



# MITCHELL PHOENIX

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT TRAINING

### **Expert Facilitation vs Facilitation by Experts**

When choosing a leadership and management development programme, one is likely to encounter courses which promise “facilitation by experts.” The experts will have a background in a particular industry, and will draw on this background as they develop managers from the same industry on their programme.

In this way, ex civil-servants will train other civil servants, ex manufacturing directors will instil leadership and management disciplines in those working in manufacturing, ex-lawyers will develop other lawyers, and ex IT professionals will inculcate “soft skills” in current IT professionals.

When the development focuses around technical information, it is easy to understand why those with a background in a similar industry might be preferable. Non-lawyers will have no grasp of technical aspects of law, non-IT professionals will know little about the technical issues facing those working at the front line of IT.

Where leadership and management attitudes and skills are to be developed, it is less clear why those with a particular industry background will be a useful choice. An impressive track record working in a particular industry suggests a person is expert at working in that particular field, rather than in developing others to do so. Further, the more impressive the track record, the stronger the hold it will exert over the person’s thinking. Hard-won experience is even harder to relinquish. Yet anyone who wishes to develop wider understanding must do just that: let go of the particular, loosen their grip on their individual insights and begin to see further than their own autobiography.

Developing and inspiring others is not the same as doing oneself, as footballers who turn to management often discover. Who had a better track record than Sir Bobby Charlton? In terms of industry experience, of “been there, done it, got the medals to prove it,” at one stage he was peerless in the English game. His management career underlined the gap between doing oneself and mobilising others. (His choice of subsequent activities shows how fast he learned this, and how shrewd and adaptable he is.)

What qualifications should one look for from those involved in management development? Expert facilitation: facilitation by those who are expert at facilitating, rather than those who are expert at something else, however



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relevant that may appear. Development by those who have a proven track record of developing others, and who can show measurable results from their work. Management based on principles which hold true for any environment, rather than tactics which worked in certain circumstances, but may not in others.

Mitchell Phoenix provide a unique and powerful influence that transforms the way leaders think and act. With offices in London, New York and Singapore, Mitchell Phoenix closes the gap between knowledge and understanding, bringing new insight and solutions. Our programmes build profitable behaviour, business results, and leave a permanent legacy both corporately and personally.

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