



# LEADING FOR RECOVERY AND RENEWAL

## ZOOM INTERACTIVE EVENT

On 25<sup>th</sup> June 2020, CRF members gathered for **Leading for Recovery and Renewal**, a Zoom Interactive Event. **Gianpiero Petriglieri**, Associate Professor at INSEAD, led a discussion of how the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the limitations of dated conceptions of leadership, and their harmful consequences.

Gianpiero proposed that a logic of care – rather than one of competition – needs to infuse leadership development and practice to repair and sustain relationships and organisations that have been pulled apart by crises. He described what leading with care means and how it works, and shared some practical tips for how to achieve it daily in organisations.

### PRACTICAL EXERCISE

#### Leading with Care

How do we lead with care? It's useful to ask 'what are we missing?', 'what are we finding?', and 'what are we looking for?'. We should aim not just to develop caring leaders, but systems of care.

One place to start is to make the following lists:

- A 'to care' list – who are the people and what are the issues to cultivate?
- A 'to cultivate' list – What are the practices that will help amplify good people and good work?
- A 'to craft' list – what missing pieces are needed to help the organisation thrive?

### SPEAKER



#### GIANPIERO PETRIGLIERI

is Associate Professor of Organisational Behaviour at INSEAD, and an expert on leadership and learning in the workplace. His award-winning research and teaching focus on what it means, and what it takes, to become a leader. He is particularly interested in the development of leadership in the age of 'nomadic professionalism'; where people have deep personal bonds to work but loose affiliations to organisations, and authenticity and mobility replace loyalty and advancement as hallmarks of virtue and success.

Gianpiero's research has appeared in leading academic journals such as *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Academy of Learning & Education*, and *Organization Studies*. He also writes regularly for the *Harvard Business Review*, where five of his essays have been included among the 'ideas that shaped management' in the last decade. His work has been featured in a range of media including the *BBC*, *Financial Times*, *The Economist*, *Businessweek*, *The Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, and *El Pais*. He has chaired the World Economic Forum's Global Agenda Council on new models of leadership, and was recently named one of the 50 most influential management thinkers in the world by *Thinkers50*.

✉ EMAIL

in LINKEDIN

🐦 TWITTER

🌐 WEBSITE

# LEADING FOR RECOVERY AND RENEWAL

## ZOOM INTERACTIVE EVENT

### KEY TAKEAWAYS



The **'future of work'** has quickly become the **'new normal'** – but it was the pandemic, not robots or artificial intelligence, that ushered in this change.

THE MAIN CONSEQUENCE OF THIS 'MIDLIFE CRISIS OF MANAGEMENT' IS **ANXIETY** – WHICH CAN LEAD ORGANISATIONS TO RETRENCH AND MAKE FOOLISH MISTAKES, OR CAN MOVE ORGANISATIONS TO TRANSCEND OLD PRACTICES AND DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR THE PRESENT AND FUTURE.

'What's the best thing to do?' and 'Why should I do it?' are questions that go hand-in-hand; we tend to ask those questions at the same time, and we look to leaders to help us find the answers. But **leaders tend to be more concerned with efficiency than meaning** (so, the former question tends to take precedence over the latter).

In the **'military general'** model of leadership, leaders have vision, strategy, and focus. In such a model, standing out works. But this model doesn't work so well when the issue is not **'how do you defeat an enemy'**, but rather **'how do you reach out and keep people working together to create the future'**.



We put care at the centre of leadership by holding (emotion and thought at the centre), and by hosting (bringing people together).



Over the past six months, we've been having a **'midlife crisis of management'** – we've realised the worldview and institutions we've put our faith in are failing us, but we don't yet have alternatives. The crisis has amplified already-existing vulnerabilities and raised questions about the fairness of our institutions, the purpose of capitalism, and changes in the practice of work.

2

4

There are two kinds of anxiety – performance (**what works?** Can I finish the project, get promoted?) and existential (**what's the meaning?**). Over the course of a career, there is a shift from the first to the second kind of anxiety.

