

# The Chequerboard of Leadership

*Extraordinary leadership occurs when EQ meets Delivery*

By Campbell Macpherson

Author of the 2018 Business Book of the Year

Leadership is delivering results - through people.

And this is far from easy, as we all now, for it involves influencing, herding and managing complex, often irrational, emotional humans. Leadership is not about telling people what to do: that never works (at least not for long).

Leadership today is not about hierarchy; it is about influence. And leaders exist at all levels of an organisation – whether you have direct reports or not. Leadership is about influencing people across the organisation. It is about helping people to want to change.

Leadership is important: the future of our families, our clubs, our teams, our departments and our organisations depend upon it. The better we are at leading and influencing people, the better off everyone around us will be. And we can all become better, and more influential, leaders.

In my 25+ years of enabling a multitude of business leaders to lead successful and sustainable change, I have seen that extraordinary leaders possess three core, critical skills:

1. The ability to deliver sustainable results
2. The ability to influence, motivate and empower people (Emotional Intelligence)
3. The ability to build extraordinary leadership teams

Poor leaders possess none of these skills. Extraordinary leaders possess all three - in abundance.

They are focused on the delivery of outcomes that are sustainable. They have honed their influencing skills and worked on their emotional intelligence knowing that when it comes to leadership, EQ trumps IQ hands down. And they realise that 21<sup>st</sup> Century leadership is a team game, not a solo pursuit.

They also realise that every one of these attributes require continual development. The future of their careers and their organisations depend upon it.

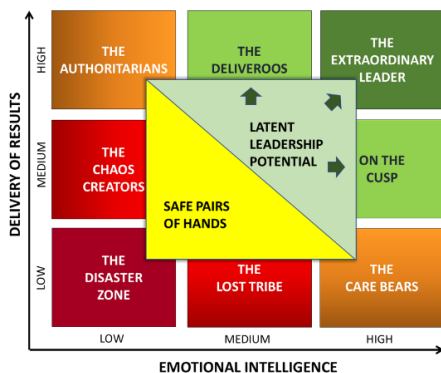
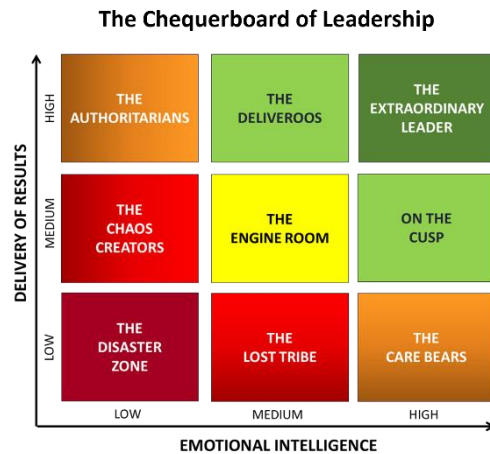
This paper focuses on the first two attributes above. You can download the paper on Extraordinary Leadership Teams from the Downloads page of [www.changeandstrategy.com](http://www.changeandstrategy.com).

## Extraordinary Leaders ... of leaders

When it comes to the first two attributes of individual leadership (delivery and EQ), each different type of leader between the two extremes of woeful and extraordinary can be plotted on a simple matrix that I have called 'The Chequerboard of Leadership'.

It is a chequerboard because a leader's position on the board is not set in stone. No matter which square someone may occupy today, they do not have to be imprisoned in that cell forever, they can move - preferably upwards and to the right - as long as they are aware of their position on the board and possess the desire to change.

Leaders in The Disaster Zone are irredeemable in their current role, while some leaders among the 'Chaos Creators' or 'Lost Tribe' will be capable of changing and developing to become better leaders.



Those in the light green squares are the high potential leaders of your organisation. Companies are quick to design leadership development programmes and talent development programmes for 'The Deliveroos' and those who are 'On the Cusp'. Within 'The Engine Room' (yellow square) are the leaders and managers that can sometimes be taken for granted – and yet they are the backbone of the business. The middle yellow square is also the most populous square on the board – described by one CEO client as their "permafrost middle-management layer".

He was mistaken: his permafrost layer elsewhere - within the red squares.

The 'Engine Room' is where opportunity can be found, for it contains two invaluable groups of people:

1. 'Safe Pairs of Hands' – competent managers that every business needs. And their leadership competence and effectiveness can be enhanced.
2. 'Latent Leadership Potential' – hidden leaders, often technical experts and professionals, whose development will deliver substantial returns for the business.

Unlocking the potential of The Engine Room could transform your organisation.

*Where would you place yourself on the board?*

*Where would other people place you?*

*In which square would you place your manager?*

*In which square would you place each member of your organisation's leadership team?*

*Why?*

## 5 Components of Emotional Intelligence

Harvard Business School describes emotional Intelligence as ‘your ability to understand yourself and understand other people – what motivates them and how to work cooperatively with them.’

However, if we wish to improve our EQ and become even more effective leaders, we need to dig deeper.

