



The Tortoise Usually Wins is a delightful exploration of the theory of quiet leadership. Written for reluctant leaders, it interacts with three key biblical images of leadership – the leader as servant, shepherd and steward – and links them with some of the key virtues of quiet leadership – modesty, restraint, tenacity, interdependence and other-centeredness. The book argues that the bulk of leadership is about helping groups decide the right things to do and then getting on and doing them. Brian Harris is the principal of a highly regarded theological seminary and also pastors a thriving local church, so the book carries the wisdom of both professor and pastor, satisfying the reader both intellectually and practically. These insights are supplemented by interviews with significant quiet leaders from around the world, ensuring a rich feast for prospective and current reluctant leaders.

'Books on leadership are today two a penny. Just occasionally, however, one of these books might stand head and shoulders above most of the others, and to my delight *The Tortoise Usually Wins* falls into that category. Furthermore, so many books on leadership are written for natural leaders; whereas, as the author makes clear, most churches are led by "quiet leaders" who know they are not great, but nonetheless, are "tenacious and committed to the task and willing to work co-operatively with others to achieve it". I can see many church leaders benefitting from this book. I warmly commend this unusual book.'

PAUL BEASLEY-MURRAY, SENIOR MINISTER, CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH, CHELMSFORD; CHAIR OF MINISTRY TODAY UK

'Without "quiet" leaders the Kingdom of God would be bereft. Why do treatments of leadership focus so little on developing those who are not considered the most charismatic, gifted or talented? Harris rectifies this problem and in so doing he skilfully interacts with practical ministry and ethical issues. This book is written from the heart and is a must read for the whole church.'

ROSS CLIFFORD, PRINCIPAL OF MORLING COLLEGE, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

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BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS ON QUIET LEADERSHIP FOR RELUCTANT LEADERS

BRIAN HARRIS

From Leadership to Leaderships: Getting Teams to Work in the Same Direction

Two key quiet leadership skills are the ability to bring the best out of others and to get people to work together to meet common goals. In our last chapter we focused on the former, in this one we look at the importance of developing strong teams.

Effective quiet leaders are surrounded by teams who work to ensure that the overall goals of the group are furthered. This requires more than groups of people working together happily. Quiet leaders keep an eye on outcomes, and regularly ask if the way in which teams are configured and the calibre of their interaction leads to the group meeting its goals more effectively. When the quality of the interaction among team members is not monitored, it can degenerate into competitive pettiness, cliques, time-wasting meetings and a multiplicity of agendas that have little or nothing to do with the group's overall mission and purpose. By contrast, when groups of people work harmoniously for common goals and are willing to monitor their progress in meeting these goals, the result is usually a stimulating and successful workplace.

Quiet leaders know that they are not omniscient. Conscious that there are many areas in which they do not excel, they are quick to acknowledge their dependence on the skills and insights of others. They recognize that successful groups have high levels of interdependence where drawing on the abilities of others is a normal part of group functioning. They therefore spend time reflecting on what helps people to work together effectively. They

ask why some teams work well, and others do not. They develop the emotional intelligence to work both with individuals and with groups of people. If this does not come naturally to them, like Myrtle in our opening chapter, they plod their way forward, one step in front of the next, learning from both what works and what does not, and in the end they develop effective teams as they realize that without them even the most inspiring of visions will come to nothing.

Biblical reflections on teams

The concept of people working together is one that underpins the pages of Scripture. The individualism so prevalent in the Western world is foreign to the world of the Bible. Most of its narratives are about people working *with* and *on behalf of* others, rather than in splendid isolation, or for self-interest. Though the Bible declares that God is one, it portrays God in Trinitarian terms, finding no contradiction in the God who is Father, Son and Spirit being one God. As humanity is made in the image of God, it should reflect something of the triune nature of God if it is to be a valid reflection of God's image. While we are moving into theologically complex terrain, it is hard to see how a disconnected individual can reflect the nature of the God who is triune, or the God who was incarnated. In Jesus we see that God is God with us – or God in community.

