

# **Developing Leadership**

A Learning and Development Manual

**Peter Gilbert  
and  
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*Learning for Practice*



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# Preface

The quality of leadership is often the key difference between organisational success and failure and between an organisation being a positive, energising place to work and a negative, stressful environment.

Written by two people with a great deal of experience of both serving as leaders and offering training on the subject, this resource has a great deal to offer individuals and organisations committed to developing genuine leadership as a foundation for establishing and maintaining effective and humane workplaces.

This training manual has enabled Peter to bring together a number of themes around leadership which he has been interested in and engaged with over a number of years, in particular, an holistic approach to leadership. It links closely to, and develops, ideas presented in his book, *Leadership: Being Effective and Remaining Human* (Russell House Publishing, 2005). Neil for his part, sees leadership as a key part of promoting workplace well-being (Thompson and Bates, 2009).

## Who is this manual for?

The manual will be of value in a wide range of organisations across the private, public and voluntary sectors. The authors' public service backgrounds will be apparent, and will make it especially valuable here, but this should not detract from the fact that leadership is an important issue across all organisations, regardless of sector or type.

It will be used by two main groups of people. There will be those whose duties include organising and running training courses, workshops and seminars. This could be either in-house training and development staff (training managers, staff development officers and so on, or those who provide training services on a commercial basis, whether individual freelance trainers or employees or associates of commercial training provider companies) or managers, especially senior managers (that is, managers who supervise other managers) who will be able to use the resources here to run team development sessions on the theme of leadership development.

Either group will find it invaluable in their work, both in developing the skills of actual and aspiring leaders, and in helping others learn how to train and support leaders. So it is relevant to all of these people:

- team leaders or team managers or others involved in supervising and leading groups of staff (section heads, for example);
  - senior managers, both operational and strategic;
  - staff in personnel or human resources sections who are responsible for advising others on matters relating to leadership ; and
  - councillors, trustees, directors and others involved in policy development, implementation and review.
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An earlier version of this manual was previously published as part of a training pack on supervision and leadership published by Learning Curve Publishing. It has been extensively revised and updated.

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# Series Editor's Foreword

## About the *Learning for Practice* series

Education and training are essential underpinnings of high-quality professional practice. This series of learning and development manuals is therefore intended to provide foundations for promoting learning across the helping professions. Each manual offers guidance for new and experienced trainers alike, for managers and supervisors interested in promoting learning within their team or area of responsibility and for college or university lecturers wanting to go beyond simply delivering lectures.

The series has grown out of the Russell House *Theory into Practice* series of books which has been so successful in providing clear, short introductions to particular areas of theory as they apply to practice. Some of the manuals in this series are based on the issues covered in one or more of the books in that series, while other manuals have no direct connection with the series – although they all share a commitment to making an understanding of theory and professional knowledge more broadly accessible for practitioners and managers in order to try and make sure that our practice is *informed* practice.

The authors contributing to the series have a wealth of experience and expertise in promoting learning. Each manual therefore offers important insights, ideas and guidance that should be of great benefit in delivering high-quality learning and development events.

Experienced trainers, tutors and managers used to acting as learning facilitators should find the materials presented and the guidance given relatively straightforward. People with relatively little experience of running learning events will find the materials and guidance helpful, but may need additional support to translate the ideas given into successful learning outcomes. Such support may involve the backing of a more experienced colleague or the use of books and manuals specifically about running successful learning events, or indeed a combination of the two. So, whether experienced or not, this manual should offer a firm foundation on which to build.

## About this manual

In recent years we have seen a significant shift in the direction of what has come to be known as 'managerialism', with its emphasis on targets and the inevitable bureaucracy that comes with it. But we have also seen a backlash against managerialism. Part of this has been a renewed emphasis on such important issues as spirituality, critically reflective practice and workplace well-being. Also part of this backlash can be seen as a renewed emphasis on leadership. This is because leadership is concerned with getting the best out of people, creating cultures and working environments that motivate and inspire people because they are genuinely supportive of staff and appreciative of their efforts – rather than simply trying to squeeze as much out of people as possible, which of course is counterproductive because of its negative impact on morale and its tendency to produce disaffection and stress rather than energy and commitment.

