and skilful at work	1	2	3	4	5
22. Ability to align work with organisation and team vision and mission	1	2	3	4	5
23. Inner drive to achieve – getting things done	1	2	3	4	5
24. Enable (empower) those around him/her	1	2	3	4	5
25. Flexible and adaptable	1	2	3	4	5
26. Resilience (can bounce back from setbacks)	1	2	3	4	5
27. Creative in problem solving	1	2	3	4	5
28. Inspiring and motivating ability	1	2	3	4	5
29. Ability to take initiative	1	2	3	4	5
30. Ability to lead teams	1	2	3	4	5

TOTAL:

Add the three scores for a grand total:

INTERPRETATION:

130 – 150:   You demonstrate excellent personal traits for effective leadership.

105 – 129:   You demonstrate good personal traits for leadership. You certainly have the potential to be a good team leader.

90 – 104:   You demonstrate fair leadership skills. By addressing those personal traits where lower scores were given, you could develop your leadership competencies.

Below 90:   You have been very honest and critical about your own personal leadership traits. This is an excellent basis from where you can develop your leadership competencies. Remember, *Leaders are made, not born*.

4. What is moral leadership?

The most effective leaders hold to a common set of values and consistently use those values to guide their day-to-day actions. The values business leaders follow are the same set of values that human societies throughout time have believed to be *right*.

The moral value codes of most effective leaders include those below.

Core values of highly effective moral leaders:

A. CHARACTER VALUES
1. **Moral Integrity**: To walk one's talk according to what is normally good. To live inside-out, i.e. to **be** the person one expect others to be.
2. **Humility**: Not to be self-centred.
3. **Honesty**: To tell the truth and to be honourable in one's actions.
4. **Responsibility and Accountability**: To be accountable for one's actions, decisions and behaviour.

B. CARING (RELATIONSHIP) VALUES
1. **Service**: Being helpful to others, to be a servant-leader.
2. **Respect**: Consideration for others and own feelings, possessions, rights, beliefs and customs.
3. **Fairness**: Treating others equally and fair, acting consistently and free from discrimination.
4. **Cooperation**: To work together in order to reach a common goal, for the good of all concerned.
5. **Safety**: To be alert and contribute to the safety and security of self and other people.
6. **The Golden Rule**: To do unto others as you would like them to do unto you.
7. **Courtesy**: To be polite and considerate in one's behaviour.
8. **Loyalty**: To be faithful and devoted to the vision, values and code of conduct of the organisation.
9. **Recognition**: To acknowledge others for quality work or contribution.

C. COMPETENCY VALUES
1. **Achievement**: To give one's best every day in order to reach set goals.
2. **Diligence (Industry)**: To put effort into one's daily tasks.
3. **Punctuality**: To be in time for commitments or appointments.
4. **Excellence**: To strive towards quality and Best Practice in what one does.
5. **To add value, to contribute** to those people you regard as important in your life.

Specific traits and behaviours of moral leaders include the following:
Moral leaders...
- aim to serve
- tend to develop the capacities of others
- demonstrate the responsibility to use their moral intelligence to ensure that the people and groups they lead act consistently with the principles mentioned earlier
- have a highly developed sense of emotional leadership (intelligence) and social skills
- are the conscience, the moral compass of an organisation and the glue that holds it together

Moral leadership...

- is not about rank – any person holding any position can be a moral leader
- is about a deep sense of ethics, being driven by core ideals (such as justice) and are motivated by the pursuit of a higher purpose
- is also about particular capacities and skills:
    - Moral leaders know how to manage themselves
    - They know how to temper their egos, and
    - How to act with nobility and truthfulness
- originates in, builds and reinforces Spiritual Capital. Spirituality means what gives life, vitality or inspiration to a person or an organisation. Spiritual Capital is reflected in what an organisation…
    - exist for
    - aspires to
    - takes responsibility for

5. A model of Leadership: *The EPL Way* Pyramid of Influence and Credibility

The leadership model presented in this section covers the main range of values and behaviours that every human being, and particularly leaders and managers, need to consider when assessing leadership excellence.

What does *The EPL Way* stand for?
Highly effective leaders base their leadership on a foundation of **three core values** or building blocks: Ethos, Pathos and Logos (EPL).

ETHOS: The Greek word for ethical behaviour, moral integrity and a moral **C**haracter. It also embraces an inside-out, principle and value-centred orientation.

> Be what you is, not what you ain't
> Because if you ain't what you is,
> you is what you ain't!