Jesus developed his own team of twelve disciples. Though they were a motley crew at the start, they went on to change the world. By no stretch of the imagination were they a perfect group of people. While we quickly remember that Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus, he was not the only problematic disciple. The gospels reflect many times of tension within the group. They argued about which of them was the most important and were reluctant to perform the mundane duties of community life – so much so that Jesus was left to wash the disciples' feet. Their stunning success, while a clear tribute to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, is also a reminder that groups can make dramatic progress.

The apostle Paul had a clear commitment to working with others, and recruited co-workers for his mission trips, leaving behind

dedicated teams of believers to grow the local church in each city he visited. These groups often left much to be desired, and some of Paul's letters deal with the significant problems that arose. In spite of their limitations, these fledgling churches had an astonishing impact on the ancient world. Paul saw the importance of different team members taking on different roles, and in Ephesians 4:11–13 writes:

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

In short, Paul sees a range of leadership roles (thus looking for leaderships, rather than simply leadership), and includes in his list apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Each of these in turn helps to 'prepare God's people for works of service'. The circle of involvement grows wider and wider, but the common vision ('so that the body of Christ may be built up') does not falter.

While there is enormous potential in having people work together, quiet leaders master the art of getting team members to work together for common goals and shared dreams. Too often teams are made up of strong individuals who pull in different directions. Quiet leaders realize that while each person has their own abilities and aspirations, the leadership challenge is to get them to work together in such a way that the sum of the whole is considerably greater than the component parts.

The synergy that results from people working together effectively is enormous. Some of the older literature on leadership discusses long lists of leadership requirements. The focus is largely on one uniquely gifted individual rising above all others. This 'heroic' view of leadership is rarely attainable, and the inevitable failure to meet the full list of expectations often leads to a sense of guilt, while it drives others on until they burn out. It is both more realistic and more biblical to hope that the requirements will be met by a team than by an individual.

How then can we get teams to work in the same direction and thus to be more effective?

Two blocks to tick: climate and task

In an ideal setting people gather together as a result of shared vision and a common mission. They want to be together because they sense that they will be better together and more likely to accomplish dreams which they suspect will otherwise prove elusive.

Realizing dreams through teams is only likely to happen if the quiet leader can both ensure a harmonious, stretching, perhaps even fun-filled environment, while also keeping the group on task. There are thus two key questions that the quiet leader needs to ask. One is about the climate within the team, the second about its effectiveness in ticking off the tasks it needs to achieve. We focus on each block in turn, before looking at some of the areas of overlap between the two.

About climate

The moment we focus on group climate a raft of questions springs to mind. Are relationships good and harmonious? Do people feel free to offer their contribution, or do they remain silent for fear of being criticized or abused? Is there enough downtime in which members can laugh and imagine and discover the richness of the group's diversity? Do people yarn about their children and hobbies and relatives – indeed, the contours of their particular life, rather than just life in general? How is conflict handled? What is the trust level in the group?

There are some tangible things we can do to enhance the climate within a team.

Build unity, not uniformity

Unity means that a team is agreed on its vision, its purpose, and its philosophy or ethos. It is very hard to make progress unless there is agreement on these large building blocks.

It doesn't mean that everyone sees everything in exactly the same way, and certainly when it comes to implementing decisions, people often have very different work patterns. Initially this can make things seem difficult, even a little threatening, but quiet leaders allow for diversity, knowing that the team is

weaker without it. Uniformity in a team leads to blandness, and also usually results in significant blind spots – as a team where uniformity is stressed most commonly lands up looking at issues from the same angle, thereby remaining uninformed of the vista quickly spotted from a different position. Diversity in a team allows for different energy levels, capacities and ways of dealing with pressure and conflict. Ryan might cope with a difficult day by guzzling large quantities of cheesecake, and this might be to the astonishment of Anna who finds that a 10km run is the only thing that helps her de-stress. Quiet leaders don't try to control this diversity, but delight in it. Nor do they keep that delight to themselves, but make a conscious decision to affirm the colourful quirks and idiosyncrasies within the team, thereby making them a strength rather than a weakness. Naturally everything has its limits. If one member's way of coping with stress is to scream at all the other team members, it is not really OK, and quiet leaders will work to help the person find more constructive alternatives.

