

Sam Powell 0:00

Good afternoon, everyone. We will just wait 60 seconds or so whilst everyone is joining, I can see participant numbers going up, which is great.

John White 0:10

We all look very serious. Quote the queen, are we supposed to be enjoying ourselves?

Sam Powell 0:29

Well, we've got looks like everyone's coming in. So I'm sure, we'll get started. I know everyone's time is precious. Well, good afternoon, everyone. My name is Sam Powell. I work for the Leadership Trust, as you can probably guess, I work in the Business Development team, and have been working for the organisation for around six years. And I'm really delighted that you're able to join us this afternoon with some of my dare I say favourite colleagues at Leadership Trust, who are all responsible for leading one of our most well-known leadership development programmes the Leadership in Management programme. And they are to announce them very quickly, Vicki Howe, John White, Tom Storrow and Robin Ancrum. As many of you will know, this is a programme that we've been operating for nearly 50 years now. And we have many clients who approached us, you've heard quite a bit about the programme, but really take a lot of hearsay and like to hear it from the horse's mouth. So our purpose today was to run a bit of a session the cost delivery team to really understand the programme a little bit more intimately. A couple of practical measures, just before we get into that kind of detail and the meat of the session. Firstly, you'll we do invite you all to use the chat function, it's worked brilliantly in the last few Lunch and Learns that we've done to allow you all to network. And we'd really encourage you to do that. We won't be disturbed by that. And we'd love to hear your comments and feedback as we go through the session. Secondly, you'll notice that we have a Q&A bar within Zoom, we would really invite you in love to hear your questions around the programme. So please do leave your messages in there. If they are subject specific, then I will grill the guy's a little bit further as we ask as we go through the questions. But there's an if there's anything more specific, then we will open up for Q&A at the end, which we can all go through. And obviously, if there's any practical questions that you have for me, just let me know. Which leads me I suppose guys into the first question that I had from a client of mine recently, funnily enough, and these were his exact words. And I think it would be really relevant to those listening in. And his question was, this is a slightly mysterious course to me, Sam. So what really is this programme? And, Robin, if I could come to you? What was it designed to do?

Robin Ancrum 2:44

Thank you, Sam. And thank you for giving me the three minutes of preparation that you allowed me and my order that we should turn up here, fresh and creative in response to these questions. Um, two parts to the question, what is the LM? And? And the second bit? What's it designed to do? Kind of? Yeah, kind of two questions in one really, um, what is it from the point of view of somebody

joining it, the LM is an opportunity to go through a very practical, very active, very hands on set of experiences, discussions, activities, tasks, in the company of a bunch of other students or learners of leadership who become a team, as the five days unfold. And I guess, in facing those various activities and challenges, etc, you get to know both yourself and the other members of your team. Probably surprisingly well, and some people say actually better than they know colleagues that they've worked with for a long time. Simply because of the speed and the pace and the intensity of the discussions and the debates that are going to take place. You're kind of led by the hand through that process. By a series of very simple if, if I'm perfectly honest, very simple lessons in the component parts of good leadership. And the design of the programme is for you to experience the various relationships and the tasks and the challenges and the problems and the joys and the delights of what you're going through. And then to reflect on them, with your facilitator with your course director but mainly with the other colleagues in your group and on the programme, so that you can challenge affirm discuss test out those simple theories for yourself. It's not one size fits all. Some people will affirm parts and challenge others. But that's what the course is there to do. It's to enable you to have that experience that real life practical experience of testing out a simple theory of leadership against what works for you personally, and the people in your group.

Sam Powell 5:31

Fantastic Robin and John, Vicki and Tom, really invite you to reaffirm or even challenge Robin, as he's mentioned during that answer.

John White 5:42

I think the supplementary on that what he intended to do, I think this is where it's really important for the clients organisation, to understand what they want the delegates to get out of it really, it is difficult to say what it's intended to do, we can talk about the consequences of the course. But if you send somebody hoping that there'll be more confident, more outgoing, and then they go back to an organisation where they're told to just toe the line, get on with the job, then you just lead to frustration and confusion. So I think it's really important that the organisational objectives and the personal objectives are aligned in before delegates come on the course. So what's the intent? What's it intended? Well, why would you send somebody on a course like this? It has many, many benefits. But we have to put them against the context of the organisational structure and development and changes that are going on. That's, I don't know if that makes sense. But it would be a much better outcome for all concerned if those conversations are heard and understood by all parties.

