



LEADING REMOTELY

Lessons from Academia, the Military
and the Corporate World
One-Page Summary Part 1

THE CENTRE
FOR ARMY
LEADERSHIP



Session one focused on leading remotely within Defence. The discussion began with an analysis of the development of Mission Command in the British and German militaries during the 1944 Normandy Campaign. The panelists then shared their experiences of leading organisations in a remote context, discussing how they overcame issues of information sharing, delegated decision-making and authority, and maintaining personal connections at reach.

Leadership Lessons

- ◆ Remote leadership requires the empowerment of subordinates more than ever.
- ◆ Punish negligence, not mistakes - do not stifle initiative.
- ◆ Reflect on what you have experienced over the past year of working remotely. Be willing to learn and adapt to ensure the benefits are not lost. This is critical to access skills, capabilities and talent for the future.
- ◆ Recent remote online work has led to richer conversations and more confidence in questioning from junior and introverted employees through the use of IM. Consider your leadership mannerisms in the physical world; do you empower your juniors and encourage them to ask questions regardless of rank or role?
- ◆ Time should be allocated to the development of an organisational culture where trust is cardinal and individuals are invited to take risks and challenge leaders. The benefits of this will be felt when a team and their bonds are stress-tested.
- ◆ Show compassion. Be prepared to act to make things better for someone else.

Prof Keith Grint, Professor Emeritus at Warwick University Business School.



“Commanders rarely or never reproached their subordinates unless they had made a terrible blunder.”

Maj Gen Nick Borton DSO MBE, Chief of Staff Operations at the Permanent Joint Headquarters.



“Trust your instincts, especially when your instincts are that someone else has got a better idea.”

Maj Gen Tom Copinger-Symes CBE, Director Strategy and Military Digitisation, MOD.



“Empowerment embodies front-footedness — sense, decide, act.”

Siobhan Sheridan former Civilian Human Resources Director, MOD.



“Leaders need to become better at inviting challenge...we need to de-risk it for our followers.”

Gen (Retd) Stanley McChrystal former JSOC Commander.



“If you get on the ground and decide the order was wrong, execute the order we should have given you.”

Watch a recording of the conference [here](#)



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Session two looked at the science behind leading remotely from academia and business. The panellists discussed the effects of the work environment on productivity and the importance of creating an organisation where asking for help is not seen as a sign of weakness.

Leadership Lessons

- ◆ 5 keys for leaders and employees to thrive in remotely: autonomy, proactive communication, setting boundaries, knowing your needs and resources, and individualised consideration.
- ◆ Information > Instruction > Influence. Information works but it could be misinterpreted. Instruction is good, but generally leads to boring, tedious work. Influence is best because it does not assume compliance based on a job title but because the employee also wants to do it.
- ◆ Diversity is more than a box-ticking exercise. Focus on cognitive diversity: insight, perspective, heuristics. A non-cognitive diverse team is an echo chamber.
- ◆ Invigorate peer-to-peer solutions. Make it possible for your team to meet objectives; stop anything that does not add value.
- ◆ Encourage serendipity. Set the conditions to create a forum that fosters the fertilisation of diverse ideas.
- ◆ Recognise that as a leader you have a role as a crafter of culture. Form a climate that inspires curiosity.

Dr Sara Perry, Associated Professor of Management at Baylor University.



“Give people the discretion to work out how to get work done.”

“What needs are automatically met at work that you need to meet differently at home?”

Kris Wadia, a Global Business Executive with a track record of launches, growth and transformation across 70 countries.



“Focus on people and you will be a remote leader; focus on technology and you will be a leader who is remote.”

Matthew Syed, world-renowned author and highly acclaimed speaker in the field of high performance.



“Shift from a fixed mindset of know-it-alls, to a growth mindset of learn-it-alls.”

“Confidence in the execution is not incompatible with humility in the review.”

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