

# BEYOND MANAGEMENT.....

Almost twenty years ago Etsko Schuitema issued a warning regarding the dire consequences of the continued perpetuation of current management customs. He went on to posit, what seemed back then to be a radical set of alternatives to the norm; Taken collectively these alternatives constitute the core principles (termed the Four Axioms) which underpin the Care and Growth leadership model.

## THE NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE.

The nature of the relationship between employer and employee is usually viewed as a buying and selling relationship; as an exchange of X kilojoules of labour for Y units of currency. The key issue in this relationship, as is the case in any trading relationship, is price.

On the face of it, this appears to be true. The deal which is struck between the two parties is formalised in an employment contract which specifies the rights and obligations of both sides of the transaction.

Secondly, as with any trade, it would appear that the one commodity (money) is handed over in return for another commodity (labour). This thing called "labour" has a commercial value and hence people are referred to as "our greatest assets". They are also labelled "human resources", which along with other resources, are unfortunately a cost to the business and must be managed.

Thirdly, the market forces of supply and demand clearly also apply to a Labour Market. Where labour is plentiful, it is cheap and hence can easily be dispensed with. Where labour is in short supply, it gives rise to a "war on talent" and to spiralling costs as employers scramble to outbid each other for the acquisition and retention of this most precious resource.

## **Challenges to Conventional Wisdom and the Alternative**

There are however two ways in which the assumption of a buying and selling relationship can be challenged.

- *It is not possible to buy and sell labour*

In the first instance the notion that labour can either be bought or sold is a fallacy. A product or service can be traded but people cannot; at least not since the abolition of the slave trade.

It is simply not possible to acquire human effort and expertise independently from the person in whom they are vested. Whether organisations like it or not, along with labour, comes a human being.

- *The two parties are not equal*

Secondly, what is implied in a buying and selling relationship is that the exchange that takes place is between two equal parties. Even if the agreed price is affected by the relative bargaining power of the two parties, neither one is subordinate to and hence has to answer to the other.

In the employment relationship, however, the two players are not equals. This is because employers have the right to ask employees to do things; to exercise power over them. In return for a guaranteed sum on a predetermined date in the month employees have to submit themselves on a daily basis to a boss's instruction; to someone who has authority over them.

The relationship between employer and employee, therefore is not a buying and selling relationship – it is a relationship of power.

What is at issue in a relationship of power is not price, it is legitimacy. It is the acceptance, or otherwise, of the authority of the superordinate by the subordinate in this relationship of power.

**Axiom 1:** What is at issue in between employer and employee is not the price of a commodity called labour, it is the legitimacy of a relationship of power.

### **Implication of Axiom One**

The prime implication of Axiom One is the understanding that for command to happen there has to be acceptance of command. Those in command in the workplace can only lead if and when, they have mobilised the consent of the majority of employees to their doing so.

Of the two parties in the relationship it is the employees, not management, who ultimately decide to what degree they are prepared to be led. In the final analysis, managers have only as much power as their employees permit them.

Management knows where it is positioned, at any point in time, on a scale from “total rejection” to “total acceptance” of their authority by the general climate which prevails among employees.

When those in authority are accepted, their visibility outside the Boardroom is welcomed. Employees take their concerns to them rather than to their employee representative or to the Human Resources function. They abide by managerial decisions and if disciplinary action is taken do not rail against it. The average employee does what is expected and more.

The degree to which the authority which is exercised is not accepted, on the other hand, is reflected in how much resistance there is among employees to

that authority. The “resistance” may be covert (evidenced in snide remarks, sarcasm, gossiping, a dragging of heels) or overt (manifested in a breakdown in communications, a go slow, a strike or even a parting of the ways). If resistance exists in whatever form, other than among a disaffected minority, there is leadership work to be done.

The key challenge facing anyone in authority, therefore, is that of establishing and then maintaining the legitimacy of that authority.

In summary then

## THE NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE

Convention	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The relationship is a buying and selling relationship</li><li>• The issue is price</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is not possible to buy and sell labour.</li><li>• The two parties are not equal</li><li>• The issue is legitimacy</li></ul>

---

Hence:

## THE NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYER AND EMPLOYEE

Axiom 1	Implications
What is at issue between employer and employee is not the price of a commodity called labour, it is the legitimacy of a relationship of power.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For command to happen there has to be acceptance of command.</li><li>• The key challenge for leadership is therefore establishing and maintaining legitimacy.</li></ul>

---

## THE LEGITIMACY OF A RELATIONSHIP OF POWER

There are a number of assumptions and beliefs currently held about what the manager’s job is and what is required to be successful in it.