Sam Powell 7:10

Fantastic. And I think, you know, I think what I really take from that John and Robin, is that whilst This is very much a personal journey for each of the individuals who go through the experience, there is some alignment and a need to really work with the organisational context to ensure that they marry up. And in fact, actually we come out of the programme going into, back into our organisation such that we can practice being the leader that we want to be, rather than being the leader that we are expected to be, which is really interesting. And that leads me into my second question which Tom, I'm I turned to you on this one, which is a common misconception. I think that this programme is quite simply a five day residential course. And I wonder whether you could just take quickly take us through what else is involved in this programme? And why indeed, that might be important.

Tom Storrow 8:03

I think looking back a very, very long way. Maybe the word delegates who came on the course and it was just a five day experience for them. But I think over the years, that's developed considerably. And there's that there's a lot of preparation goes into a delegates attending the course now, in terms of them doing, for example, a 360 degree assessment, and then getting some feedback on that having a kind of briefing discussion with one of the one of the LT staff before they come on the course. The idea of all that is to prepare them partly for the course but prepare them also for kind of reflecting on what they want to get out of it. What's the 360 telling them? What would they like to do differently, and so on. And what we do on the first day of the course, it's a point on the first down, of course, has asked the delegates to share with one another their personal learning objectives. And if they've done the 360 they've done the prep they've done that reflection, delegates come along with, with some ideas of what they really want to do. And there's an opportunity there just thinking back to what Robin and John, were just saying, there's an opportunity there to perhaps get them to reflect even before they come on the course about that alignment between their personal learning objectives, and what their organisation needs or how those objectives will fit in with the organisation. So there's that prep beforehand. But there's also at the end of it, it isn't just well, thanks so much for coming off you go. We do talk at the end of the course about, again, your reflections and your action plan. What do you take away from the course? What do you think you want to work on? And how can we and how can others help you with that? So again, there may be issues that it will be very useful for delegates to talk to their manager, talk to somebody within their organisation, talk to your coach about: one what they're trying to learn, but to how they can, how they can try to make those changes back in the real world and in the workplace. In addition, the person who did the 360 Review beforehand will do a follow up call to say, a few weeks after the course to say, so how was it for you? What's your action plan? What are you doing with it, and so on. So there's an element kind of reinforcements almost of, of kind of audit or coaching in that to say, so what are you going to do with it? So it wasn't just an interesting experience? And I know, quickly, forget about it. There is that reminder there is that, that encouragement to do something, do something with it. And in addition, there, there's our alumni group. Often, groups on the course will have exchange will have set up a WhatsApp group or change details. And people will be following up with one another to say, you said you were going to do X, how's it gone for you, and so on. And so things like the alumnae the blogs, and further contact without the can, can help with that, we hope I think that it's, it's it's not just a five day journey, it's a continuing journey. And this will prompt something that people will work on, well into the future. That's certainly what I did anyway.

Sam Powell 11:23

I think that makes a lot of sense. And really interesting, because I think we, we all kind of see the the course description, or the programme descriptions on but actually, the recognition that this is much more than just a five day experiences is really important. And John, what it what it leads me to think is, well, this thing is 50 years old now. And we've spoken to a lot of managing directors and CEOs who actually said, well, what makes this programme still relevant? What Why would I consider sending my guys on something that was designed 50 years ago? Can you give us a bit of insight into that?

John White 11:58

I think it's a really interesting question. And fundamentally, people don't change. I think the context in which we lead and aspire to lead has changed. The world is an organization's are less hierarchical than they used to be, there isn't the rigidity of structure, things are far more fluid. But people's