Quiet leaders build harmony and unity within the team by consistently finding ways to affirm the contribution that each team member makes. They help others spot the positives in each person, thereby making it less likely that people will adopt the destructive strategy of always commenting on the negative.

This is not to suggest that there is no place for challenge in a team setting. Great teams have a teachable spirit. Although insecure people struggle with negative feedback and quickly become defensive, with encouragement and persistence this can change and issues which need to be addressed can be discussed.

Encourage real conversations

As a general principle, teams work best when they are places where real conversations are birthed. It is very frustrating to be part of a team that only works with the superficial. Leaders face facts. Sometimes those facts can only be understood after deep reflection. Few breakthroughs are likely to occur without it. Mark Strom writes: 'In my experience, when leaders do not foster a rich environment of conversation – an environment open to testing commitment and even to breakdown – a kind of void opens up at the very heart of the organization. This void is like a missing conversation.'

Quiet leaders encourage real conversations by participating in them openly and realistically. Instead of letting the team become trite or simplistic, they open topics up, giving a clear cue that genuine exploration of the topic is desired. This frees other team members to explore thoughtfully.

Distinguish between being aggressive and being assertive

Working teams are often made up of people who are leaders in their own sphere and it is not uncommon to have a number of forceful personalities within one team. Aggression is a behaviour that seeks to dominate others. It usually ignores the needs, opinions and feelings of others. Aggression intimidates and manipulates others and quiet leaders will quickly nip such actions in the bud, knowing that most people underperform in aggressive contexts.

Being assertive involves standing up for personal rights and expressing thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate ways which do not violate another person's rights. Team members need to communicate openly, clearly and sensitively with each person being assertive and encouraging others to be the same. Part of being assertive involves a willingness to use 'I' statements and to own one's own feelings and responses. An example is: 'Can I be honest? The tone the group is taking is making me feel that I don't really want to be part of the conversation. When I hear raised voices, my instinct is to back away. But I actually care about what we are doing and don't want to opt out of the discussion just because, in my opinion, we are being a little bad-mannered.'

Some group members have a special knack of being able to defuse difficult situations with humour or affirmation or by depersonalizing the issue being explored. This is a very valuable contribution, and should be affirmed by quiet leaders.

Keep short accounts with other team members

Misunderstandings, miscommunication and conflict will inevitably occur in a team. While the line of least resistance is to adopt an ostrich-like stance and pretend that nothing is wrong, issues which are left to fester become more and more hazardous. If enough time lapses, attitudes which could have easily been

remoulded set like concrete. A sign of healthy relationships is when team members have the freedom to talk honestly with other team members about hurts and misunderstandings. There is little point in working through difficult issues if you are about to leave a group, so a willingness to handle issues should be seen as a vote of confidence in the future of the team.

Teams lose their spiritual cutting edge and sharpness when hurt and pain are allowed to grow. A simple method to stop misunderstandings developing is to ask for a climate check at the end of each meeting. People can be asked how they are feeling after the meeting, and to give a rating of 1 (flattened), 2 (fine), 3 (delighted). You would usually expect 2s and 3s. A single 1 might be reason for the group to take some time to explore why, or the leader might follow through on it; several 1s should result in time for relationship-building being prioritized.

Encourage team members

It is easy to take team-mates for granted. It is also easy to slip into problem-solving mode, where the thing that has gone wrong gets all the attention, and we omit to celebrate our successes. In the end the team feels like it is only dealing with problems. Quiet leaders remember to tell the success stories. They link them to the names of team members so that they can bask in the praise of the group. If there are difficult things to be worked with, a team leader might say, 'Before we deal with the stretching stuff, let's remind ourselves of how much we got right, and of the things we can celebrate.' It is helpful to restate the positives again at the end. In short, it is best to start and end with a hopeful tone.