Core Challenges

- The *character* challenge
- The *moral integrity* challenge
- The *accountability* challenge
- The *responsibility* challenge
- The *inner balance* challenge
  - feeling inspired
  - physical wellbeing
  - mental wellbeing
  - emotional wellbeing
- The living your *principles and values* challenge
- The **stewardship** challenge – to be accountable through service, rather than by control or compliance

PATHOS: The Greek word for a servant's heart, representing **C**aring, **C**ompassion, **C**onsideration and team involvement.

> *I don't care how much you know,*
>
> *until I know how much you care*

Core Challenges

The middle level of the Pyramid of Leadership and Credibility represents the following leadership challenges:

- The *communication* challenge
- The *caring and compassion* challenge
- The *servant leadership* challenge
- The *encouragement* and *recognition* challenge
- The e*mpowerment* challenge – feedback, mentoring, coaching

LOGOS: The Greek concept for **C**ompetence, meaningful life and work, knowledge, skills and wisdom.

> *Give a man a fish and you feed him for one day.*
>
> *Teach a man how to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.*
>
> Lao Tse Tsung

Core Challenges

The following logos related challenges face the leader/manager:
- The *competence* challenge
- The *management by values* challenge
- The *team inspiration* challenge
- The *quality* challenge
- The *meaningful contribution* challenge
- The *visible felt leadership* challenge
- The *time management* challenge

These three pillars of leadership find expression in **Leadership *The EPL Way* Pyramid of Influence and Credibility**. It also represents the three C's, the three M's and the three R's:

Leadership *The EPL Way* Pyramid of Influence and Credibility
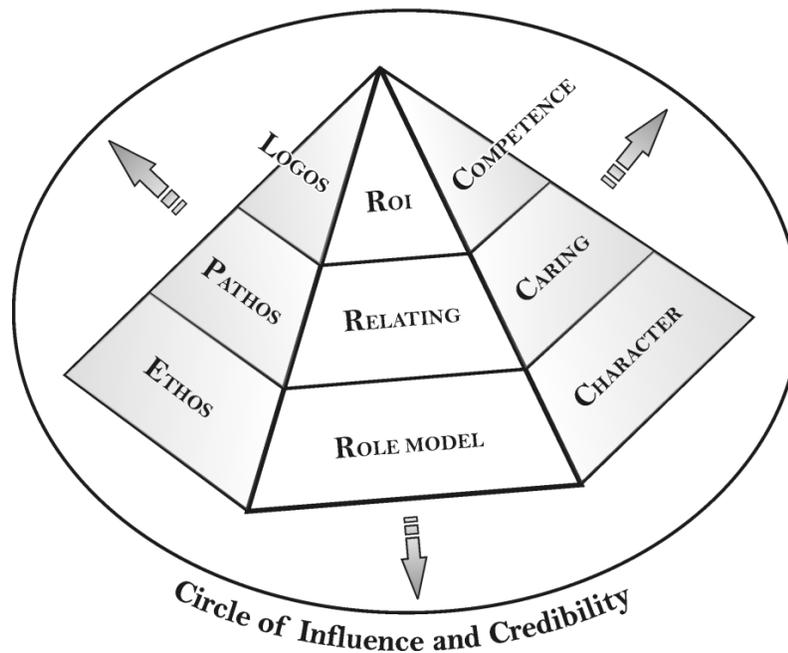
The Three C's: Character, Caring, Competence
The Three M's: Modelling, Mentoring, Managing
The Three R's: Role Model, Relating, ROI

The circle around the Pyramid represents the Circle of Credibility and Influence of the leader which is determined by how such a person or leader lives and expresses the three Pyramid levels.

Activity

Personal and Organisational challenges at each of the three levels of the Pyramid of Leadership.

Personal	Organisational
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

6. Universal Leadership Competencies structured according to Leadership *The EPL Way* Pyramid levels

The competencies given below are aligned to the most prominent international leadership competencies. As such they are very useful as hallmark for personal and organisational leadership effectiveness. The leadership competencies are structured according to the three levels of the Pyramid of Leadership.

Level 1: Ethos-related competencies (Character, Integrity)
1. **Character and integrity**: to walk the talk, authenticity.
2. **Accountability** and **responsibility**.
3. **Commitment** to one's life and work.

4. Self-development – CANI = Constant and Never-ending Improvement.
5. A constructive **mindset**
   - A **positive** 'part-of-the-solution' **attitude**
   - A **positive self-esteem**, a **belief in the willingness of team members to commit** and give their best for the greater good of the organisation
   - A **principle** and **value-centred** work ethic.