The commonly held view of the job of those in authority at work is that it is to achieve a result, a vision or an outcome through people. By definition managers don’t do the work themselves they get the work done by others. That managers perceive their role in this way is not surprising given that what managers in general are measured and rewarded for is the results they get out of their people.

Further to this, managers are of the view that they have the right to demand delivery because they pay a wage and/or because of their position in the hierarchy.

When employees sign up with the company they become contractually bound to perform as agreed in the employment contract. If employees do not arrive at work and do their jobs, management is within its rights to terminate the contract.

Finally managers generally believe that the way to achieve results is through the skilful use of a host of management tools at their disposal – ranging from targets, deadlines, budgets, direct instructions and performance ratings through to inspiring vision statements, public recognition, incentives and good verbal communication.

The possibilities are seemingly endless. They boil down, however, to using either compulsive or persuasive means to achieve the desired results. There is a “hard” way and a “soft” way to get employees to do what management wants them to.

The most effective managers are those who are most skilled in the deployment of these management tools or strategies. They know the best strategy to use in a given situation and are therefore versatile in their approach. Hence the popularity of the so called “situational leadership” school of management.

Managers who are most successful, however, allegedly rely more on persuasion than compulsion. This is simply because, in the long term, they know that persuasion works better than compulsion.

When it comes to the motivation of employees, therefore, it is a combination of intellect, personal charisma, interpersonal skill and style which accounts for success.

## **Challenges to Conventional Wisdom and the Alternative**

There are a number of contentions to be raised with respect to the above which together fundamentally challenge what actually accounts for the excellence of those in leadership roles.

- *There are inevitable consequences to the use of ‘sticks’ and ‘carrots’*

People can be driven to perform in response to both the ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ approach. What is not openly acknowledged, however, is the inevitable consequences, in the fullness of time, to the use of both the ‘stick’ and the ‘carrot’.

All forms of compulsion essentially motivate through fear. People understandably feel that they are being forced, coerced even bullied into doing things. They comply but only in order to avoid the negative consequences to them of not doing so. The coercive means engender resistance. They breed an attitude of “I will do exactly what you say and I hope that it fails”. Eventually there is only apathy and a lack of commitment.

Carrots, on the other hand, appeal to the greed in human beings. Employees make the desired response but only in order to get what they want.

Contrary to popular belief the 'soft' approach often leads to a worse reaction than the hard approach. No matter the skill of the persuader, those who are being persuaded or positively influenced, are not fooled. They sense that they are being manipulated and because of this their response goes beyond resistance to retaliation, to getting their own back. Over time persuasion leads to hostility and to conflict, rather than harmony, in the relationship between the two parties. Both protagonists are only in the relationship to maximise their own self interest; to get as much as possible for giving as little as possible.

In response to both the 'stick' and the 'carrot' the employee reaction is predictable. This is because all people are hardwired to resist coercion and to retaliate when they feel manipulated.

- *There is a limit to what 'sticks' and 'carrots' can deliver*

Coercion and persuasion do work. There are many publicised examples of dramatic improvements in productivity which have been realised through the use of penalties and incentives.

The gains from both options however are limited. The reason why this is the case is obvious. Employees are doing what is required of them because they 'have to' not because they 'want to'. In the face of coercion they give what is required out of fear of punishment. In response to some form of enticement they become concerned by "what's in it for me", they give in order to get.

Both strategies get movement but not willingness. Employees will only give if either the 'stick' or the 'carrot' is present. In the absence of the 'stick' or the 'carrot' they are inert.

- *It is not the 'what' or the 'how' but the 'why'*

Contrary to popular opinion, whether a management tool works or not is neither a function of the 'what' nor the 'how'. A positive result does not arise because the "right" management tool was chosen nor because the tool was executed with sufficient skill. The determining factor, is something else entirely; it is the 'why' which sits behind the 'what' and the 'how'.

The core variable for success as a manager is not behaviour, it is motive. This is because, as human beings, we respond in any interaction not to the other person's behaviour per se but to what we perceive to be the intent behind the behaviour.