Say strong things with grace

Strong leaders can be very single-minded and strong-willed. Some people can be so full of truth they lack grace. They are so sure they are right that they feel justified in treating others critically, thereby losing credibility. Team members need to be both strong and sweet, full of grace but also full of truth.

Quiet leaders note the different way in which team members are able to receive feedback. Some people like things to be said directly, with no beating around the bush. For others, this is a sure trigger for defensiveness and counter-attack. An old proverb

claims that 'a word to the wise is sufficient'. Many people don't need things to be spelt out, and find it humiliating when they are. For them a gentle pointer to a better way is enough.

Meet together regularly

Good working relationships are a prerequisite for an optimal team experience. While relationships usually build over time, the process can be hastened by the team spending time together. Team meetings should be a wholesome mix of business matters, practical details, feedback, evaluation, communication and consultation, mutual encouragement, socializing, spiritual formation, equipping, seeking God and maintaining the vision. The Pauline vision in Romans 12:15 of a community that is able to laugh and weep together should shape our interaction. Quiet leaders ask, 'Have we done what it takes to make it possible for us to laugh together and to weep together?'

About task

At an early stage a team needs to clarify why it is meeting. Is it a group for companionship and friendship, or are there more specific objectives that the group wishes to meet? While the goals of any particular team may vary, teams usually exist to enable a group to meet targets that an individual would struggle to meet on their own. Once we move beyond an individual working alone, questions of structure bubble to the surface. In the early stages of a team's life some key structural aspects need to be clarified. These revolve around the three key areas of authority (which should be linked to accountability), responsibility and decision-making. Unless there is clarity in these spheres, groups are unlikely to meet their goals.

Authority and accountability

If a group is to get anything done, people need to know who has the authority to make decisions and to enact them. We'll look a little more at decision-making later, but for now let's note that each team member must know which decisions fall into their brief – else chaos follows and either no action is taken, or you land up with ten people each buying the single lawnmower that was needed.

If people have the authority to act, they must also be accountable for how they use their authority. It needs to be clear whom team members are accountable to. A common mistake is to make people accountable to more than one person. This almost inevitably leads to confusion and playing one authority figure off against another. At times each team member is responsible not to an individual but to the team as a whole. While this can work well, very often when people are theoretically accountable to everyone, they are actually accountable to no one. It can be very awkward to look for accountability in a group setting, so teams often fail to follow through with underperforming members. It is better to discuss how this will be tackled before it has become an issue, so that the group's norms are transparent and easy to enact.

Realms of authority are often delegated. Thus at a school while the principal has overall authority (subject to reporting to the school board and the relevant educational authorities), large areas of responsibility are often delegated to vice principals. There are also subject heads and heads of year – each with specified areas of accountability. Principals sometimes make the mistake of intervening in areas that they believe need attention, without working through the designated staff member. This then undermines those who have authority in this area, which can sometimes lead to overt conflict – or hidden conflict (for example, in the form of apathy: 'Why bother? I'll be overridden'). We need to clearly ask and answer: 'Who are team members accountable to? What are they authorized to do?'

Responsibility

Linked to authority is the question of responsibility. Here we answer the question, 'Who is responsible for each team task?' In formal employment situations, written job or position descriptions are needed as without them people are unaware of the scope of their responsibility. They might also face unfair criticism over unmet expectations that were never clarified. Sometimes more modest projects are tackled in a team setting (such as organizing the school ball). Written job descriptions then become impractical, but the need for each team to know their responsibilities remains.

If we plan to hold people responsible for particular outcomes, they must have enough authority to accomplish the outcome.

The necessary link between these two is sometimes overlooked and results in a great deal of tension for those who are asked to account for outcomes that they were not empowered to influence. One of the most common ways this happens is when we expect people to achieve certain goals but fail to provide either sufficient time, staffing or funding to make the target attainable. In doing so we set people up to fail, rather than to succeed. Before holding people responsible for outcomes, quiet leaders remember to ask, 'Does this person have enough time, staff and finance to make this possible?' Sometimes other things might be needed – such as additional training, coaching or simply being affirmed and encouraged.

