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**FYI:** Lindsay Wittenberg

## Planning for a *very* diverse workforce...

Planning and creating workforces of the future means that in a world that's changing faster than ever, leaders need to develop the leadership capacity of the talent pool and engage all generations in their workforces to fulfil inspiring visions together. Lindsay Wittenberg, Managing Director, Lindsay Wittenberg Ltd.

Demographic shifts that are transforming the global workforce mean that employers will no longer define the workplace. It is the priorities and preferences of employees, rather than employers, that will dictate what the future workplace will look like - and, critically, it is leaders who provide the connection to the workforce and help shape it for the future. More than ever, leadership will be required which is empowering, collaborative, inspiring and co-creative. A quality of leadership is required that is about 'being' even more than 'doing'. Leaders need to be authentic and emotionally intelligent, and to develop these qualities in the talent pool, i.e. those who follow today and will lead tomorrow.



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Authentic leaders are anchored by their own deep sense of self. They clearly and accurately see themselves, their values and beliefs, and where they stand on important issues. They're true to themselves and to what they believe to be right, rather than conforming to the expectations of others. They're motivated by their own personal convictions rather than to attain status or other personal benefits. They're originals, not copies. And they behave morally. An authentic leader focuses on nurturing confidence, development, hope, and optimism in their followers. They help create meaning at work, and they motivate discretionary effort in the fulfilment of an inspiring vision, engagement in the purpose and the vision, and trust.

Employees give their best when their values are met and their motivations are reflected in their work, and when they have a sense of achievement from that work. These values differ across the generations: 'Matures' expect their leaders to offer them learning experiences, and goals as ambitious as those for other team members. Baby Boomers are motivated by recognition. They want to compete as individuals and be part of a team. Generation X expect leadership that offers them opportunities to learn marketable skills and skills for self-enrichment. Gen X value life outside work, and consider freedom and flexibility at work as essential. A coaching style of leadership is effective with these people. Generation Y expects

individual attention from their leaders, and respond to opportunities to grow and improve, and to immediate, constructive feedback. Generation Z will be the most socially networked generation in history. Leaders will need to satisfy this generation's expectation to be 'always on', to do work they love, and to be able to flex their work so that it offers meaning. Senior leaders (often Baby Boomers or Generation X-ers) need to engage or re-engage the experienced base of talent alongside the always-on generations (i.e. Generations Y and Z) and every generation between, running cohesive workforces where the generations work harmoniously together and where all feel connected to the organisational culture and values.

Self-awareness is a crucial and fundamental skill for this challenge, not least because it helps leaders establish and nurture transparent and compelling relationships. The self-aware leader is more likely to respond than react, and is easier to trust and engage with - and self-awareness can be nurtured by engagement with others' feedback through reflection. These are critical attributes if the leader is to inspire and empower others to deliver on the organisational agenda. The leader who lacks self-awareness is operating in a fog which makes it impossible to make well-informed judgments or to really connect with others. Self-awareness is one component of emotional intelligence. The research of Dr Martyn Newman for example, identifies the following ten emotional skills that drive leadership performance and distinguish great leaders: Self-awareness: self-knowing and straightforwardness, Self-management: self-control, self-confidence and self-reliance; Social awareness: empathy; Social management: relationship skills; Adaptability: adaptability, optimism and self-actualisation.

Leaders with these skills can energise workforces around a common cause, enable creativity and courage in response to the changes in their environments, build resilience and performance, and meet the demands of employees' priorities and preferences. They deliver on Jack Welch's dictum: "The most important job you have is growing your people, and giving them a chance to reach their dreams."



For further information:

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