



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

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**NEWSLETTER**

Issue 3



## IN THE ISSUE

### [Dr Gayle on the Great Resignation Wave](#)

### [From Dr. HarryBee's Desk](#)

### [The Good Hive news](#)

### [Meet our Community](#)

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*If we want to address the Great Resignation, we're going to have to look at the different groups of employees who are leaving and understand what companies need to do to provide support structures to get them back into the workforce. They want some hope that society is going to get better in the future. The internal culture you create around leadership matters.*

[- Indra Nooyi, former CEO of Pepsi, for SHRM](#)

## THE GREAT RESIGNATION WAVE

By Gayle Avery, Co-Founding Director of ISL



In the past two years millions of people have been reconsidering their professional life, quitting their jobs or changing careers. What has been named the Great Resignation Wave (GRW) has hit the job market globally. The VUCA operating context (volatile, uncertain, complex & ambiguous) was aggravated by a global pandemic that shook many organisations to the core, putting them back into reactive mode. Executives were trying to survive and adapt as quickly as possible to conditions that had never been seen before in the business world. So the question is, how do we face the resulting resignation wave?

Disconnected employees won't find a reason to stay and work hard no matter what is in the paycheque when life outside of work is threatened. Talent attraction and retention can easily be improved by adopting a sustainable leadership approach. A good start is having conversations about work and culture in the organisation. Asking what employees want the "new normal" to look like. Once at work are people feeling valued (beyond money)? Is the work meaningful? Are there opportunities for continuous training and development? Do workers have a chance to be heard and decide?

Sustainable organisations address these issues using leadership tools forged from a resilience and sustainability perspective. This toolkit has been proven effective through solid research and practical case studies over many decades. The tools increase efficiency and productivity while building and strengthening a culture that benefits all: the business and its people, and the planet and its inhabitants. Leaders just need to use the right tools.

We share some key tools in our recently released Essential Leadership Tools microcourse. The course covers four different sets of tools that you can use to improve productivity and the well-being of employees: guiding tools (like setting goals and giving feedback), developing tools (such as coaching and managing underperformance), inspiring tools (creating a vision and purpose that work) and insight tools (managing politics and framing organisational initiatives). These are not the only tools needed to achieve sustainable leadership at a manager's level, but they are indeed essential to master if organisations are to get their culture right, and attract, retain and develop their people.

Please contact us for more information if you would like to discuss how we can help your organisation improve its longevity and resilience while maintaining high-performance, and benefitting the planet and society. We can tailor courses to groups and teams.

Happy reading,  
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.

This is a continuation of Dr. Harry's previous article in our 2 Issue. You can read the first part [here](#).



## UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP: OF LEADERS, HEROES, ROLE MODELS, DESPOTS AND BUFFOONS (PART 2)

*By Harry Bergsteiner*

**Hero** (from hērōs, ancient Greek or proto-Greek)

A hero impresses by virtue of personal qualities such as prowess, endurance, courage and bravery. Heroes may or may not make good leaders, and you can be a hero even if you have not achieved your goal (e.g. the siblings Scholl, see below). Some examples of heroes have been given above, some others follow. Examples of hero:

Joan of Arc (1412–1431). Canonised peasant girl who as leader of a relief army won several quick victories during the hundred-year war but upon capture was burned at the stake at age 19. Having succeeded as a mere young peasant girl with little social standing to be accepted as the leader of an army, and having witnessed various acts of brutality in the skirmishes she was involved in, she would have known that the consequences of getting caught would have been dire indeed. Her eventual canonisation is testament to the perceived righteousness of her cause and her bravery particularly given that in the Middle Ages religious leaders were with few exceptions aristocrats who generally regarded those of low birth as nothing more than chattels. (L, H, RM)

Reinhold Messner (1944 >) Italian/Tyrolean mountaineer (many ascents solo), first solo conqueror of Mt Everest, first to ascend all 14 peaks over 8000m, and many other non-mountaineering firsts. Since most of his heroic achievements were solo or with a trusted friend, his role as leader is secondary. (H, RM)

The siblings Scholl (Hans, b. 1918; Sophie, b. 1921). Two students at University of Munich, who as members of the non-violent resistance movement the White Rose, were executed by guillotine for handing out pamphlets against the war and against Hitler. Caught by the university's Custodian on 18.2.43, they were sentenced to death and executed on 22.2.43. Post-war they became symbols of anti-Nazi resistance. Sadly, they never had a chance to become leaders. (H, RM)

### **Role Model**

Persons who by virtue of who they are, what they do, and how they do it, influence others in terms of who they want to be, and the how and what of their doings. An important role of a leader is to lead by example. However, someone (even a fictional character) can be a role model without necessarily being a (real) leader or hero, and a despot or buffoon can be a role model to those who share their lack of ethos, pathos and logos.