There are five categories of emotional intelligence and each one of those can be broken down further into sub-categories.

My workshop delegates use the information below to assess themselves so that they can begin to work on those areas that will have the most impact.



**1. Self-awareness.** Recognising your own emotions and feelings, how you react under pressure and the effect you have on others.

- Self-confidence: sureness about your self-worth, strengths and capabilities.
- Humility: appreciation of your weaknesses, influences and biases. The ability to acknowledge that you may not be 100% right. Humility is strength.
- Observation: The ability to observe your emotions without judgement.
- Self-honesty: Honesty about all of the above and both the right reason and the real reason for why you want to achieve the outcome.
- Impact. Understand the effect you have on others (positive & negative).

**2. Self-control.** Managing disruptive impulses, how you react and how long an emotion lasts.

- Controlling emotions. The realisation that it is you who generates your emotions, not the other party. The emotions you feel, their strength and what triggers them – are all within your control.
- Detachment. The ability to stay slightly detached, emotionally. To be objective and look at the bigger picture.
- Integrity. A desire to maintain standards of honesty and honour.
- Adaptability. Handling change with flexibility.

**3. Empathy.** Understanding others – how they think, feel and what they are trying to achieve. The ability to genuinely put yourself in their shoes and appreciate their point of view.

- Respect for the other person or at the very least, their position/viewpoint. A belief that they have the best intentions / come from a 'good' place.
- Understanding the implications of the change / achieving the outcome for the business, the department, for you and for the other person.
- Understanding the right reason and the real reason for them wanting to achieve their desired outcome.
- Embracing and encouraging diversity of thought, background and experience. Avoiding echo chambers and encouraging 'constructive disagreements' and new ideas.
- Social awareness. Reading a group's emotional currents and relationships.

**4. Relationship Management.** Developing the skills you need to deliver shared objectives.

- Listening to understand not just to reply.
- Ability to deliver clear, relevant messages that are understood.
- Scanning. The ability to gauge how an interaction is going in real time and pick-up on social cues.
- Collaboration, cooperation and compromise. Willingness to compromise to find shared objectives. 'Winning' solo is only ever short term.
- Managing conflicts and difficult situations with honesty and respect

**5. Motivation.** Of self and of others. Building clear goals, taking initiative, commitment and a positive, proactive attitude.

- Ability to motivate yourself.
- Ability to motivate others.
- Driven to achieve. Desire to deliver the required outcomes.
- Willingness to initiate, manage and embrace change.
- Optimism, positive attitude and proactive approach.
- Clarity of what you are seeking to achieve – and why.

*How would you assess yourself on each of the above?  
How would your colleagues or your manager assess you?*

*Comparing and contrasting the differences will be invaluable: one of the best leadership development exercises you can do.*

**Change & Strategy International (CSI)** enables leaders to become extraordinary leaders of change – starting with themselves. We help leaders to align their people to deliver, build extraordinary leadership teams, develop extraordinary leadership skills, build change-ready cultures and lead successful change.

**88% of change initiatives, business strategies, mergers and acquisitions fail.**  
**We enable leaders to be the 1 in 8 that succeeds.**

CSI's Principal, Campbell Macpherson, is an international business advisor, change leadership expert, keynote speaker and award-winning author. He is also an Executive Fellow of Henley Business School.

**3 Key Leadership Papers:**

- The 12 Traits of an Extraordinary Leaders
- The Chequerboard of Leadership: when EQ meets Delivery
- The 8 Components of Extraordinary Leadership Teams

**3 Key Leadership Programs:**

- 'Leading with Influence' Program
- 'Extraordinary Leadership Teams' Program
- 'Leading Change' workshops and webinars

Campbell has been advising organisations worldwide since 2011. A selection of the client list can be seen in the column on the right. His multi-disciplined executive career spanned three decades with organisations across Australia, UK, Europe, US, ME and Asia. He was the founder of one of Australia's first multimedia companies. He started his career flying jets (badly) in the RAAF.



Campbell is on the books of several keynote speaking agencies across the UK, US and Australasia, and gives speeches worldwide on change and leadership.

He is the author of three books – and runs programmes on each of them:

- 'The Change Catalyst' (Wiley 2017), the 2018 Leadership & Business Book of the Year. It is about leading change.
- 'The Power to Change' (Kogan Page 2020), which was a Runner Up in the 2021 Business Book Awards. It is about embracing personal change.
- 'You: Part Two - thriving in the second half of your life' (Hachette 2021), co-authored by his yogi wife, Jane. Enlightened organisations use content from the book to empower their invaluable Second Half employees and forge even closer relationships with their lucrative Second Half customers.



**New! Campbell's fourth book *Transforming Olympus* will be published in 2024.** A 2-part leadership fable: In Part 1 the Greek Gods realise they must change the way they lead if they are to avoid the devastation of eternal irrelevance. In Part 2 a (fictional) company in the real world needs to enhance its leadership swiftly if is to survive in today's fast-changing world.

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Facilitator, Speaker,  
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and Change Catalyst.**



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