Decision-making

Team members need to know how decisions are made. Most commonly decisions are made in one of five ways:

1. The leader decides and announces the decision.
2. The leader decides and sells the decision to the team.
3. The leader presents issues and asks for ideas, then decides.
4. The leader and team raise issues and the team decides within boundaries which are set by the leader.
5. The leader allows the group to define the issues and decide.

Some groups consistently have one method for decision-making, though it is more common for a diversity of approaches to exist. This can cause confusion, unless underlying principles are explored. For example, a leader might usually allow the group to define issues and decide, but earmark certain areas as being for the leader to decide on. So long as the group knows what scenario exists and why, it is unlikely to be problematic. An inconsistent shuffling between systems leads to confusion. A common complaint is that sometimes the views of staff are welcomed and sought, that on other occasions staff input is clearly unwelcome, and that members can't figure out the rationale for the different approaches. In dysfunctional settings, team members are congratulated for taking initiative and being proactive in some situations, and then reprimanded for adopting a similar approach in another. This whimsical approach leads to a team that is mystified and apathetic.

Where the team is actively involved in the decision-making process, seek the opinion of each team member ensuring that everyone has a voice. It helps to detach an idea from the person making it. View any idea under discussion as the property of the group, rather than the individual. This is not to suggest that we should not thank individuals when they come up with great ideas, but that we stress the responsibility of the group to own all decisions made. We should not give some ideas an easy ride because they were volunteered by a popular group member, while others are dismissed because the person making it is cantankerous and difficult.

Decide which issues need communication and which need consultation

Precise boundaries of freedom and authority need to be decided. When a team member has been given authority in an area they need to communicate their decisions to the team only for information and clarification but not for discussion. A simple example might help. A team member has been given authority to organize the catering for a function. They should then report that the catering is under control (communication) rather than go to the team to ask if they would prefer chicken or beef (consultation) though in their report to the team they might choose to mention that chicken is on the menu (communication).

Consultation takes place when the team or team leader needs to be involved in the discussion and decision-making process. Consultation must then occur before the decision is made. Consultation is almost always needed when non-budgeted items are required or if a team member is in favour of a course of action outside the parameters outlined in their brief.

When team members report on issues it is wise to ask whether they are communicating or consulting. Sometimes team members simply want to be heard. They often face complexity, and knowing that others are aware of the issues they face can be liberating. If instead of being heard they are saddled with a long list of advice, frustration is likely to result and their 'note to self' will read, 'Don't bother to let the group know about the challenges I am facing.' Clearly this is less than helpful.

Reviewing decisions

Successful teams periodically evaluate and review their decisions. Sometimes teams sense that a poor decision has been made. Perhaps a marketing campaign is not going as had been anticipated, or a new programme may not be working as we hoped. We all know that there is sometimes a gap between what we long for and what is actually achieved. Unless a clear process is in place to review decisions, some teams dutifully work away at implementing decisions they know are flawed, losing heart as they do so, but unsure how to get the decision changed. Other team members might simply abandon the decision without consulting the team, simply protesting 'but it was obvious that it wasn't working' if called to account. Chaos is a small step away. When significant new decisions are made, a staged process of review should be put in place. It is usual to review at the early, mid and later stages of implementation. This is not to suggest that decisions should be second-guessed every time they don't bring instant success. We sometimes have to persevere with a decision before we will reap the benefits. However, just as teams need a clear process for decision-making, they also need a process to enable them to review decisions, and to modify or even abandon them if it is deemed wise.

RACI and CAIRO

A helpful acronym is sometimes used to guide through the decision-making process – RACI, sometimes modified to CAIRO.

RACI is a responsibility assignment matrix that helps us to answer who is *Responsible*, *Accountable*, *Consulted* and *Informed* when a specific project is undertaken. To expand briefly on each:

- *Responsible* answers the question, 'Who is responsible for this task or project?'
- *Accountable* clarifies 'who is ultimately accountable for the project?' The person who is responsible must get the project and its processes signed off by the person or group who is ultimately accountable.
- *Consulted* identifies whether there are other players or people with whom we should consult or collaborate for the project to be a success.