**Leaderism is a cult of leadership that is sustained by the belief that if we have great leaders, and strong leadership skills, we do not need institutions and each other. Leadership is essential, but leaderism is detrimental to organisations.**



6



8

**LEADING WITH CARE IS AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL TO THE 'MILITARY GENERAL' MODEL OF LEADERSHIP. WE NEED CARE IN ORDER TO RECOVER AND RENEW. WE SHOULD BE CARING FOR INSTITUTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS.**



1

3

5

7

9

10

It is important that leaders **allow the future to emerge instead of offering a vision of it and then trying to pull people into that vision.**



## LEADING FOR RECOVERY AND RENEWAL INTERACTIVE ZOOM EVENT

### AUDIENCE Q&A

**Q** There is lots of optimistic talk about change, but will we slip back to old ways when we return to work?

**A** We can't afford not to be optimistic about the potential for change, but we also need to be sceptical about grand pronouncements. Realistically, we will either have our denial reinforced, or with time and support, we can profoundly transform mindsets and practices. Most likely, there will be a polarised response among organisations to these two options.

**Q** How do you see business schools evolving to develop leaders in the manner you outlined?

**A** There is already a lot of change compared to 20 years ago. We are much more experiential and holistic, considering the whole system and the whole person. Bringing people together will endure; the fear is that a small elite will seek the experiential of coming together, while everyone else gets the virtual crumble. This isn't likely to fulfil the promise of the democratisation of knowledge and development. We risk an ivory tower for elite development, and not much for everyone else. Even the office may become a luxury. Rhetoric is ahead of practice, but demand is ahead of rhetoric for business schools – which is a good thing.

**Q** What can we do about executives who don't have the skills or intuitively understand how to behave in a more caring way? Is there any research on the economic value of leading with care?

**A** I'm very ambivalent about having to make a business case for this, but I think one thing that will come out of this crisis is some amazing examples and case studies for this. Within the next six to twelve months, we can probably expect to see those stories and statistics emerging. We also need to distinguish between caring and being interpersonally skilful. Care doesn't always mean being nice – it's showing how the action is in the service of the institution. We don't want to make a business case for politeness.

**Q** How can we work with the resistance in our systems to develop and not go back to 'what was'? That is, how do we make true sustainable change or transformation?

**A** Organisations have to find ways to do two things: reframe and entrench. There are two kinds of resistance in our systems – to the past, and to the future. Institutionalise whatever you want to grow.

**Q** Thinking about the role of capitalism and the apparent failure of governments and institutions and the pressing global issues we face, what changes will be necessary to engage the people with those that lead organisations? How do we attract leaders with the qualities necessary to step up to take on these challenges? And indeed how will organisations come together to truly lean into the multi-dimensional, multi-disciplinary challenges in a more effective way?

**A** First, we need to start calling social connection leadership. One of the most damaging current practices is to call pushing for results 'real leadership', while using 'management' to describe anything toward safety and care. We need to emphasise both. Leaders have two functions – vision and connection. We tend to emphasise and promote the former over the latter, but we need both. There are two kinds of leaders – of purity (which is more exciting in the short-term) and of unity (which is better remembered over the long-term). A crisis makes leaders of purity very appealing. But organisations must find ways to institutionalise the leaders that foster unity instead, the connectors. Otherwise they'll come out of the crisis even more polarised.

**Q** Where does leading with trust fit into all this? How do leaders engender a feeling that they can be trusted on things, short- or long-term?

**A** I see trust as the result of care. The reduction of trust is not necessarily a failure, but a half-success. This is because old models of leadership were largely predicated on a homogeneous group, so the person who was smarter, more competent, and more passionate usually became the leader. In a pluralistic society, you can't say 'I'm smarter, more competent, more passionate' and expect trust. The problem was too much cohesion; today it is too much fragmentation. We're still training leaders for a situation that no longer exists – that is, the 1950s. So the mistrust is coming from that disconnect, and it's a good thing that we interrogate these outdated models. Trust isn't impossible, but has to be made a higher priority.