interpersonal skills are things that we can learn and we should learn, and then no clearer today, despite the fact that people read a lot more about leadership, hundreds and hundreds of books have been published on this subject, but has anything really changed. And so if people coming on the course can get a better understanding of how they impact other people, the people that they lead the people who lead them, if they can get an insight into that, then it might give them a clue on how they can change their behaviour in order to be more effective. And I suppose golfing Jones published a book some time ago with the haunting title is why would anybody want to be led by you? And it really is, if you stop and think about that, and really honest with yourself, then I think the answers that you would give would be the same as those people would give 50 years ago, when they first came. I think the course has changed over that time. I think it is less Outward Bound than it used to be. It came from structures in the military. So it is less rough and tough. It is it is for everybody, irrespective of their physical capabilities, but fundamentally, the self-examination of who you are and how you affect other people. And perhaps in the as a leader, rather than think about well, how do I how can I motivate my team? For me, I think the more important question is, how I can stop de-motivating? And that there's more to be gained from stopping, hacking people off rather than trying to motivate them. And if people motivate themselves, it's organisations that D motivate people. And the same applies now to, to what happened 50 years ago. But people that answered you are more likely to be open and challenging, less differential than they used to be. So the context has changed, but fundamentally people haven't. And the course is still going to be around in in quite some time unless there's a major shift in the human species, which I don't think there's going to be then it. It has its place well and truly planted. It's quite an intense personal one... examination of what makes each of us tick. So I think that's something that people should be prepared for when they come on the course whatever preparation, you're going to be asked some questions by other people in your team, other people on the course, even from yourself that you might not have considered for some time. And, and that's the reason why it's still so powerful as it has been all all throughout those 50 years, irrespective of market sector, irrespective of specialisation. And people say, well, it's different in finances different in it is different in the charity world. Now, people are still the same. And it's different in Africa. And it's different in Asia as different people are still saying fundamentally the same. And that's why it's been around for so long. I think.

Sam Powell 15:46

That's really interesting, John, and to demonstrate either how wonderfully or terribly well connected I am, depending on the perspective, I've interestingly added a supplementary question on that. From somebody who's actually been through the programme, I won't mention a name, because he said he asked me not to give him that he came through in the 1990s. But he has a group of millennial leaders who he's working with in his business. And his concern is actually well, I had a fantastic experience on this programme all these years ago, what's to say that my guys will get the same experience, if not better, after all these years? Open the floor. Can anyone give us any views on that?

John White 16:29

I think that the challenges come really about leadership itself from the term, I think it is had, justifiably, bad press. People are far more challenging about the leaders that we have the world leaders, if we look at some of the examples of political leaders and others, and in the financial sector, they haven't been the most values driven leaders that we've ever come across. And, and so younger people say, well, I don't want to be like them. I don't want I don't want anything to do with this leadership stuff. And yet, we have people that are leading causes so effectively on a global scale. And they have the skills to be able to motivate thoughts, thought leadership, perhaps that's the different way of looking at

it. It's, I still maintain that the course has a place, and it's a very powerful place. But I think it'd be interesting to ask that question of younger people who do come to the course to see if it's relevant for them. I suspect it is.

Robin Ancrum 17:37

I think that one of the advantages of the course, not necessarily have it, have it designed, but simply how it is, is that whether you are a millennial or a boomer or woke new ager, or whatever the hell you are, exactly, as John just said, you bring yourself to the to the programme. And fundamentally what is happening is a self-examination, with the help of and in the company of other people, we're also doing that self-examination. So it doesn't really matter what label is attached to you, the same process is going to take place, so that so that our subject and our objects are constantly refreshing themselves in a wonderfully creative way.

Sam Powell 18:31

Fantastic. Well, it sounds like a great opportunity for the my colleague who asked the question as we went through, and, and I suppose the, it leads me to a thoughts, Vicki, if I may, which is you know, if anyone is thinking about joining the programme in the next 12/18 months, you know, what, from your experience, what advice would you give to them? And why?