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This manual has been written to support the efforts currently being made to replace misguided managerialist approaches to the workplace with more enlightened approaches based on principles of leadership. Written by two people with a great deal of experience of both serving as leaders and offering training on the subject, this resource has a great deal to offer individuals and organisations committed to developing genuine leadership as a foundation for establishing and maintaining effective and humane workplaces.

Neil Thompson, series editor

## The series editor

**Neil Thompson** is a Director of Avenue Consulting Ltd, a company offering training and consultancy across the 'people professions' – that is, the helping professions plus management, supervision and leadership more broadly ([www.avenueconsulting.co.uk](http://www.avenueconsulting.co.uk)). He has held full or honorary professorial positions at four UK universities and is now a sought-after trainer, consultant and conference speaker.

Neil has qualifications in social work; training and development; mediation and alternative dispute resolution; and management (MBA) as well as a first-class honours degree and a PhD. He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, the Higher Education Academy and the Royal Society of Arts, as well as a Life Fellow of the Institute of Welsh Affairs. In addition, he is a member of the International Work Group on Death, Dying and Bereavement.

Neil is a highly respected author, with over 100 publications to his name, including several bestselling books. He is the editor of the US-based international journal, *Illness, Crisis & Loss* and also edits the e-zine, *Well-being* ([www.well-being.org.uk](http://www.well-being.org.uk)). He has been a speaker at conferences and seminars in the UK, Ireland, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Norway, Greece, India, Hong Kong, Canada, the United States and Australia. He is the series editor for the Russell House *Theory into Practice* series of books. His website is at [www.neilthompson.info](http://www.neilthompson.info). He is also the editor-in-chief of two online communities, **Well-being Zone** ([www.well-beingzone.com](http://www.well-beingzone.com)) and **Social Work Focus** ([www.socialworkfocus.com](http://www.socialworkfocus.com)). He has a blog on each of these sites.

Prospective authors wishing to make a contribution to the *Learning for Practice* series should contact Neil via his company website, [www.avenueconsulting.co.uk](http://www.avenueconsulting.co.uk).

## The authors

**Peter Gilbert**, the author of *Leadership: Being Effective and Remaining Human* (Russell House Publishing, 2005), is an independent consultant in social and health care, currently carrying out a number of roles, including facilitating the National Social Care Strategic Network; and is also Professor of Social Work and Spirituality at Staffordshire University. Peter's other roles include being the National Project Lead for the National Forum; Chair of the National Development Team for Inclusion; and visiting Professor with Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust and the University of Worcester. He also acts as an expert witness and has contributed to a number of national policy guidelines.

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Following a first career in the British Army, Peter worked for 27 years in local government social services, as a practitioner/manager and senior manager. Stints with West Sussex, the London Borough of Merton and Kent Councils then saw Peter move to Staffordshire County Council as Operations Director in 1992, to take responsibility for implementing the NHS and Community Care Act 1990. He then took on the role of Director of Social Services in Worcestershire from 1997 to 2001, following local government reorganisation.

A Master's Degree in Modern History from Balliol College, Oxford, was complemented by a Master's Degree in Social Work from Sussex University, and later an MBA from Roffey Park Management Institute/Sussex University.

In addition to being the author of a book on leadership (*Leadership: Being Effective and Remaining Human*, Russell House Publishing, 2005) Peter is co-editor of *Spirituality, Values and Mental Health*, published in 2007. He recently co-authored a national position paper for SCIE on leadership and personalisation.

**Neil Thompson** has been involved in providing leadership training for many years as well as acting as a consultant in helping organisations to develop the necessary leadership skills to promote workplace well-being. His experience has taught him that the quality of leadership is often the key difference between organisational success and failure and between an organisation being a positive, energising place to work and a negative, stressful environment.