The reason we willingly submit to the surgeon's knife but resist that of the robber's is because we read their intent as different. We know that the knife wielding assailant is there to do us harm but we trust that the pain and discomfort that the doctor is putting us through is in order to heal us.

In essence intention is about whose interests are being served. Malevolent intent is about the pursuit of self interest; it is self serving. Benevolent intent, on the other hand, is action taken in the other's best interests.

Employees will only trust those in authority at work, therefore, when they are convinced that they have their employees' best interests at heart. That is, when they perceive management as being in the relationship to give them something not to get something out of them.

When this is the case, those in command have power and are truly powerful. In the absence of power, managers only have control.

- *The right to demand delivery is earned, not by paying a wage, but by subscribing to certain criteria.*

What those in command have to give to their people, what earns them the right to demand delivery, distils down to only two drops of essence. In the first instance managers have to have a genuine concern for those in their charge. They have to care for their people as human beings; not as human resources which help their bottom line to grow. Further to this, they have to enable their people to realise the very best in themselves.

The price to be paid before employees will be truly willing to deliver on command is not money, it is care and growth. This is what makes the power which is exercised by those in authority legitimate.

This is equally true of anyone in authority be they religious leaders, police and army officers, doctors, parents, teachers and even sports coaches. Any relationship of power is legitimate only if the aim of that relationship is the care and growth of the subordinate in that relationship.

Care and Growth are, indeed, the universal criteria of any legitimate relationship of power.

- *The product of leadership is not a result, it is an exceptional human being.*

The leader's job is not to get results from or get work done through others. The leadership job is get the people done through the work. Managers use people as the means to get the job done and produce results. Leaders use tools and results as a means to enable people.

Leaders do not produce results; they produce extraordinary people. The means and ends for managers and leaders are different.

In this sense a coaching analogy is useful. It is the players not the coach who play the game and put a result on the scoreboard. How the game is played and the resultant score are however by no means irrelevant to the coach. The coach watches the players and sees how their game impacts on the score.

The game and the score however is not the coach's job. They are the coach's tools; the vital information that the coach needs and uses to enable the players.

**Axiom 2:** Any relationship of power is legitimate if the aim of that relationship is the care and growth of the subordinate in that relationship.

## **Implications of Axiom two**

Axiom two has three key implications as follows:

Firstly, there has to be a fundamental change in the intent of the boss-subordinate relationship from being boss centred to being subordinate centred. Subordinates are no longer there to serve their superiors. Managers are there to serve their people. What is traditionally a reporting relationship must become a coaching relationship.

No less than a total inversion of the line of service, from up the line to down the line, is what is required.

Secondly, legitimate relationships of power have to exist at every level in the hierarchy. For this to happen requires each person in a command role to care for and grow those who report to them directly. The size of the leadership task for any manager is simply determined by the number of subordinates they have. Each manager has as many pieces of leadership work as he has people reporting to him directly.

For the line of command to be strong requires everyone in the line to pay the price of legitimacy. Failure to do so by any manager anywhere in the hierarchy will create a point of weakness in the line and jeopardise the legitimate authority of others in the hierarchy.

Each individual manager obviously has the choice to make the change from 'take' to 'give'. Those who are not prepared to pay the price are accountable, they cannot lay the blame at anyone else's door.

Clearly in any organisation there are managers who are already operating consistently with the Care and Growth criteria. For the successful implementation of Care and Growth what is typically the exception has to become the norm.

Thirdly, what those in leadership roles are measured on and rewarded for has to change. Managers should not be measured and rewarded for what they get out of their people but rather for what they give to them.

The primary criterion against which leaders should be judged is not personal or business achievement. Rather it is the calibre of the people in their charge; the degree to which they have set up their people for success.

In summary then:

## THE LEGITIMACY OF A RELATIONSHIP OF POWER

### Convention

- The manager's job is to achieve results through others.
- Managers have the right to demand delivery because they pay a wage/ they are the boss.
- It is intellect, personal charisma, inter personal skill and style which accounts for success.

### Challenges

- The leader's job is to get the people done through the work, to make extraordinary people.
- The right to demand delivery is earned by subscribing to the criteria of care and growth
- The core variable for success as a manager is not skill or behaviour, it is intent.