Vicki Howe 18:59

The first thing I'd say is when you come to the course be absolutely yourself, and don't try and be something else, because one of the things that we talk about throughout the week is authentic leadership. And it's worth just coming with an open mind, no matter what you've heard about the course because as John was saying, the courses evolve over 50 years. But if you've got that open mind, and even though you've listened to what other people have, have told you, your experience will be vastly different from anyone else's. And that's due to your own personal leadership styles strengths and challenges, but also those of every single person around you, including the delivery team and the facilitators and what's going on that week. So an open mind and being yourself would be really important. I think also as a top tip, and it's been referred to by John. And I think, Robin, it's an incredibly intense week on a personal level. And so ensuring that you have been given space to really embrace the course is incredibly important both because you're leaving your work behind, and you're leaving your family and all those connections behind. And they will have their own their own week, which can have its own ups and downs, and you'll have your own week and the more space, you have to give yourself some time to reflect and make the most of all the connections and the people that you're going to meet that week, the better. And, again, another one, I think this is probably point four would be come prepared, prepared to share what you want to get out of this course. And maybe where you want your leadership to go, even long term. So have those personal learning objectives quite clear to the start of the week. And you might find that they evolve throughout the week. And that's a good thing, because maybe that demonstrates that you're reflecting and learning as the week goes on. And you'll find that both your fellow participants and the delivery team will help you along that pathway. And I would also say the more you put into the week, the more that you'll get out of it. And I guess that's my philosophy in life, too. And so take the opportunity to connect with others, but also to experiment, because one of the really important things I think about this course is there's no feedback that goes back to your organisation. So you can try and do things differently, and make mistakes and sometimes making mistakes is actually the best way of learning and it's okay to make

mistakes. And you'll be supported and given opportunities to reflect on what happened and what you might do better. And what you've learned and what others around you have learnt as well. So it's a safe place to experiment and play, which kind of leads me on to my final top tip, which again, is one true to my heart and expect to have some fun and have some fun on the week because that is crucial to learning. If you're not having fun, then it's going to be a hard week.

Sam Powell 22:33

No, it was really, really interesting. And some fantastic tips, some of which I wish I knew when I went through the course was it five, six years ago. So yes, I think we can be quite hard on ourselves sometimes, can't we? I can see the Q&A box flashing away. And also I have some WhatsApp messages. So forgive me as I look in different directions, the questions which we would love to get through for you, John, I think this is in response to your point, but I will open the floor to answer. Somebody said there was mentioned of Outward Bound, which they take to mean outdoor experiences, which and I quote, they are absolutely terrified by the prospect of so their question is quite simple. Why on earth would I put myself through such a terrifying experience of climbing up a cliff face or going into a cave?

John White 23:27

I think why you would do it is to find out more about yourself to find out how you cope with that challenge, because life is full of challenges, whether they be Outward Bound, or in the office. So we tend to shy away from some challenges. And it's important to give clear guidance. You don't have to do anything that you don't want to on the course. It's completely up to you. And if you don't want to take a challenge, you do that knowingly. And the course will respect that. Absolutely. I don't think I've come across many people that say, I wish I hadn't done something on the course. So I think it is better to come and know that that's the situation. And to know what you can learn about yourself by being faced with things that you don't want to do, what have you got to pull on? And perhaps you've got to trust other people in order to get through a task. And for some of us, me, especially trusting other people and asking for help is incredibly difficult. And it still is many, many years after I went on the course I prefer almost to fail in to ask for help. So and I've always been that way. So I acknowledge the person's question. I acknowledge I acknowledge the challenge, but I would say the Outward Bound part is not the biggest challenge that you're going to have during the week, the biggest challenge is reflecting on who you are. And again in some, in some cases, you're going to have to reflect on the fact that you are a lot better than you thought you were. And when people tell you that, you're going to run away from that feedback, or you're going to accept it, and really take your talent and work with it, or it might tell you that you're perhaps not as, or you could do something better. It would be only better if you did something else, John, right. Now, it's going to be as big a challenge doing something else, rather than my well-practised and honed skills to change to enable me to lead people better. So that's why the challenges are there, it's just to put it into context, it's just a different, a different aspect of challenge to human beings. So I don't know if that gives any reassurance, it probably doesn't, firstly, because there's still going to be terrified of doing Outward Bound stuff. And I understand that, and people on the course will understand that. But rest assured, you won't have to do anything that you choose not to do.