Neil Thompson and Peter Gilbert are also the authors of a companion volume in the *Learning for Practice* series, *Supervision Skills*, (Russell House Publishing, 2010).

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# Introduction

## How to use this manual

Effective staff development and leadership pay dividends for all concerned in terms of:

- Higher standards of work;
- Higher levels of job satisfaction;
- A better working environment or 'climate';
- Fewer mistakes or difficult situations to deal with;
- Clearer procedures and expectations; and
- More and better opportunities for learning.

This manual can therefore play an important role in helping you develop your knowledge and skills in promoting staff development in relation to leadership.

This manual has three purposes;

i) to introduce you to what is involved in the art of leadership;

ii) to provide materials on which to base training courses and staff development exercises (for example, as part of team development work); and

iii) to act as a reference source that you can consult as and when required in the future. We therefore suggest that you read through it quite quickly the first time, to get an overview of the issues and to begin to familiarise yourself with what is involved in it. Next you should work your way slowly and thoroughly through the manual, step by step, making sure you have got to grips with each section before moving on to the next one. In this way you will steadily develop a solid foundation of understanding on which to base your work relating to developing the role of leader.

Once you have completed this second, more demanding reading of the manual, your work is still not over! You will still need to refer back to the manual from time to time (perhaps quite frequently at first until you get used to using it) as a point of reference. This, it should be added, is why – in the photocopying permission section, which follows – trainers using this manual in more than one organisation are encouraged to provide a copy of this manual to each organisation where they train.

The manual is divided into three main parts. Following this introductory section, Part One is entitled 'Setting the context', and that is precisely what it sets out to do. It discusses the importance of staff development in general before broadening out to look at what is involved in leadership and how it can be developed in a wide variety of organisations.

Part Two is entitled 'Training and Development' and, within it, you will find various exercises that can be used as the basis of training sessions or staff development activities (for example, as part of staff meetings or 'awaydays'). The exercises are clearly laid out,

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with guidelines for how they can be used. While inexperienced trainers are likely to feel most comfortable following the guidelines very closely, more experienced trainers may well prefer to adapt and amend as they see fit.

Part Three is the conclusion and here you will find a summary of the main themes underpinning the manual, together with suggestions for further reading, details of relevant organisations and relevant Internet resources, as well as the Appendix, which contains a set of leadership biographies and presentation slides.

### **Disclaimer**

This manual has been researched, prepared and presented in good faith, with all due care and attention. However, no responsibility can be taken for any errors or oversights.

The manual and its contents are intended as a resource to facilitate training and staff development and should not be seen as a definitive statement of employment law. The manual is not a substitute for professional legal advice or guidance and should not be relied upon as such.

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## Leadership Recognition

### Aim

This exercise helps you identify leadership characteristics in:

1. People you work with currently.
2. People you have worked with.
3. Individuals currently engaged in public life through politics, sport, business, welfare and so on.
4. Leadership figures from history.

### Materials

Flip chart paper and pens; Bluetack or masking tape.

### Timing

This exercise is likely to take about 80 minutes.

Introduction:	5 minutes
Groupwork:	25 minutes
Feedback and discussion:	35 minutes
Summary and conclusion:	5 minutes

### Activity

- Begin by explaining to the group that this exercise is geared towards helping participants identify the characteristics of leadership and that this is to be done by considering well-known leaders from public life.
  - Next, divide the group into pairs and ask each individual to identify two people (one woman and one man), from the present or the past, whom they would identify as a leader. After a few minutes, each individual should then be asked to share his or her choices within the pair. They should also discuss the reasons for their choices and, if people find that they have chosen historical figures, it might be worth their while exploring whether the sharp light of today makes it more difficult to think of a current figure as a leader.
  - After about 10 minutes, ask the participants to think of four qualities or skills which make the people they identified stand out as a leader and to discuss these briefly with their partners within the pairs. This should also take about 10 minutes.
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**Exercise 4 cont.**

