



**Institute for Sustainable Leadership**

Driving high-performing and resilient organisations

February 2022

**NEWSLETTER**

Issue 2



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*We need to be aware of what our brains do outside of our awareness that is altering the way we see the world. We need to reflect on how we are feeling and the assumptions we are making. And we need to be willing to acknowledge that our feelings, behaviours, perceptions and memories are affected by implicit processes outside of our control or awareness. We are the elephant trainer sitting on top of a huge elephant. If we are a good trainer, we can direct the elephant where to go and what to do, but we need to be vigilant and we need to be consistent.*

*- Dr Mark Williams, [The Connected Species](#)*

By Gayle Avery, Co-Founding Director of ISL



Information technology has provided everyone with an abundance of data and an infinite online library just a click away. Significantly, it's not what you know, it's the quality of the information you have access to and how you use that information that matters. Everyone has access to Google and yet not everyone knows how to improve their organisational culture by breaking bad habits, how to use words to persuade with integrity, or how to create a purpose-driven team. We are here to help.

Using acclaimed experts, we are introducing a series of micro-courses in 2022 that cover the latest thinking in their field. Starting this month, you can explore the brain and behaviour with the help of world-renowned neuroscientist, Dr Mark Williams, in his new course **The Brain and Sustainable Leadership**. Aristotle is supposed to have said "We are what we repeatedly do". Understanding how our habits are formed and maintained is crucial to improving organisations especially when we want to influence people to adopt sustainable leadership practices and change their organisational culture to match ('the way things are done around here'). How the brain influences behaviour shapes who we and what our organisations are like.

In this issue, Dr Harry Bergsteiner sharpens our thinking about the definition of leader with practical and historical examples. The concept of leadership has been watered down and mixed up with other terms and buzzwords, confusing everybody. This first article lays the foundation for future issues that will distinguish leaders from role models, heroes, despots and buffoons.

Apart from The Brain, we are also offering a refresher micro-course in **Essential Leadership Tools**. Having taught all over the world and consulted with large, medium and small businesses, I was able to select crucial tools that will save you time, anchor your processes in core values, inspire your people and expand your insight into what effective leadership looks like day to day. This course is ideal for new managers and leaders. Soon we will welcome the celebrated Randal Tame and his Leading Persuasion course as part of the micro-course series that we are launching in our virtual classroom. Communication skills are essential to avoid misunderstandings, maintain the integrity of the company, motivate a team and particularly, to get a point across that will help the enterprise to move towards a future that is both sustainable and successful.

Finally, I would like to personally extend a warm welcome to our new students and members this year. We will keep on growing and expanding in 2022 because we are passionate about providing high quality education that is changing the world towards a kinder and healthier place. Thank you for joining us and spreading the word about what we do, it helps us greatly. We value you and would love to hear your feedback and suggestions.

Welcome to the ISL family,  
Dr Gayle Avery

## FROM DR. HARRYBEE'S DESK

In this section [Dr. Harald Bergsteiner](#), Co-Founder of ISL, focuses on the theme of the month for our readers. His expertise in turning highly complex concepts into simple terms makes adopting the 23 Honeybee Sustainable Practices accessible to practitioners and researchers alike. You can find those practices [here](#).



## UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP: OF LEADERS, HEROES, ROLE MODELS, DESPOTS AND BUFFOONS

*By Harry Bergsteiner*

Much of the discussion in the leadership literature is confusing because authors have a tendency to use words such as leader (L), hero (H) and role model (RM) interchangeably; they also trivialise the destructive effects of despotism by referring to despots (D) as leaders; and they condone even buffoons (B) calling themselves leaders.

The most stand-alone archetype, because it does not sit well with the other archetypes, is embodied by buffoons since they lack what it takes to be a leader, hero, or role model in the true sense of these words. A possible exception are court jesters who as official members of noble and royal households played an interesting and useful political role in medieval European courts, being a kind of 'licensed' fool who could make 'educative' jests even at the expense of princes and kings. However, if they over-reached their licence, the punishment could be severe; so, in order to ridicule a king you needed to be clever and brave. Or, as Shakespeare said in Twelfth Night: "This fellow's wise enough to play the fool, And to do that well craves a kind of wit."