Hence:

## THE LEGITIMACY OF A RELATIONSHIP OF POWER

### Axiom 2

Any relationship of power is legitimate if the aim of that relationship is the care and growth of the subordinate in that relationship.

### Implications

- A change in the intent of the relationship from being boss centred to subordinate centred is required.
- There must be legitimate relationships of power at every level in hierarchy.
- The primary criterion against which leaders should be judged is the calibre of their people.

## EMPOWERMENT/ GROWTH

The Care and Growth model is once again at odds with the common view when it comes to both the meaning of "empowerment" and with what the empowerment process itself entails.

The Care and Growth model challenges the notion that empowerment is synonymous with both employee participation and democracy, that it is possible to empower overnight and to separate empowerment from accountability.

### Challenges to Conventional Wisdom and the Alternative

- *Empowerment is not the same as employee participation*

Participative management has been in vogue for many years now. It arose out of management's recognition that there was a reservoir of good ideas among those lower in the ranks which was largely untapped and hence unavailable to the business.

The way to access this collective wisdom was through the implementation of employee involvement programmes; quality circles and the like. Front line employees were thus fed details pertaining to real problems and their improvement suggestions presented to management for consideration.

In this sense, the empowerment of employees meant sharing information with them, which hitherto was the sole domain of management, and then listening to employee views and opinions on the data which had been given to them.

Employee empowerment, however, is much more than employee involvement. Real empowerment requires leadership to go beyond asking people for their opinion, listening to them and only then deciding. It means letting them decide and living with their decision even if it is contrary to the decision the leadership would have made.

By definition, then, it is simply not possible to give up authority but to still hold on to control. When authority is handed over so is control.

To truly empower, therefore, literally means to give up power. The corollary to the enfranchisement of employees is the disenfranchisement of management.

- *Empowerment is not the same as democracy*

When the people make the decisions this is democracy. Furthermore in a democratic system, where there is "one man one vote", everyone is equal.

A precondition for empowerment however is inequality not equality. For those in authority to give up authority they have to have it in the first place!

Before power can empower and thus be legitimate, there has to be inequality between the subordinate and the superordinate.

This is true of anyone in authority, be they parents, teachers, coaches or managers. Without the requisite authority to do so, they cannot enable those in their charge.

When teachers lose the authority to discipline, then students can no longer learn. This is because the teacher can no longer teach; she is too busy trying to restore a vestige of order in the classroom. Similarly, if parents were to be prohibited from spanking their children, they would breed monsters rather than young adults fit to play a useful role in society.

Empowerment therefore is not about replacing autocratic behaviour with democratic behaviour since there is room for both in any legitimate relationship of power.

This can be seen quite clearly when one considers the boss one works for willingly. The 'want to' boss can behave in a soft and democratic manner; by listening, being approachable, supportive and sympathetic. Equally she can

act in an autocratic way by setting direction, assigning responsibility, taking disciplinary action and so on.

Those on the receiving end of the 'want to' boss's autocratic behaviour are nevertheless prepared to accept this behaviour without question. This is because they intuit that the reason for the autocratic behaviour is related to their enablement. The boss is being tough with them with their highest self interest in mind.

Autocratic control in other words is entirely legitimate; but only when it is seen to be subordinate to the intention to empower.

- *Empowerment is not an instantaneous process*

There is a misconception that people are either empowered or they are not. In other words, that control either sits in one person's (the manager) hands or in another person's (subordinate) hands. The handover of control is somehow instantaneous. Nothing could be further from the truth.

At one extreme the imposition of control, coupled with an intention to never let go, is clearly disabling. It is akin to insisting on always holding the infant's hand. The toddler will never learn to walk.

At the same time the instantaneous and total suspension of all control is also disempowering. Letting go of the child's hand and standing in the far corner of the room, even though the child cannot yet walk on its own, is equally disabling. In both cases the young person will be rendered unable to walk.

What is enabling in this context is for the adult to start out holding the child's hand, then to let go but stand close by, finally stepping back to let the child walk alone. In other words what is enabling is not an instantaneous, total suspension of control, but rather an incremental suspension of control.

This recognises what we know from nature. That is, that growth does not happen overnight. The seed cannot transmute into a mature plant in a matter of hours. Similarly in the human species adulthood takes at least twenty one years to get there.

