

REFLECTIONS FROM PAST PARTICIPANTS AND COLLEAGUES

“In this collection of essays Richard Searle brings clarity, humour and profound wisdom to the challenges and opportunities of leadership, including aspects such as fear, that we often pretend aren’t part of most of our leadership journeys. Practical and readable, the insights Richard presents about leadership will inspire you to creative action, both individually and in collaboration with others. I’ve known Richard as a colleague and friend for many years but still, reading these essays, instilled in me fresh optimism and ideas about how to do my own leadership work more effectively and generously.” *-Amanda Sinclair, Professorial Fellow, Melbourne Business School, University of Melbourne*

“Richard Searle’s new book ‘Leadership On Top’ is essential reading for anyone seriously interested in leadership, and more generally, in people and the human condition. Richard is an outstanding management educator and he has inspired many leaders to achieve success through his clear and concise approach. I have had the pleasure of working closely with him for a long time, and for a decade we co-facilitated the senior leadership program ‘Leading for Strategic Success’ at Melbourne Business School – Mt Eliza Executive Education. Richard has captured so much of that program in these powerful articles. The enduring impact of our partnership and Richard’s other work is made evident by the quoted reflections from participants and clients throughout this volume.” *-Dr Robert Burke, Associate, Melbourne Business School, University of Melbourne*

“I am a new person, more in touch with what my team needs from me and what we need to do as a business to set the benchmark for the industry. In the future, pioneering programs like this will become a prerequisite for leadership.” *-Radek Sali, CEO, Swisse*

“Leaders are constantly presented with complex problems and situations. The big challenge is that all the stakeholders have different views and feelings about these problems and hence lots of noise emerges. Our natural instinct is to immediately put our hand to the plough and work even harder. Two of the key takeaways I apply when faced with such situations are: 1) Mindfulness; to pause, reflect, and in my case, pray; and 2) Differentiate between ‘what is a real snake and what is just a rope’. I find that Richard’s approach to leadership is not just about more tools but about strengthening the person within.” -**Lau Tian Chen, Vice President, DHL Customer Solutions and Innovation, Singapore**

“It was a significant turning point for me in terms of having the confidence to trust my instinct and lead. In fact I recommended the course to two of my Executive team colleagues and it has been so valuable reflecting together on what we learned and challenging one another to embed these leadership skills in our everyday working lives.” -**Debby Blakey, CEO, HESTA Super Fund**

“The relationship between management and leadership is very complex. They are not naturally complementary but also not mutually exclusive. You do need to do it your way. Sometimes you have to switch off the manager in you to let it come through. This can be quite disconcerting. This is where mindfulness and listening comes to the fore. You do need to recognize the time to manage and the time to lead.” - **Edward Louis, Assistant Secretary, Business Framework Project, Department of Defence**

“Leadership is not for the faint-hearted. Mastery of the soft skills of a true leader takes grit, determination and sheer hard work. And, of course, it can be enormously rewarding. But to get the reward you must treat the mysterious art of leadership as a real world skill, like many others, to be studied, practiced, critiqued and done over and over again. Being open to learning – formally and informally – has been essential to my leadership practice.” -**Una Jagose, Solicitor General, New Zealand**

“A senior leader should outline and clarify the why (outcomes) and the what (outputs) and seek to shape, influence and enable the how. Leadership involves appreciating diversity of thought, instilling unity of purpose, clarifying roles and responsibilities and ensuring success is measurable and acknowledged.” - *Anne Bradford, CEO, Department of Children and Families, NT*

“For me the big step to becoming comfortable as a leader was accepting that it was people centred. It didn’t matter that others knew more than me, in fact they should know more if they are specialists, what mattered were things like caring, character, consistency and the ability to convey passion for making a difference.” - *Stuart Forsyth, Director, McPherson Super Consulting Pty Ltd, and former Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Superannuation, Australian Tax Office*

“Lead by the heart and manage by the head. Spirit more than strategy. If you want to be a great leader you must have spirit, strategy is not enough. In my experience, when we choose the best leaders at Indonesia Telkom we use a 3C criteria – character, competence and collaboration. The first C is character (50% weight) – why so important? – I will sleep well because I believe in him/her.” -*Dwi Heriyanto, Senior General Manager, Indonesia Telkom Corporate University*

“As a leader in the design and construction industries and a practitioner architect committed to the power of collaborative teamwork, my big leadership lesson emerged from greater mindfulness and self-reflection. Making the space and time within which colleagues can be creative, generate ideas and thrive has been the key to leadership and professional fulfilment.” -*Matthew Pullinger, Principal, Hassell*

“Allowing others to lead is the hardest leadership trait of all. It is important to keep reminding ourselves that what got us here will not necessarily get us there. And women in leadership roles need a host of different skills to men in the same roles – including a thicker skin!” - *Deborah Young, General Manager, Australian Private Equity and Venture Capital Association*

“One of the biggest things which I took away from our week together is that there is a distinct difference between being a good manager and a strong leader. Leaders will need to make difficult decisions with the best interest of the organisation in mind. I have learnt to inspire people through words and to support them during their growth. A big part of being a good leader is to have the skill to build great teams based on trust and honesty and who want to work for you.”- *Craig Gathercole, Director, Maben Group Pty Ltd*

“Leadership is ultimately about taking care of your people. Effective leaders need to be courageous, true to themselves and both realistic and visionary. Above all they need a sense of humour. Working with Richard has been both rewarding and challenging. He doesn’t provide cheap answers but asks the type of questions that provoke critical reflection, promote clarity and help to guide my future direction. Learning about leadership also has required me to learn about myself.” - Susan Ogden, Principal, Dandenong High School