- *Informed* specifies who needs to be informed of decisions and actions taken.

RACI is sometimes expanded to CAIRO, with the O referring to those we *omit* from the process. It can be liberating for team members to know those things for which they are not responsible and that they need to feel no angst over. Likewise, if we are communicating with many people who do not need to be involved in a process, we often create an unnecessary workload and waste time.

When next your group decides on a course of action, make and check a RACI and CAIRO matrix. If you can't state who fits into each category, or if there is confusion and debate as to who fills each role, confusion and conflict is likely to arise. In short, until you can crisply and clearly fill in the CAIRO matrix, the initial empowering stage has not been completed.

Overlapping zones

Some issues have the potential to impact both the team climate and its focus on its task. Here are two areas that quickly impact both climate and task if mishandled.

Confusing principles with preferences

A principle is a fundamental belief. If the team contravenes a principle held by a member then it must address the issue and deal with the consequences. This is not common, but when it occurs, it can lead to hard questions. *Chariots of Fire* won the Academy Award for the best picture of 1981. Exploring the astonishing stories of the 1924 British Olympic team, one of the key issues it deals with is Eric Liddell's refusal to participate in the 100-metre heat because it was to be run on a Sunday. Liddell's deep religious convictions made it impossible for him to agree to race on the Sabbath – much to the astonishment of his fellow team members. For him this was a matter of principle and therefore, non-negotiable. Usually principles cannot (and should not) be altered.

Preferences sometimes parade as principles but they are no more than personal opinions. I have been involved in enough churches to see how the question of music and worship styles is often falsely dressed as a matter of principle when people are

actually talking about their musical preferences. Describing the issue as one of principle makes the proponent feel that they hold the moral high ground. This is quickly exploded when it becomes clear that the matter is simply one of personal choice.

It is perfectly natural for teams to select the course of action that they prefer, but at times they need to be challenged to explore whether the path chosen is consistent with their principles. For example, many churches adopt programmes which are enjoyable to their members, but which are unlikely to help them to connect to the community they wish to serve. While they might claim that missiological relevance is a key principle driving their decision-making, the programme might demonstrate a commitment to the members' preferences, rather than to their stated principles.

The simple guideline is that while preferences can be overridden if they are preventing the group meeting its goals, principles should be respected and upheld.

Confusing critique with criticism

One of the key ways to grow is to receive feedback from peers. Team members should intentionally invite constructive feedback. The best forms of critique will acknowledge the positives, focus on things which can be changed (rather than those which cannot) and will view the person as a whole. It usually starts with recognition of strengths and moves on to areas of challenge. It is concerned with dealing with underlying issues and offers constructive ideas for development.

By contrast, criticism is negative, destructive and is focused on fault-finding. It often leaves a person feeling condemned and destroyed. Feedback without love and hope is criticism, which at best is unhelpful and at worst is devastating.

A leadership interview with Lucy Morris

Dr Lucy Morris is the CEO of Baptistcare, a large not-for-profit organization in Western Australia. Baptistcare employs well over a thousand staff members, and recently underwent significant and successful restructuring. Lucy is highly regarded for her ability to empower teams to work effectively and harmoniously.

1. *Lucy, you have introduced significant (and successful) change at Baptistcare. How did you hold the team together during what must have been an unsettling time?*

I worked out the bare bones of the outcomes I wanted for Baptistcare over a period of weeks, talking to people in other organizations and critical friends who had experience in change leadership. I was clear about which aspects of the plan I would consult on with my colleagues and which aspects people could make their own decisions about. The changes had to make sense with our vision, mission and values; including the timeframe that was available. I spent a lot of time telling the story from different perspectives, providing sufficient resources, appropriate authority, accountability loops and support. We celebrated the early successes, created a regular review process, and made sure the leadership team spent time together regularly on 'away days' to debrief and reconfigure the plan as we progressed with regular 'updates' and 'news' flashes. The clarity of the process and the reasons for the plan went a long way towards keeping everyone committed and engaged. I was also as open and enquiring as I could be, to reassure people they knew as much as I did and that we were working on this together.