Vicki Howe 26:10

Sam, can I come in on that one, too? I think the activities, which is the Outward Bound element of the programme adds another dimension, to the opportunities and the challenges that you get in the week. And we ask people to choose an activity that perhaps might challenge them most. And that's okay. Because when you do that, you're already challenging yourself to be open and honest with yourself about what does challenge you. And people select all sorts of things for different reasons. But the team that then support you through those activities are incredibly empathic and have a, an amazing ability to understand where you're coming from, and give you the support for you to continue to challenge yourself. And so you can choose the level of challenge that you want. And, for me, it's an opportunity to find out a lot about yourself in a completely different context, and how you relate and respond and work with other people and developing leadership skills in in a different way. And so I think my, my suggestion would be to say, to take that opportunity, maybe let people know how nervous you are about a specific element of the course and think about what would help you make those decisions and those choices. And I've been fortunate in my journey with the Leadership Trust to be one of those activity instructors. And I would say some of my most powerful experiences have been as an activity instructor, and walking alongside people who have done things that they've never dreamt they would ever do in their entire life. And then we've had others that have thoroughly enjoyed the experience. And that was unexpected, but it hasn't been the big part of their LM course, it's been something like what John's in third. So again, an open mind and not expecting too much is probably a wise approach for the LM and that Outward Bound element to it.

Robin Ancrum 28:39

I'm really interested, Alex, who came through the cost a couple of years ago, has just posted in chat a piece about the value he got out of the feedback, personal feedback from the 360 feedback that he got from his group. I think it's worth saying you know, that we can overlay the the reluctance or the nervousness or the fear that you might have on a cliff face. The really important and fears and reflectance and nervousness aren't out there in the physical world, it it's in our relationships with other people at work and at home. And that I think, is the point that Alex is making. Um, it's just that when you are halfway up a cliff, and your knees knocking in your throat gone dry and you're, you know, you're scared witless. It is very, very obvious that there is a clear relationship between that physical fear and your ability to perform. It's less obvious in other circumstances in other environments, but it's the same mechanism. And that I think to John's point earlier, is the little bit of self-exploration that you're doing in different environments.

Sam Powell 30:10

Fantastic. Thank you, everyone. That's really useful. And I'll get some feedback on the answer the questions to you later, I'm sure. Let's hope it is, good. I can also see in the Q&A that we've got a question, but a more practical question around the number of people who come through the programme. So we have clients that like to send multiple members of that team through a programme to kind of get them all on the same page. And the question they have is, as it's quite a personal journey, what would the recommendation be from the programme directors? Should they go on separate dates? Or can they come through together?

Robin Ancrum 30:47

You're going to get an anonymous vote on that on Sam. My guess is that we would say that, ideally, you come through in numbers, which are small enough that you don't have to be too close in your in a syndicate group with another member. So definitely don't have another person from your organisation in the same syndicate group. But at the same time, it can be really helpful to share the experience of the week with a colleague who is in a different syndicate group.

Sam Powell 31:23

And just for us, for those of us who maybe haven't been on the programme Robin by syndicate group, could you give us a bit of insight into what you mean by that?

Robin Ancrum 31:30

Typically, the course will consist of groups, small, smallish groups, or teams, of somewhere between seven by approximately seven or eight people. And normally, a course comprises three or four such groups. So the syndicate group is the small group, and you experience close relationships with those people, but you build relationships right across the course, with the other 21 or 22 people that you're working with as well.

Sam Powell 32:02

Fantastic. And it seems that that unanimous vote that you mentioned, Robin is shared by the silence.

John White 32:09

I think to have an personal experience it is you want to have the security and comfort of as Vicki said, there's no feedback to the organisation. So if you're on your own, then you then you, you know that somebody from the same organisation might be seeing what you're doing and feeding back. And perhaps there's that level of confidentiality. I think just as an aside, one of the potential pitfalls, if you're sending quite a few people through the course, is there's a reluctance for those who have attended to not talk about the course in any way. And, and that becomes a bit of a secret society and excludes other people. They've got a new language, which evolves around the models that he used in the trust. And it is a pity because you don't have to wait for everybody to go through the course before you start implementing some of the changes that you might like to make. It's a lost opportunity, if that happens, is just a point to do. Absolutely.

Sam Powell 33:18

Fantastic. Thank you, everyone. And I can see I've been keeping an eye on the chat bar as well. One further WhatsApp message from a friend of mine, actually, who's based out in the kingdom of Bahrain. And she mentions that she came through the leadership and management programme in 2018, full of energy full of excitement about putting into practice what she learned. And, again, she's asked me not to mention her name, but she feels that she's just lost a bit of that momentum. And she's curious to know, what would what would the advice be from the, from the programme directors who she worked with? Now that she's three, four years down the line?

