



Improving our performance as leaders

Background Note and Agenda for our 12th Leadership Conversation

6.00pm Wednesday, November 22nd 2017 until 3.30pm Thursday, November 23rd

***"To help
others
develop,
start with
yourself!"***

When the boss acts like a little god and tells everyone else they need to improve, that behaviour can be copied at every level of management. Every level then points out how the level below it needs to change. The end result: No one gets much better."

Marshall Goldsmith

*For those who join us on November 22-23, **our aim** is that by 3.30 on the 23rd you will be much clearer in your own mind about how you want to drive up your own performance as a leader and support members of your top team in doing the same.*

**Being
tough on
ourselves**

We all say that we want our team to be top performing, don't we?

But how often are we really TOUGH on ourselves - and the team as a whole?

We occasionally make a bit of a speech to the team about the need to raise our game, and point to one or two aspects of our overall performance where we know that we haven't been up to scratch.

We then whizz through a rapid post mortem of what has been going wrong, being careful to keep it fairly general so that no-one feels they're being picked on. And it's not long before we hear ourselves saying that we mustn't spend too long on this in case we become too negative!

In our defence, we know that discussions about performance have a long tradition of not being particularly honest, or open.

In many organisations there is a culture of keeping criticisms of performance for online feedback, even though it's much more difficult for others to accept criticism when it is in print – and more difficult STILL when it's anonymous!

"To help others develop, start with yourself!"

So we tell ourselves that we're not doing much worse than anyone else. And one of the reasons we make ourselves go along with this is because so much of the discussion about our performance, as CEOs and Executive Directors, is in the context of appraisals that are used to help determine our future career with the business – and what sort of bonus we are going to be paid.

In the world of performance-related pay, there is every incentive to paint as rosy a picture as we can of our own strengths as leaders, and little incentive to be open about our weaknesses.

This might be fine if we want to create a good impression – for a while.

But it doesn't support us in our own leadership development, and understanding our key weaknesses well enough to enable us to leave at least some of them behind.

**Exceptionally
high levels of
trust**

Having a real discussion about our performance as leaders requires very high levels of trust in the other people in on the discussion. That's what we offer you if you join us in Windsor on November 22-23.

After all of our Leadership Conversations so far, Fellows have told us that they felt that they could be completely open and honest with each other, as you can see on our feedback page.

"To help others develop, start with yourself!"

This is why we are so confident that in November we will be able to achieve exceptionally high levels of trust among the group, which will enable us to spend most of our time on those areas where we most want to improve as leaders.

We know that we will be able to trust the fact that any feedback across the group is generous-spirited and comes from a good place.

So we will then be able to concentrate on examining our own performance as leaders and supporting members of our immediate team in performing better themselves.

**Becoming
more effective
as leaders**

In this Conversation we will all share one mission:

***To drive up our own performance
as leaders as high as we can.***

As we achieve this mission, we should be able to work up a whole host of practical ideas for offering stronger leadership to our own teams, and driving up our – and their – performance ever higher.

The deal is simple: we will all perform as highly as we can in pursuit of your improved performance. And we ask you to reciprocate.

"To help others develop, start with yourself!"

This doesn't
stop on
November
23rd!

At the end of the Conversation, we will ask each of you to let us know at the end of March 2018 how much you have managed to improve your performance as a leader.

We will then pool the results and share them with you, without betraying any confidences.

Of course, we want this to be a great Conversation. More importantly, we want to hear from you next March that as a result you have improved your performance as a leader and sustained that improvement.

Outline Agenda

Wednesday, November 22nd, 2017

2.30pm onwards	You can check into your room in St George's House
4.30pm	Tea in the House for those joining Evening Prayer in the Chapel
5.05 pm	Evening Prayer (optional)
6.00pm in the Vicars' Hall	Refreshments, then start of the Conversation. After agreeing our groundrules, we agree our first question for small groups in which we ask you to score your own performance as a leader according to criteria that we will agree together. We also ask what are the one or two aspects of your leadership style that hold you back from giving yourself a higher score
7.30pm	After feedback and debate, we agree on the two main issues for us to explore in groups over dinner
7.45pm	Free time/ drinks until dinner is served promptly in the House at 8.30pm
10.00pm	Private floodlit tour of St George's Chapel (optional)

Agenda continued overleaf

We're starting with ourselves

Agenda *continued*

Thursday, November 23rd, 2017

7.45am	Breakfast is served in St George's House
8.45am Vicars' Hall	We hear any overnight reflections, agree the question for our next round of small groups and "get on a roll"
11.00am	By late morning we will be engaged with the critical challenge of how you each address those key aspects of your leadership that are holding you back from performing to a higher level
12.30pm	A hot buffet lunch is served in the Vicars' Hall. In small groups, we ask what are the main leadership lessons to be drawn from our discussions so far, and the one or two key personal insights that will guide you in in your future development as a leader
1.15pm	We share personal insights and then allocate ourselves to our final round of small groups, when we will ask how you can use the insights to enable you to support your team more in driving up their performance as individual leaders
1.45pm	Our final burst of creative thinking in new small groups, developing practical strategies for modelling higher performing leadership and in the process inspiring our teams to follow our lead
2.30pm	We hear each other's plans and sharpen up the strongest ideas that we can each take away to achieve maximum impact on our own performance as leaders and the overall performance of our top team.

We will finish on the dot of 3.30pm.

AND helping others develop, too!