## LEADING FOR RECOVERY AND RENEWAL INTERACTIVE ZOOM EVENT

### FURTHER READING

Astorino, David and Nellen, Valerie. 2020. **The New Normal Is Now.** RHR International. <https://www.rhrinternationalconsultants.eu/thought-leadership/blog/new-normal-now>

CRF. 2019. **Digital Disruption – Exploring the Implications for Leaders and Leadership Development.** Full Report. <https://www.crforum.co.uk/research-and-resources/digital-disruption-exploring-the-implications-for-leaders-leadership-development>

CRF. 2019. **Digital Disruption – Exploring the Implications for Leaders and Leadership Development.** Post-Meeting Notes. <https://www.crforum.co.uk/research-and-resources/post-meeting-review-notes-digital-disruption-exploring-the-implications-for-leaders-leadership-development>

CRF. 2019. **Digital Disruption – Exploring the Implications for Leaders and Leadership Development.** Speed Read. <https://www.crforum.co.uk/research-and-resources/speed-read-digital-disruption-exploring-the-implications-for-leaders-leadership-development>

Engage. 2020. **Leading Virtually – Practical Steps for Times of Crisis.** <http://www.engagegroup.co.uk/leading-virtually-practical-steps-for-times-of-crisis>

HeadSpring. 2020. **Beyond Covid-19: Developing Leadership Skills for the New Normal.** <https://www.headspringexecutive.com/New-Normal-Leadership>

Mercer. 2020. **Return to a New Normal: Nine Ways Organizations Can Successfully Prepare for a Comeback.** <https://www.mercer.com/our-thinking/return-to-a-new-normal.html>

Mercer. 2020. **The New Shape of Work: How to Adapt, Reset, and Transition to a New Normal.** <https://www.mercer.com/our-thinking/career/the-new-shape-of-work-covid-19.html>

OrgVue. 2020. **Coronavirus: An Action Plan for Business Continuity.** <https://www.orgvue.com/resources/articles/coronavirus-an-action-plan-for-business-continuity>

OrgVue. 2020. **From Crisis to Recovery.** <https://www.orgvue.com/thank-you-for-downloading-from-crisis-to-recovery-ebook/>

Petriglieri, Gianpiero. 2020. **Are Our Management Theories Outdated?** *Harvard Business Review.* <https://hbr.org/2020/06/are-our-management-theories-outdated>

Petriglieri, Gianpiero. 2020. **The Psychology Behind Effective Crisis Leadership.** *Harvard Business Review.* <https://hbr.org/2020/04/the-psychology-behind-effective-crisis-leadership>

Petriglieri, Gianpiero. 2020. **We Are All Zombies Now, But It Has to Stop.** *The Financial Times.* <https://www.ft.com/content/34fea7ea-83c5-11ea-b6e9-a94cffd1d9bf>

Petriglieri, Gianpiero. 2020. **Why Leadership Isn't a Miracle Cure for the COVID-19 Crisis (and What Can Really Help).** *Fast Company.* <https://www.fastcompany.com/90500558/why-leadership-isnt-a-miracle-cure-for-the-covid-19-crisis-and-what-can-really-help>

Petriglieri, Gianpiero. 2020. **Your People Need Care, Not a Battle Cry.** *MIT Sloan Management Review.* <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/your-people-need-care-not-a-battle-cry>

Starek, Joanna. 2020. **Twenty-First Century Leadership for Twenty-First Century Problems.** RHR International. <https://www.rhrinternationalconsultants.eu/thought-leadership/blog/twenty-first-century-leadership-twenty-first-century-problems>

### CRF PARTNERS

CRF's partners are here to support your organisation during the crisis and beyond. Learn more [here](#).

### crf UPCOMING CRF EVENTS

📍 **ONLINE:**  
**HRBPs: Reset and Thrive – Helping Businesses Prepare for an Uncertain Future**  
1<sup>st</sup> July 12.00PM BST

📍 **ONLINE:**  
**Thriving After a Crisis – Diverting Danger and Creating Future-Proof Organisations**  
10<sup>th</sup> July 12.00PM BST

📍 **ONLINE:**  
**The Agile Dashboard**  
22<sup>nd</sup> July 12.00PM BST