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- Next, reconvene the main group for a plenary discussion in which the pairs should share their choices of leader and the qualities and skills with the full group. Use this session as the basis of a discussion which identifies the main characteristics of a leader and any debates or disputes about what makes for a good leader.
  - Use the last few minutes to sum up the main learning points or ask the group to do so.
-

## **Anthony Ashley-Cooper, Seventh Earl of Shaftesbury (1801-1885) – Social Reformer**

It is difficult today to envisage an earl as the great champion of poor, disabled and dispossessed people over half a century of campaigning, but when Shaftesbury died, a vast crowd gathered outside Westminster Abbey, and his passing was mourned across the country in every sector of society. While most social reformers today, like sports people, are specialists in one area: child care, disability, employment, mental health and so on, Shaftesbury's indefatigable approach and immense sympathy for people deprived of decent opportunities in life meant that, as soon as he identified a challenge, he went into campaigning mode.

His successful campaigns to improve people's lives through legislative and community action were:

- Mental Health legislation, to introduce public care and commissioners to inspect asylums and people detained (Shaftesbury's commissioners still survive today as the Mental Health Act Commission).
- Curtailed the hours that children worked.
- Set up the Ragged Schools Union to educate children from poor families, and stopped inhumane practices such as children being used as chimney sweeps.
- The original foundation of the Union exists today as a modern charity – The Shaftesbury Society, working with people with disabilities in education and care services.
- Championed sound public health.
- Oversaw industrial reform in the Factory Acts.
- Encouraged Florence Nightingale, and badgered the Government to despatch a Sanitary Commission to the Crimean War zone.
- Played a part in bringing reforming and pastorally energetic bishops into the Church of England.

Shaftesbury demonstrated:

- An empathy with dispossessed people, which he turned into a compelling vision and then practical and enduring action.
- He had a strong personal faith which he lived and promoted as a driving force in his own life and social reforms.

- Despite personal tragedy and setbacks in his parliamentary programme, Shaftesbury showed a long-term commitment and he also used persuasion to win round die-hard opponents.
- The legislator always wanted to see for himself and experience, if possible, the people, the conditions he was determined to change, and to communicate directly with those who were oppressed by them. When he was bringing in legislation in the House of Commons to abolish the labour of children and women underground, he went down himself into a coalmine, not long after a number of people had been killed in a tragic pit shaft accident. When questioned by colleagues as to why he had gone down into the mine, he responded that he: 'thought it a duty: easier to talk after you have seen' (Pollock, 1985, p. 13).
- Shaftesbury had presence and was a passionate speaker.
- Integrity was a feature of his life. He was able to bridge the strong class divides in the 19th century and was instinctively trusted by a wide range of people. He used his own deeply unhappy childhood and his struggles with depression in a positive way so that his personal experience fuelled his social commitment and his empathy with dispossessed people, rather than turning him inwards on himself.
- Despite being profoundly serious about his beliefs and his reforming work, he had a well-developed sense of humour. Once he was booked to take the chair at a meeting of a charitable society and, through some mistake, nobody turned up but himself and one newspaper reporter. Getting up, he said: 'At this large and distinguished meeting ...'. The reporter looked up wonderingly. 'Why not?', said Shaftesbury, 'it's true. Am I not large, and are you not distinguished?!' Sharing a laugh at themselves, the two left the empty hall (Pollock, 1985, p. 165).
- Shaftesbury never forgot his core mission. When in meetings people started getting sidetracked, Shaftesbury would urge: 'What about the children?!' to bring them back to their mission (see Gilbert, 2010).

Gilbert, P. (2010), *Social Work and Mental Health: The Value of Everything*, 2nd edn, Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing.

Pollock, J. (1985) *Shaftesbury The Reformer*, London: Hodder and Stoughton.