The level of control which is exercised in a legitimate relationship of power therefore must be commensurate with the maturity of the subordinate in the relationship. The starting point is the current level of maturity of the person being empowered. As the person matures the amount of control lessens; becomes less stringent over time.

Control is simply a tool in the empowerment process; it is a means not an end.

- *There are three variables which affect empowerment not two.*

Empowerment is a process for enabling contribution; for cultivating 'givers'. A number of issues need to be addressed if this process is to be effective.

In the first instance it is clear that employees can't give if they don't have the 'means' to do so; literally they are not allowed to give. In an organisational context this suggests that managers provide their people with an enabling environment in which to perform by giving them the requisite tools, resources, information, authority, support and standards.

Equally for contribution to happen people must have the ability to give. They need to know from their manager both 'how' to do what is required of them and 'why' they should do it.

Generally speaking, therefore, managers are of the view that having addressed the two variables of 'means' and 'ability' to contribute, their empowerment job is done. To use the analogy of empowering a man to fish; the process entails providing him with the tools (the hook, line, sinker etc) and bringing in an expert to teach him to fish. Suitably equipped and able the man is now fully empowered to feed himself and his family fishing. Or is he?

No, he is not. This is because what is missing is the third critical variable in the process; the issue of accountability.

If I was to say to the fisherman "don't worry if you come back empty handed because I have a deep freeze at home stocked with fish, you can have some of mine", I would have disempowered not empowered the man.

This is because I would have taken away his desire, his need to fish. Further to this I would have set myself up as the person who is now accountable for catching the fish, not him.

It is not enough to provide people with the means and ability to do what is required of them. People must want to make the required contribution. What engages peoples' will to contribute is accountability.

Through the centre of accountability runs a standard. A person's contribution can either be above standard or below standard. When a person's contribution is above standard; either the person is going the extra mile in which case it is appropriate to reward the person, or the person is careful to meet the standard and should be recognised.

Similarly if the person has the means and ability but is below standard it is for two kinds of reasons, either the person is careless and should be censured or they are malevolent which requires that they are disciplined.

To empower someone means to address all three aspects of the empowerment process. Unless due consideration is given to all three, in the order of means, ability and then accountability, empowerment has not happened.

**Axiom 3:** Empowerment implies an incremental suspension of control in order to enable the subordinate.

### **Implications of Axiom Three**

The 3rd Axiom has implications for the whole issue of authority and control within an organisation. If we define control as the intent to manage predictable outcomes, it is clear that in any organisation there are a myriad of mechanisms that serve this purpose. Collectively these mechanisms make up the systems and structures which constitute the organisation.

What happens to structures and systems with the implementation of Axiom Three is not that they cease to exist; that there is a wholesale obliteration of all the controls in the business. This would be tantamount to a deconstruction of the very organisation itself.

Rather, when management acts consistently with the spirit of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Axiom, the following happens incrementally over time.

Firstly, decision making authority that is vested at the centre and up the hierarchy is devolved progressively away from the centre and to lower levels in the hierarchy. Allied to this there are a series of small finite adjustments to the organisational design which leads over time to a flattening of the hierarchy.

Thirdly, there is a gradual relaxing of rules and procedures, replacing them with broader policies and guidelines. Linked to this there are fewer, not more controls, in the processes within the business.

Finally the role of staff functions changes, as they are weaned off their auditing and compliance function to rechannel their time and effort into enabling the line.

These changes happen, not as once off projects, but on a continuous basis. In other words, there is no final solution in terms of either the organisation's structures or systems. They remain fluid, with small discrete changes being made as circumstances change and people grow.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Axiom also has implications for the whole issue of accountability in organisations. To empower means both giving up power/handing over control and replacing control with accountability.

In practical terms this implies the following. Firstly, that whenever authority is given so too is accountability. Before people are given the freedom to operate without control, a tight link must be forged between autonomy and accountability (both positive and negative).

Secondly, that when there is a deviation from standard, the appropriate action is to find out who is accountable for the deviation and hold them appropriately accountable rather than impose a control on everyone.

Only when managers act consistently with this insight is it possible for the real product of the empowerment process to be realised. Namely people who focus on doing the right thing and who are accountable for what they do.