2. *Over 1,400 people are employed by your organization. How do you try to bring the best out of them?*

We have committed to a significant range of strategies to recognize and value our people, which include annual values awards, quarterly newsletters with stories of achievements, challenges and learning, personal visits, a personal 'thank you', personal engagement with individuals, establishment of innovative career pathways and internal promotional opportunities, professional and personal development opportunities, training, education and leadership development programmes, flexible workplace arrangements to suit all types of family commitments, and all the leaders have the capacity to make arrangements to support people when in crises. This commitment never stops as we are always on the lookout for ways we can help support people and make their lives easier while working for Baptistcare. With approximately 90 percent of staff being women, we spend significant time strengthening and growing female leadership.

3. *You work in the aged care sector, which in Australia is significantly underfunded. Presumably this means you can't reward staff with huge financial incentives. So how do you motivate your team?*

We made a commitment we would aim to be in the top five paying organizations in our service sectors and staff know we value them and we will sacrifice other things to keep wages equitable. We see this as an issue of justice, given that women are traditionally underpaid and their work is frequently not valued by employers and the wider community. They are equal in the eyes of God and their contribution is equally valued, needed and essential for humanity to flourish. We also focus on intangibles such as access to career pathways, good professional development opportunities, training in leadership and governance, flexible work arrangements and making good use of technology, access to coaching, mentoring and critical friends. We also work to ensure that staff can see the difference they are making in people's lives as people come to work for Baptistcare for more reasons than solely financial imperatives.

4. *When things go wrong, how do you stop the team spiralling into negativity?*

We have regular reviews of our projects as part of our practice as a learning organization. We have four key themes for our daily work – leadership, innovation, quality and financial sustainability – and our reviews use these core areas of focus while we check our practices using the lenses of our vision, mission and values, 'to transform and enrich lives'. Together with a very strong sense of timeliness, we have 'learning conversations', using appreciative inquiry rather than leaving poor performance, unintended consequences or insufficient resources to strangle performance and outcomes. We're always focused on 'what could we do to help make things easier and better for our clients and our staff?' It makes the listening and learning from our mistakes easier to work through. And sometimes, we accept the awkwardness and imperfections and lack of achievement, because of individual circumstances.

5. *Please pass on one key leadership insight you have.*

It is impossible to be good at everything. There is so much I don't know. I recruit people into the team who are good at things I and

my colleagues are not, who bring gifts we don't have and from whom I/we can learn. I look for people who could do my job when I leave as I am only writing a 'chapter', not a book. These are also people who have wisdom, insight and courage, who can give hope, who love learning and who are open to making mistakes. I don't want perfectionists; I want people who love other human beings as unique in the eyes of God. I want people who will stretch themselves, learn, weep and laugh as companions on our organizational journey, who will leave us richer and who will themselves be changed positively by their time with us.

For reflection

Patrick Lencioni has suggested that teams are often held back by five areas of dysfunction:

1. Absence of trust
2. Fear of conflict
3. Lack of commitment
4. Avoidance of accountability
5. Inattention to results²

In one way and another, this chapter has considered each of these pitfalls, but it helps to group them together under one heading. As we conclude this section, quickly evaluate the teams you are part of. Evaluate the health of your teams in the light of the five spheres Lencioni discusses:

1. Do your teams have a high level of trust? If so, how was it built and can its success in this sphere be duplicated elsewhere? If not, is it just that insufficient time has been given to building group relationships, or have there been some destructive trust-breakers? If something happened to break trust, what can be done to restore it?
2. How does the group handle conflict? We look at this more fully in Chapter 10, but is conflict avoided at all costs and if so, why?
3. Are teams members committed to the group's mission as well as to the group members? A commitment to both is usually

unbreakable, while a commitment to only one can see a group member switch allegiance ('I can accomplish this just as effectively with another group').

4. Then there is the accountability question. Are people held accountable? Are they given sufficient authority for the accountability to be meaningful?
5. Do results matter to your team? What are your team results? If you struggle to answer the question, is it possible that this is a realm of inattention?