To bring some semblance of order into the imprecise use of the terms leader, hero, role model, despot and buffoon, I define the five archetypes and provide examples of each to better draw out the distinctions. In my definitions and choice of examples, I avoid associating an archetype with a particular gender, race or religion; and I cover a wide span of history.

### **Leader**

Trying to define the concept of leader by means of a string of adjectives that describes the leader (e.g. authentic, considerate, decisive, empathetic, ethical, humble, thoughtful, truthful) or a string of verbs that describe what she does (e.g. create, direct, empower, enable, guide, influence, inspire, organise, plan, reward, support) is an exercise in futility since neither list can encompass all the possible situations in which a leader might find themselves (e.g. different personal, interpersonal, organisational, cultural situations). To be more precise: (a) leadership is contingent on time, place and situation; and, (b) a leader needs to be a chameleon who changes their behaviour in response to needs and circumstances. In place of an exhaustive string of adjectives and verbs, we define effective leadership with one single adjective, namely sustainable. If outcomes are deemed and found to be sustainable, then, by definition, those responsible must have made and implemented enough good decisions to warrant the terms leader and leadership. It is, of course, possible to start out as a leader but gradually morph into something quite sinister.

## FROM DR. HARRYBEE'S DESK CONT'

In modern usage, a leader is someone who through the application of ethos, pathos and logos (terms coined by Aristotle, Greek philosopher (384–322 BC)), inspires and enables others to voluntarily support and pursue a shared purpose and vision. The terms ethos, pathos and logos respectively describe qualities of: one, the self (viz. character, values); two, one's emotional relationship with others (viz. empathy, sympathy, respect, loyalty); and three, one's reasoning (viz. logic, reason, intellect, nous). This means that persons whose actions do not reflect ethos, pathos and logos, and who manipulate and/or coerce others to do their bidding, are not leaders but more likely charlatans, bullies, autocrats, despots or tyrants. Furthermore, those who acquire voluntary followers by feigning ethos and pathos, and subverting logos, are at a minimum Machiavellian charlatans, which can, in the case of a tainted 'leader' such as Donald Trump, easily descend into anti-democratic and despotic behaviour (e.g. by manipulating votes and inciting the storming of the US Capitol). A leader may also be heroic and serve as a role model, however, by definition, charlatans, despots and tyrants do not qualify to wear the mantle of leader. In short, leaders are defined by whether they have voluntary and cognisant followers.



In determining whether someone is/was an effective leader, three useful things to examine, using Mahatma Gandhi and Adolf Hitler as opposite archetypes, are:

1. Did the person become a leader by legitimate means, either by way of popular acclamation or through a formal and widely endorsed democratic process that ensures equal representation? On this criterion, both Gandhi and Hitler were legitimate, Gandhi by popular acclamation and Hitler by having been elected to the German Reichstag via a legal, albeit contentious, process. (Note, Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin were elected by an undemocratic process that does not provide equal representation and so they lack legitimacy as leaders.
2. How did the person wield the authority and power conferred on them? Was it exercised with ethos, pathos and logos? Gandhi achieved his vision by non-violent and persuasive means, but Hitler fails by using misleading propaganda and abusing his power ever more aggressively and illegally, eventually morphing into a brutal tyrant.
3. What was the person's legacy? Gandhi 'helped' instal India's first democracy but Hitler fails comprehensively by—after being elected to political office—putting in place a brutal dictatorship; causing an almost inconceivable amount of death, pain and carnage; not achieving any of his long-term personal and national goals; and eventually committing suicide.