In summary then:

EMPOWERMENT/GROWTH	
Convention	Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Empowerment is synonymous with employee participation and democracy</li><li>• It is possible to empower overnight and to separate empowerment from accountability</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Empowerment is not the same as employee participation</li><li>• Empowerment is not the same as democracy</li><li>• Empowerment is not an instantaneous process.</li><li>• Empowerment is not possible without accountability.</li></ul>

Hence

EMPOWERMENT/GROWTH	
Axiom 3	Implications
Empowerment implies the incremental suspension of control in order to enable the subordinate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A devolution of decision making authority and flattening of hierarchy</li><li>• A shift of systems from being procedure to policy driven.</li><li>• Fewer, not more controls.</li><li>• Enabling support functions.</li><li>• Replacement of control with accountability.</li></ul>

## MATURATION AND MATURITY

When leaders successfully implement the first three principles of the Care and Growth leadership model their people change; they grow or mature.

In today's corporate world employee growth, it is believed, is reflected in positive changes in their fame, fortune or facts. In other words, as employees mature they 'get' more knowledge, power, status, reward and so on.

The Care and Growth model proposes an alternative view of maturity and the maturation process which has far reaching implications for the leadership of organisations.

## **Challenges to Conventional Wisdom and the Alternative**

- *The process of maturation is the process of the maturation of intent to give unconditionally*

There is a long list of adjectives which can be used to describe an immature person. The list includes words like irresponsible, unaccountable, dependent, reactive, impatient, selfish, ill disciplined, lazy, unwilling, discourteous, untrustworthy and so on.

By definition a mature person is the very opposite of this. The process of maturation, therefore, is about moving from one state (immaturity) to another state (maturity). At its core it involves a transformation in the person from 'taking' to 'giving'. Immature people are here to take. Mature people are here to give.

The process of maturation begins at birth and ends at death. At birth a person is 100% 'here to get'. This has to be true because at birth a person has nothing; whatever they get in life still has to come their way. At death the opposite is true; a person is 100% 'here to give'. When a person dies they get to take nothing with them; they give it all away unconditionally.

The difference between 'taking' and 'giving' is an intent difference. When a person gives but has no intention to give, they are not giving they are being taken from. When a person gives with the intention to get something back they are similarly not giving; they are making an investment. Only when a person gives neither wanting nor expecting anything in return are they actually giving. Giving is only giving when it is unconditional.

Immaturity is about continuously seeking and desiring to 'get' more. Maturity is about an increasing determination and preparedness to 'give' unconditionally.

- *There is a connection between intention and attention.*

The difference in intention between an immature and mature person is reflected in what they give attention to. Faced with the same situation, the immature and mature attend to different things.

The immature focus on their needs, their wants, what is in their best interests in the situation. Their actions are expedient. The mature focus on what is correct, even when it is neither convenient nor in their immediate best interests to do so. This does not mean that the mature person does not have needs. It means that they can suspend their needs for what is correct; they can act for reasons higher than self interest. Their actions are values rather than needs driven.

The immature attend to their own expectations rather than to what the situation requires of them; to what they want to get in the situation. The mature concern themselves with what they should be contributing; what they should be giving in the situation. The mature view their expectations

objectively, weight them up against what they should be contributing and act accordingly. They reflect before they act.

The immature focus on their 'rights'; on what they believe they are owed or entitled to. The mature attend to their 'duties'; what they owe other people or the situation. When the immature do not get what they believe they are owed they blame others or forces outside of themselves. The mature take accountability for the circumstances in which they find themselves. They look at themselves and what they are or can do, rather than blame or wait for others to do something.

The immature focus on the end, on the desired outcome or result. They endeavour to control the other person or the situation to give them the outcome they want. The mature give up control of the outcome. Their attention is on the process not the outcome. Their concern is with means not ends.

- *Where a person's attention is focused has consequences for them and their relationship with others.*

There is an inextricable connection between immaturity and weakness which is obvious when one considers the consequence to oneself of being 'here to get'. What a person 'gets' clearly does not sit in their hands; what one gets comes from 'other' to 'self'.

An immature person, because they always want something, is always needy and controlled by the other's ability to withhold that which they want. The immature person is therefore dependent on others and is manipulable by others.

The immature person moreover has an external locus of control. As a consequence of focusing on that which they have no control over they are weak. Since the world rarely delivers what one wants the instant one wants it, the immature person is more often than not discontented, unhappy and insecure. They feel and behave like a victim.