## FROM DR. HARRYBEE'S DESK CONT'

### Examples of role model:

Mother Teresa (1910–1997). An Albanian/Indian Roman-Catholic nun who devoted her life to the poor, initially of Calcutta. Although both a leader and—to some—a hero in founding and leading the Missionaries of Charity (over 4,500 nuns and active in 133 countries), she led mainly by being an inspiring and indefatigable role model. (RM, L, H)

Lord Buddha (around the 5th century BC). Founder of Buddhism, he was born of an aristocratic family, taught for around 45 years and acquired a large monastic and lay following. His teaching included ethics, self-restraint and meditation. He rejected animal sacrifice and the caste system and rejected the notion of government by a single leader, even in monasteries. (RM)

**Despot** (from Greek despotismós, related words: autocrat, tyrant, dictator)

Despots rule over others with absolute power and authority. They can be relatively benign (e.g. Richard the Lionheart), whereas dictators and tyrants (e.g. Joseph Stalin, Vladimir Putin, Xi Jiping) are characterised by degrees of ruthlessness. Very few despots were legitimately elected as such.

History is short on female dictators, those who made it being wives or daughters of dictators (e.g. Jiang Qing—wife of Mao Zedong, Imelda Marcos—wife of Ferdinand Marcos, and Indira Gandhi—daughter of Nehru). Defining leaders in terms of voluntary followers means, of course, that unelected despots cannot, by definition, be leaders. They are—despots. Apparatchiks and minions are an interesting subset of despots without whom they'd struggle to exist.

With some notable exceptions, the archetypes leader, hero and role model do not sit well with autocrats, despots and tyrants who care nought for ethos, pathos or logos because they do not persuade or influence, they command. To reduce the risk of a leader morphing into a despot I have to introduce another concept here—leadership culture. We define this concept and explain its power in one of our online leadership courses, suffice it to say that organisations with an excessive focus on the 'CEO as hero' are highly vulnerable because the simple act of changing the CEO can send the organisation into a tail spin, which is precisely why sustainable organisations 'grow' their own CEOs. In ancient Greece, despot was not a pejorative term. However, when a despot became intolerable, the Greeks once again had a 'democratic' remedy. Once a year the citizen of Athens could vote to ostracise—using shards of pottery called Ostraka—to expel a political leader from Athens for 10 years if he was seen as a threat to democracy.



## FROM DR. HARRYBEE'S DESK CONT'

### Examples of Despot:

Pittacus of Mytilene (c.640–568BC). A member of the so-called aesmetai of Greece who were legitimately elected as despot—by those who were eligible to cast a vote! Despots often were particularly successful and respected military generals. (L, H, D)

Joseph Stalin (1878–1953). He was a key member of the Bolsheviks who came to power as a result of Vladimir Lenin's 1917 "October Revolution" that eventually created a one-party Communist state. Initially just another member of the party's Politburo he usurped leadership of the party after Vladimir Lenin's death and became the dictator/tyrant that ruled Russia with an iron fist from about 1922–1953 and is held responsible for the deaths of millions of people through mass repression, ethnic cleansing, deportation, executions, famines and wars. (D)

Adolf Hitler (1889–1945). Hitler had himself titled by the Reichstag (lower house of the Weimar Republic) as Führer and Reichskanzler (Leader and Chancellor) of Germany. Post-World-War II the term Führer was so reviled that it ceased being used in all sections of German society with people in business using the term Führungskraft, which translates literally into the rather awkward term leadership person. (D)



Indira Gandhi (1917–assassinated 1984). On 12.6.1975 the Allahabad High Court found Gandhi's 1971 election to the lower house of India's bicameral parliament null and void and unseated her from Parliament, a decision confirmed on appeal by the Apex Court on 24.6.1975. The very next day a state of emergency was declared at her behest that lasted until 21.3.1977. During the emergency, media censorship, imprisonment of political opponents and a wide range of other human rights violations were perpetrated.

Vladimir Putin (1952 >). Lawyer and former KGB foreign intelligence officer who used the 'advantages' of the Soviet Union's and later Russia's one-party non-democratic system to engineer becoming variously prime minister or president and via constitutional amendments to potentially extend his term to 2036. (D)

Xi Jiping (1953 >) Similar to Putin, he used the 'advantages' of China's one-party communist system to rise from a victim of the Cultural Revolution to President of the People's Republic of China. He went one better than Putin by having presidential term limits removed. (D)

## 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.



## RECYCLING PROGRESS FOR SOLAR

Solar Power is one of the clean energy industries that faces the challenge to integrate an effective recycling program for its own waste. The team at Fraunhofer Center for Silicon Photovoltaics CSP in Germany, has announced that their researchers produced solar cells from 100 percent recycled silicon. This highly complex process is a significant step forward in an industry in need of a scalable recycling process that is cost-effective and pushes the creation of a circular economy.



## NEW LIFE FOR USED OILS

If you are not familiar yet with the linear use of industrial oils you would be concerned to know they contribute to significant CO2 emissions. The good news is that SFK, a Swedish firm, has been granted 1.62 million Euros for a plant in Spain that will work on regenerating industrial oils. The regenerated oils will have the same performance as the original ones. The EU grant to SFK is part of the group's strategy for scalable circularity in new industries and it supports SDG12, responsible consumption and production in the continent.