## FROM DR. HARRYBEE'S DESK CONT'

### Examples of Leader:

Queen Boadicea (first century AD,). Celtic-Britannic queen who united several Celtic tribes from what is now south-east Britain by exploiting their hate of Rome to lead an uprising against Roman imperial forces in AD60 or 61, winning some early significant victories but eventually, although outnumbering the Romans by a huge factor, losing a decisive battle and dying either of self-inflicted poisoning or 'illness'.  
(Leader & Hero)

Hildegard von Bingen (c.1098–1179). German canonised Benedictine abbess and polymath who excelled as a writer, theologian, composer, philosopher, legal scholar, linguist, mystic, botanist and herbalist. As well as setting up two new monasteries, she has been described as a musical genius with compositional techniques that were not implemented and realized until the Renaissance. Thus, her *Ordo Vitutum*, a liturgical drama, is regarded as the oldest sacred music drama (morality play) and predates Monteverdi's ground-breaking opera *L'Orfeo* (musical drama) by about 500 years. At a time when most women were treated as men's chattels, her views were sought by emperors, popes, kings and other secular and religious leaders. She was also extremely brave, ignoring a ruling by pope Eugenius III to exhume and relocate her monastic friend's corpse to non-consecrated ground, despite the papal threat of a decree of interdict banning all religious activities at her monastery if she did not.  
(Leader, Hero, Role Model)

Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948). Indian pacifistic anti-colonialist campaigner and leader for India's independence from British rule. He never occupied a position of formal power but was and is revered as the nation's leader. (Leader, Hero, Role Model)

Martin Luther King (1929–1968). Black leader who, inspired by his role model Mahatma Gandhi, led the non-violent American civil rights movement, and who was made famous by his "I have a dream" speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. (Leader, Hero, Role Model)





### Examples of Leader:

Nelson Mandela (1918–1999). South African anti-apartheid campaigner and activist who, though of royal birth, was sent to prison by the white South African government for 27 years because of his role in the African National Congress, an initially non-violent protest movement that turned violent following the 1960 Sharpeville massacre. Mandela eventually became the first black president of South Africa. (Leader, Hero, Role Model)

Angela Merkel (1954 >). Germany's first female chancellor was held to be quite heroic by many for deciding in 2011 to shut all German nuclear power stations (completed by 2022) following the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster; and, in 2015, despite opposition from many quarters including her own party, allowing 1.1 million refugees to enter Germany that year. Re-elected for a fourth term in 2017, she became Germany's longest-serving Chancellor. (Leader, Hero, Role Model)

By Harry Bergsteiner

***This article will continue in our next issue.***

*At the Institute for Sustainable Leadership we are committed to creating a community that develops a strong bond with the planet, has a positive impact on the world and creates high performing organisations that do good. **Enrol in our Foundations Course now** with your own customised company forum to nurture a visionary workplace that achieves long-term success while caring for the planet and society.*

**ENROL  
NOW**

**LEARN  
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## THE GOOD HIVE NEWS

In this section we bring you news that sparks joy, hope and maybe some creativity for out-of-the-box thinking in your organisation. At the [Institute for Sustainable Leadership](#) we take pride in integrating theory with practice. Hence, this section showcases a way of living based on good principles.



Image by Harald Bergsteiner

## EMISSION: IMPOSSIBLE

In 2017 the International Busplanner Sustainability Award went to Stadwerke Augsburg, a Bavarian utility company that used biogas (using compressed natural gas) for its bus network. We would like to think that renewable energy should already be a reality in developed countries that have plenty of resources to upgrade their transportation infrastructures, such as Australia. It is now more urgent than ever to catch up with the world.



## THE WORLD'S FIRST NET ZERO INDUSTRIAL PARK

We are keeping an eye on [Envision Group](#), named by Fortune Magazine as one of the top companies changing the world right now and already profiled by MIT. Currently working with powerful clients, this company is pushing green technology to serve well known enterprises such as Microsoft to use renewable energy. Their commitment and efficiency has already impacted a large network of powerful companies worldwide to operate sustainably long-term. One of their top projects is the world's first net zero park. Undoubtedly opening the door to the future.

