

High Performance Leadership Workshop with Mike Harris

3 hours of teaching and worked examples

What is High Performance Leadership?

High Performance Leadership involves the creation of an environment which unleashes peoples' energy, creativity, innovation and commitment whilst at the same time being rigorous about managing to stretching performance goals.

Implemented well it gets results way beyond the predictable and it gets them with a speed and ease that can be breathtaking.

Who is it for?

- Leadership teams of companies of any size from start ups to £250m pa Corporates.
- Leadership teams of divisions or functions in larger companies.
- Individual Executives
- Business owners
- Entrepreneurs

Most participants are interested in high performance leadership as a way of growing revenues and achieving a bigger scale than they previously thought possible. Some use it to attract the resources they need to get started. For others it is a way to achieve what they want in business without having to trade in their quality of life and finally there is a group who are unsatisfied with their products and services and whose primary aim is to get breakthroughs in quality, customer engagement and customer satisfaction

What's the output

- An understanding of the principles and tools of high performance
- An ability to use some of the tools immediately on issues relevant to the participant

The Principles and Tools

Behave like an iconic brand

The business does not have to *be* an iconic brand, but it does have to behave like one. At the heart of an iconic brand is a promise of a valued experience to all who work in the organisation or touch it in any way. For example at Firstdirect we built the brand around a promise of heroic customer service that left people feeling totally taken care of. We tried to ensure employees, business partners, shareholders and customers all felt totally taken care of in any dealings they had with Firstdirect. The brand experience was the heart of the company, the driving force behind its culture.

You don't need to be Virgin or Apple to create a brand promise (also known as 'a mission') which shapes every single action you take and gets you out of bed every morning fired up. Essentially, you take on creating a brand experience and a culture that is vibrant, and irresistible.

In this sort of environment innovation, customer insight and customer engagement take care of themselves. They become as natural as breathing!

Use Outcome Based Strategies -view current results, good or bad, as the signposts to an inspiring future

High performance leaders get committed to an extraordinary, inspiring future, without worrying about how they'll get there. This involves using current results as insight into what's working and what isn't about our current approach rather than regarding them as good or bad. *What's missing about what we are doing now that would make a difference-* is a great question – all too rarely asked. Usually it's drowned out by *what's wrong and who is to blame?*

A key tool in applying outcome based strategies is what I call '*Smart Risk Assessment*'. This allows anyone to approach extraordinary strategic goals an achievable step at a time. A smart risk is one where we don't mind failing (as long as the failure is fast and cheap) and where the upside is worth the investment in time, money and reputation.

Create Leverage through a Perfect Pitch – use others' needs and resources to power up our business

Who has a problem to which we are a solution? That's the question that allows us to leverage the needs and resources of others (customers, distributors, JV partners, investors) to power up our business. Answering the question allows us to build a perfect pitch which will attract those we need. A high performance leader delivers a perfect pitch at every opportunity to everyone he meets.

Balance

Jim Collins in his book *Good to Great* argued that the most effective leaders stay perfectly balanced between an unshakeable belief that they will prevail in the end (somewhat irrational) and a willingness to confront the facts of the current reality however grim (totally rational). In my opinion this precarious position balanced on the edge of reason is where a leader is most alive: able to light up an entire room with her enthusiasm for what she is creating and able inspire everyone around her with her determination to confront whatever needs confronting to take the next decisive step.

Process

- **Hour 1** –Mike explains the principles behind high performance, using examples from his own companies, and companies he knows well
- **Hour 2 - worked examples**
 - What would behaving like an iconic brand look like for you?
 - Find one aspect of your current business inconsistent with that behaviour, one aspect which is consistent and could be elevated and come up with one new idea?
 - How would you develop leverage – think of one powerful organisation or person to whose problem are you a solution? What would be your pitch to them?
 - What's your game for the next 12 months – a game you can play full on and be satisfied, win or lose?
- **Hour 3** –Participants invited to share problems they are currently facing. Mike will offer on the spot coaching which will illustrate to everyone the principle of balance

Mike Harris and High Performance

- Mike gradually discovered and developed the principles and tools used in the workshops as he created three billion pound plus businesses (Firstdirect, Mercury and Egg) – all known as high performance organisations with vibrant cultures and iconic brands.
- Firstdirect is one of the highest rated organisations in the world for customer satisfaction and has been consistently so for 21 years
- Mercury grew from a turnover of £900m and a profit of £90m to a turnover of £1.6bn and a profit of £215m in just three years. Mercury was more famous than BT in 1993 (as measured by unprompted awareness of telcos)
- Egg was the fastest ever growing new bank in the UK and met its five year targets for deposit growth in just 6 months. Egg for many years had more internet banking customers than any other bank in the world. Egg card was the fastest growing new credit card in the UK since the initial launch of Barclaycard in the 1970s
- Egg confounded all the analysts who said that to achieve the stretch goal set in its IPO document (written in 2000) of achieving profitability in 2001 was simply impossible.
- Mike has introduced the principles of high performance to 100s of businesses in the last two years