Tom Storrow 34:04

Well, I, I talked earlier about preparation before and follow up afterwards. So perhaps if I make your first comments, I think it's always useful to go back to perhaps the notes you made, particularly for example, in feedback session, or in terms of action planning, and so on, and just start with, so what did I think and what did I feel two years ago or three years ago when I did the course, and what did I want to work? And think about so what what's been stopping me or what's getting in the way and so on. And there may be as I said earlier, in terms of fault, there may be a number of things that we can do, or colleagues and friends who've been through the course can do to help you with that help you unpick that and reflect on so I said I wanted to do 'X' so what's stopping me what would help me? What do I really need to how do I am Pick 'X' and so on. So I think the message I was trying to give earlier was, you don't have to do that all on your own. And that could be things that we can do as follow up. Or, as you were just saying a moment, as John was saying, a moment ago other people that have been through the course in your organisation can do to help you compare notes, reflect, refresh that action plan, or move on to the next things on your action plan.

John White 35:24

I think on a practical level, maybe if that person is leading a team, then have a conversation with the team on an individual basis, and say to the people, you lead, like, you know, I went on this leadership course a couple of years ago, I want to lead you in the best possible way. But tell me one thing I can do differently that will enable me to lead you better. And you've got to prepare yourself for shock, really, because I get what they're going to say is something really quite small and insignificant, but it'll make a big difference to them. And if it seems reasonable, and doubling pay, or holding entitlement is not reasonable in this context. But if it's reasonable, you say, Okay, I'll, I'll try and do that, will you give me some feedback on how I'm getting on from time to time, and if they say, Great, you're doing it and you're doing it really well, then you are a better leader, you're leading them better. And if you've done that with one person, do it with the next person. So you're working, because to become a better leader, you have to do things differently. And, and the prize is that you will be leading people better you will be enhancing their lives, you will be de motivating them less. And that can be quite encouraging in its own way, and quite rewarding, because that's what it's about. It's about you leading other people better giving them clear instruction or listening to the better or whatever it's going to be. So if they're stuck, then the clue is, is with the team. And so how can you do it differently? Because they are the world's authority on your leadership? Because they're being led by you every day. So why wouldn't you ask them? Unless, of course, you don't want to hear what they got to say.

John White 37:17

Sometimes that's even scarier than a rock face. But I would encourage you to do that and keep doing it.

Sam Powell 37:26

Fantastic. Sound Advice, Tom. And John, thank you very much.

Vicki Howe 37:32

Yes, I was just also thinking that there is a way of perhaps, as Tom said, referring back to your notes and holding a mini review with yourself in terms of having a look at your action points. And, and then imagining you have a facilitator, sitting either alongside you in front and asking those questions that come up in a review, How you feeling? You know, what's, what's worked? Well, perhaps what you could do differently? And what have you learned about yourself in the last few years? And then what are you going to do about it? So when? Yes, even if you need to find a photo with your facilitator, and stick it somewhere on the wall to have that conversation? And that could be another approach you could take?

John White 38:25

Okay, I think that's a great, that's a great point, and, and perhaps going on from Tom's point that if you were to phone, one of the people in your syndicate group and say, Look, I'm struggling with this. You know, what, what would you suggest I do, they will have, and you've been through this intense experience. And they'll be open and honest. And perhaps you can work together on it. So it's a good point.

Sam Powell 38:50

Excellent, thank you. Thank you all. And I'm extremely conscious that for the Scottish and Czech Republic fans, there's an important time coming up at two o'clock. So I will just have one final run through the Q&A bar and the comments, just to see for any final questions, if you do, please, please do let us know. Equally. If you if a question kind of stimulates after we've closed Do you feel free to send them through I'm sure we can communicate some answers. It looks like we've closed everything for now, though, which all leads me to say is thank you for everyone joining us today. Thank you to Vicki, John, Tom and Robin for sharing your insights and experience with YouTube. Of course, if you do have any further questions, or if you'd like any further information around the programme, do not hesitate to get in contact with us. I know that the team will be in touch just to email out the recording of this video, which I'm sure we will all be delighted to share. And he says feeling slightly uncomfortable about that thought that hey, it's all part of the fun of the experience. Thank you so much for joining us, and we'll see you next time.