The immature person essentially views other people as a means to their end. They are generally discourteous, disrespectful and demeaning. They are concerned with their own significance and are therefore viewed as selfish and arrogant.

Their pursuit of self interest causes others to resist them. Their inherent competitiveness makes for conflict and disharmony in the relationships with others. In the fullness of time the immature destroy others and themselves.

Maturity on the other hand is associated with strength. This is primarily because the mature focus on the source of their power; what sits in their own hands and what is in their control.

The mature have an internal locus of control. This is what gives them a sense of security, of fulfilment and makes them optimistic. Since they cannot be manipulated they cannot be controlled and hence they are free. This enables them to be proactive and to be a master rather than a victim of their situation.

The mature are able to exercise constraint; to delay gratification. They listen to others and are therefore seen by them to be reasonable, rational and objective. They relate to others in a manner which is courteous, humble and respectful. As a result others respect them and hold them in high regard.

Their relationships are cooperative rather than competitive. Consequently their relationships work, they are constructive and mutually affirming.

- *Giving is not about being nice, it is about being appropriate.*

A person who is 'here to give' is not necessarily a person who gives away all their worldly possessions to charity or who allows themselves to be constantly taken advantage of by others. Giving is not about always being nice, it is about being appropriate.

In essence giving means doing what the situation requires unconditionally. As such 'giving' presents itself in two forms; as generosity or courage. Both of these involve taking a risk.

When a person acts generously they are risking things associated with themselves. When a person acts courageously, however, they are risking themselves; they are putting self not things on the line. Of the two forms of giving courage is clearly harder, simply because the price that may have to be paid is that much higher.

In any situation then a person's maturity is not a function of what the person has got out of the situation, but what they have put into the situation unconditionally.

**Axiom 4:** Maturity means being here to serve, or acting with generosity and courage.

### **Implications of Axiom Four**

As the saying goes, the process of aging is mandatory but the process of maturation is purely voluntary. Whether an individual is generous and/or courageous is a matter of choice. Anyone can be a 'giver' or a 'taker' right now.

In any workplace therefore one finds both mature and immature souls. There are 'givers' and 'takers' throughout an organisation and at all levels in the hierarchy. Employees who are mature are intent on serving. They are loyal, trustworthy, dedicated and willing to give unconditionally in pursuit of the organisation's objectives.

Mature leaders are similarly intent on serving, on caring and growing their people. In doing so, they are not always nice. This is because they have no tolerance for mediocrity and will do whatever is necessary to push their people to realise the very best in themselves. A leader who is truly here to serve has benevolence in the heart but steel in the hand.

In an organisation where those in leadership positions act consistently with the spirit of the 4<sup>th</sup> Axiom they do the following:

- They spend significant time with and give attention to their people because they care about them.
- They trust their people and entrust them with more as their people grow.
- They set high standards both for themselves and for their people.
- They clarify, assess, review and reward their people for their contribution not for the results.
- They deal with exceptions by addressing the leadership causes for the exception, not by instituting a control.
- They confront victim behaviour by encouraging their people to take accountability for the situation in which they find themselves.
- They use the task as the means to grow the person rather than use the person as the means to get the job done.
- They teach their people both 'how' to do what is required of them and 'why' they should do it.
- They provide a line of sight between each individual's contribution and the overall performance of the enterprise.
- They do the right thing rather than the expedient or popular thing in every situation.

At an organisational level Axiom Four requires the organisation's systems structures and processes to be reconfigured to align with the Care and Growth criteria. Ultimately even the company's mission or purpose has to change from one of making a profit for the shareholders to one of serving a customer.

In summary then:

## MATURITY AND MATURATION

### Conventional Wisdom

- Maturity is about being 'here to get' – be it in terms of facts, fortune fame or fitness
- Getting is what strength is all about.

### Challenges

- Maturity is about being 'here to give' unconditionally
- There is a connection between intention and attention.
- Strength is a function of giving not getting.
- Giving is not about being nice but about being appropriate.

Hence

## MATURITY AND MATURATION

### Axiom 4

### Implications

Maturity is about being here to serve, acting with generosity and courage.

- Employees are here to serve
- Leaders are here to serve
- The organisation is here to serve

---

At the root of the Care and Growth model is the intent to serve. As individuals and organisations who have embraced this model have demonstrated, it is the intent to serve which ultimately accounts for both organisational and personal excellence.