Level 2: Pathos-related competencies (Caring, Compassion)

6. **Inspiring and support** others to optimise their performance.
7. **Abundance attitude**: sharing, collaboration and enabling others.
8. **Communication** effectiveness.
9. **Connecting** and **networking** with others.
10. **Acceptance** of and **respect** for others.
11. Building **quality relationships**.

Level 3: Logos-related competencies (Competence, Meaningful life and work)

12. **Goals and results driven** attitude – championing change and moving forward.
13. **Effective thinking skills** including analyzing, interpreting, problem-solving skills, innovative and creative thinking skills.
14. A **quality** oriented mindset; pursuing excellence in life and work.
15. Functional life and work-related **knowledge and skills**.
16. **Adding value** to self and others – meaningful life and work.

Activity

1. Identify your top five personal strengths from the list of competencies.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____
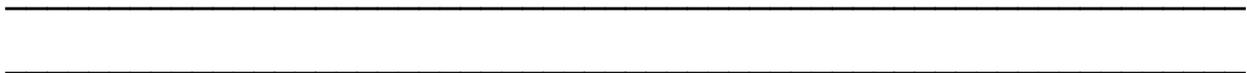
     2. What are your main challenges that requires
        your attention.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. Cultivating your moral leadership

In the last section of this presentation the focus shifts to strategies how to cultivate your personal and organisation's moral leadership. Three strategies will receive our attention:

1) Discover your personal and organisation's moral leadership compass.
2) Align your moral leadership compass with daily practices, decisions and behaviours.
3) Strengthen your moral leadership skills.

7.1 Discover your personal and organisation's moral leadership compass

A moral leadership compass consists of principles, values and beliefs that guide your aspirations and your actions. The question is, *What is the set of principles, values and beliefs that anchors you and your organisation?* How would you want the public you serve and those that audit you to think about you?

Two sets of guidelines might help you to find answers to the above questions.

1) What are your **core values** identified under Section 4 (pp. 6 and 7)?
   Your Core Values

   - _____
   - _____
   - _____
   - _____
   - _____
   - _____

2) Universal competencies for and inspiring, safe and productive workplace.
   Being a leader is, in itself, a challenge. Leaders must acquire core traits and competencies to guide and lead work teams towards a culture of inspiration, service and production. Which of the **Universal Leadership Competencies** are your strengths or are regarded as very important (see pp. 11 and 12)?

   - _____
   - _____
   - _____
   - _____
   - _____
   - _____

7.2 Aligning your moral leadership compass with practices, decisions and behaviours

Governing values and a code of conduct serve as a **compass** for moral behaviour in a team. It defines standards that guide behaviour and performance.

Sometimes, however, we do not live up to these governing values or code of conduct. In such a situation one has two options: you can learn to better align your behaviour with your values and code of conduct, or, you may decide to reject or revise some of those values or conditions of your code of conduct.

Whatever you do is fine, as long as your actions do not violate the following:
- Your organisation's code of conduct
- Universal moral values such as fairness, justice or respect for other people
- The universal leadership competencies listed earlier

In order to make agreed upon moral values and your code of conduct part of your daily work practice, a practical strategy could be to operationalise agreed upon behaviour and decision making.

Example: Operationalised application of **respect for each other**:
- Greet each other
- Listen to each other
- Communicate in civilised way
- Keep promises made

Activity

Identify two values or code of conduct conditions and describe the operationalised application of each value

1) **Value 1 or Code of Conduct condition:**

    _____

    _____

    o **Operationalised application:**

    _____

    _____

2) Value 2 or Code of Conduct condition:

_____

_____

    o **Operationalised application:**

    _____

    _____

7.3 Strengthening your moral leadership skills

Think of moral leadership building as a learning process like any other. Consider these guidelines in your free time:

1) Who do you want to be – your moral leadership brand? Get ideas from:
   - Your leadership qualities (pp. 4 – 5)
   - Your moral leadership core values, traits and behaviour (pp. 6 – 8)
   - Universal leadership competencies (pp. 11 – 12)
2) What are your strengths and weaknesses (challenges)
3) Prioritise which of your strengths and challenges needs attention first. The important thing...
   The 80/20 Rule
   Management consultant Roy Greer, offers this advice: Spend **80 percent** or more of your time developing and leveraging your strengths and **20 percent** or less of your time "pumping air into your priority flat spots (challenges)."

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