[Connect with us](#)



## ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP TOOLS

Managers have a lot on their plate everyday. Not only they complete their own projects and tasks, they also have to inspire, motivate, guide, direct people... In our [Essential Leadership Tools microcourse](#), Dr. Gayle Avery provides essential and practical tools to integrate sustainable leadership in daily management. Read below some tips for managing underperformance.



**Set clear goals.** Start with a conversation to create a priority list of specific tasks or outcomes that include certain processes, for example.

**Set measures.** This avoids disputes about whether outcomes and goals have been met, and it also means that employees can see how they are progressing themselves.

**Provide ongoing feedback.** Feedback should be given in the right way to be effective: it should be about the behaviour and communicated respectfully.

**Upskill your team.** More training may be needed, or mentoring on-the-job.



**Leadership Webinar**

**'Sustainable Leadership Pays'**  
with  
**Dr. Gayle Avery**  
24 May 4 pm (AEST)

**SIGN UP**  
**HERE**



 **Institute for Sustainable Leadership**  
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# MEET OUR ISL COMMUNITY

## BRIGID ASQUITH-HUNT

Brigid is a Director of Partner in Time Consulting Pty Ltd. Brigid consults to organisations from a range of industries on either a strategic or project basis. Her strength is identifying and implementing strategies to: drive opportunities and growth; strengthen the delivery of value; forge stronger relationships; enhance the client experience and improve productivity; deliver on sustainability outcomes; motivate, empower and energise a team, elevating their effectiveness and engagement.

Brigid completed the Foundations in Sustainable Leadership Course with the Institute for Sustainable Leadership along with other graduates from MGSM. She is currently completing the Advanced Practitioner Course in Sustainable Leadership with the Institute.



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

One of my key learnings, that relates to the financial services sector, is having a broad stakeholder focus. In sustainable leadership, having a broad stakeholder focus is about recognising that an organisation's actions can impinge upon the interests of a range of individuals and groups, both inside and outside the organisation. It also recognises that the obligations and interests of all stakeholders can be reconciled in a mutually beneficial way. This is particularly important in the financial services sector which has lost a lot of trust in recent years due to a focus by leadership in some organisations in the sector on short-term incentives and returns, rather than on long-term performance drivers and outcomes to the benefit of a wider range of stakeholders, including customers, community and shareholders. Broader stakeholder needs drive Sustainable Leadership and the evidence shows that, with that, comes stronger performance, including long-term financial success.

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

Sustainable leadership can create not only strong financial performance but also a competitive advantage for organisations. Sustainable leadership practices strengthen brand and reputation of the organisation and its goods and services. They also elevate customer engagement and satisfaction, all of which are critical in a competitive environment. Sustainable leadership practices also build organisational resilience through a more engaged team, an enabling culture and other practices that create a more robust organisation. This is crucial in a world where constant change is inevitable, whether from environmental, social, political or technological forces.

### **What are the three things that could take us closer to a better tomorrow as individuals?**

The first one would be to observe empirical evidence and listen to the science. Evidence and science have had our back as a society for hundreds of years and have allowed us to develop into a far more enriched, healthier and prosperous world. The second is to be open ... whether that's to new ideas, different opinions or challenging perspectives. As a society, a lot of our traditional views are being, and will continue to be, challenged as we look to navigate the new normal. Whether that's the wider definition of capital to include nature and society .... or to game-changing innovation around renewables ... or even being open to strongly-held values of younger generations. The third is to always make sure that you are creating a meaningful career for yourself. That's about having purpose, aligning your work to your mission in life: possibly that's about creating positive change in the world or helping others or society at large. It's also about pursuing 'work' that you enjoy and love because then you'll thrive ... and be excited for the future that you're contributing to.



# 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*

**NOW OPEN**



 **Institute for Sustainable Leadership**  
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**Executive Education**

**Guiding  
Developing  
Inspiring  
Gaining insight**

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## What our participants are saying:

### Foundations in Sustainable Leadership Course



Good for business, people and our planet

*"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**

### Foundations in Sustainable Leadership Course



Good for business, people and our planet

*The course was very valuable. It made me stop and review my actions and I realised that we can't continue to do what we've always done and expect different results. We need to think more strategically around working as one business, grow culturally and focus on continuous improvement.*

*I want to implement many of the strategies taught in the course. I can help my team to see the vision and feel the purpose which will in turn be communicated to all. Applying the learnings together with the team really excites me: driving a new culture, ensuring sustainability, and adopting a long-term focus.*

**Lee Hughes | Head of New Zealand at RSEA Safety**

### The Brain & Sustainable Leadership Course



Good for business, people and our planet

*The Brain and Sustainable Leadership is an excellent course to know how to improve productivity and creativity in different work environments. It is interesting, the topics are very clearly presented, engaging and flow well from module to module.*

*The material goes from basic understanding of brain neuroplasticity to habits and how to change them for the better. It also emphasises how connection and attention are important for productivity. The course provides great practical tips applicable in many different areas. I would highly recommend it to everyone.*

**Zorana Sicherl | Occupational Therapy Lecturer at University of Ljubljana**

**CUSTOMISED PROGRAMS**  
**AVAILABLE**