

Effective leadership is about communication



By [Louise Marsland](#)

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Transactional, autocratic leadership is not the future of organisations - the new paradigm is servant leadership that seeks to inspire and liberate, said Brand Pretorius, CEO of McCarthy Ltd, in his keynote address to the Public Relations Institute of South Africa (PRISA) annual conference today, 30 May 2005, held at the Sibaya Casino & Entertainment Kingdom, outside Durban in KwaZulu Natal.

Where there is effective leadership, one can see good, sustainable results, said Pretorius. But effective leadership is a joint responsibility as the business environment becomes more complex.

"The business world we used to know doesn't exist anymore - the change has been that fundamental. The reality is that business leaders have to make complicated decisions on an ongoing basis, under a lot of pressure. Against that backdrop, if we talk about effective leaders today... and I've had my fair share of success and failure... there are some guidelines for success for effective leaders:

- The effective leader has the ability to transform and perform at world class levels of efficiency, at the same time. Change is the price of survival.
- Live according to the right values... transparency, transformation, ethics, excellency... These are not values that we put up against a wall and pay lip service to them. These are values that one lives by.
- An effective leader creates common purpose, alignment and synergy.
- An effective leader has the skill to communicate at all levels. This is not just about talking to the leaders, but about winning the hearts and minds of all at all levels of an organisation - the glue that keeps an organisation together and influences all stakeholders.
- An effective leader creates the right culture in an organisation. Many organisations in South Africa still have a Euro-centric culture, but we live in South Africa and sometimes we are insensitive to the Ubuntu principle, where achievement might not be the most important principle. Effective leaders recognise diversity.
- Effective leaders build relationships on trust - because where there is no trust, there is no legitimacy.
- What is a key success factor in terms of effective leadership, is that it is visionary, not autocratic and transactional. What was the old model of management? It wasn't leadership! It doesn't work any more. The new model of leadership is to create a unifying vision, which on the attainment of that, will reward anyone. Then we inspire. We make people enthusiastic. Leaders are the dispensers of enthusiasm, who create a sense of belonging. There is commitment, not just reluctant compliance. We have an abundance mentality - we reward great work. Leaders have to close the loop.
- Leadership is not about control and playing policeman and issuing instructions. Leadership is also about serving, showing real interest, and caring. Servant leadership is the future of leadership.
- Leaders have to be socially responsible... and sow the seeds that will benefit others and make the world a better place."

"I have learned many things about leadership," Pretorius said. "Leadership is a responsibility, it isn't a right. I have to earn the support and the loyalty and respect of my people. I can never demand it. And I have to earn it on an ongoing basis: the moral right to lead. I have learned that leadership is not about ego and authority, it's about results and achievement. Leadership thrives on results, and not on salutes. Leadership is not about how many people want control. Leadership is about how many people we liberate, so that they can achieve their own potential. Leadership is not about instructing - but about coaching and encouraging. It is not about taking, but about giving. Leadership is about leading people to a better tomorrow.

"The new paradigm of leadership is all about the strength of your spirit, the power of your ideals, your humanity, your ability to win the hearts and minds of all your team members."

Pretorius says he reminds himself everyday of four key principles: "give my people direction; earn their trust; deliver results; and I must give them hope".

ABOUT LOUISE MARSLAND

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