**Connect with us**



## MEET OUR TEAM @THE INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP



Karen Beck, ISL Strategic Business Development Partner

Karen Beck is our strategic business development partner who is passionate about sharing the 20+ years of research and development by the Founders of the Institute for Sustainable Leadership. Her main priority is to form partnerships with organisations interested in developing a more sustainable future for their organisation, our society and the planet.

Bringing extensive experience from the construction industry, Karen has honed her expertise in innovation and stakeholder engagement in the aged care, education, residential, commercial and hospitality sectors.

Karen holds a Bachelor of Applied Science, a Master of Architecture and is a Certified Practitioner in Sustainable Leadership.

## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY SCHOLARSHIPS

To show our support for International Womens' Day on 8 March, we are offering 50% scholarships for professionals in the design & construction field for the **Foundations in Sustainable Leadership course**. A 40-hour self-paced course enriched by live calls with professionals in the same cohort and hosted by expert Dr. Gayle Avery.

Nominate someone from your organisation today [here](#) (**\*Applications close on 15 March**).

***Give women managers and professionals the opportunity to improve their leadership skills along with others who champion women in their organisation.***

**International Women's Day Scholarships NOW OPEN**  
for our Foundations in Sustainable Leadership course



# MEET OUR ISL COMMUNITY

## CHRIS SHUTTLEWORTH

Chris Shuttleworth is a collaboration consultant who helps leaders and teams connect so they can achieve greater value outcomes for their businesses. Organisations that practice sustainable leadership are excellent environments in which to foster true teamwork. Chris helps employees find these organisations, while at the same time helping leaders and teams to build them.

Chris has 25+ years in the professional services industry where he built businesses by growing teams to develop innovative products and services. After his first encounter in 2007, he spent the 2010's building a business based on ISL's Sustainable Leadership principles. That team achieved great success across performance indicators of innovation, customer satisfaction, and employee engagement; as well as delivering exceptional financial performance. In 2019, Chris established his own firm (H23O) to help his clients apply the principles of Sustainable Leadership to achieve the same success.



### **What are your biggest lessons from sustainable leadership?**

Leadership is practised within a context - we need to think about the system and how each of our actions influences and impacts other aspects of the organisation.

### **In your view, what is the importance of Sustainable Leadership to building better organisations?**

The world is experiencing a paradigm shift where the shareholder is no longer the prime stakeholder to which the organisation needs to deliver value. This shift requires a new paradigm for conducting business in order to balance value creation across a broad range of stakeholders. The ISL's principles of Sustainable Leadership is an approach that will help leaders successfully weather the challenges involved in this transformation.

### **Taking into account the current state of the world and speaking from your professional career, what are the three things that could take us closer to a better tomorrow as individuals and organisations?**

1. Understand that true teaming involves goals for which we are mutually dependent and are unable to achieve on our own
2. Engage in better conversations where we seek to discover unknown truths together rather than attempting to bend other people to our particular perspective
3. Increase self-awareness - understand that we play a role in the confusion that we encounter in the world; it is not just the fault of other people

**"The Foundations course in Sustainable Leadership should be required for any leader who wants to guide their team towards long term sustainable performance. The course content was engaging and thought provoking, while the video conference discussions with other students provided a great learning experience and opportunity to connect and debate ideas with others. I highly recommend this course."**

Chris Shuttleworth | Accredited Team Coach and Leadership Consultant

## NEW MICROCOURSES!

**The Brain  
&  
Sustainable  
Leadership**  
with Dr. Mark Williams  
*Honorary Professor*

**ENROL NOW**

**Understanding  
change**

**Shifting behaviour**

**Increasing  
productivity &  
innovation**

**Improving  
communication**

**Integrating good  
habits**



 **Institute for Sustainable Leadership**  
Driving high-performing and resilient organisations

**ESSENTIAL  
LEADERSHIP  
TOOLS**  
with Dr. Gayle Avery  
*Honorary Professor*

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Developing  
Inspiring  
Gaining insight**

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