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# FRESH IDEAS FOR LEADERS

The constant of change and the resilience of the human spirit



Message from CEO Dave Veale

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Friends,

As the country begins to emerge from the pandemic, it is impressive to see the strength and resilience of the human spirit. After months of isolation and tumult, we find ways to keep going. The disruptions to our lives and our organizations have been unprecedented, yet it has been met with unbelievable determination and ingenuity.

The leaders I speak with have found new and innovative ways to keep their teams and businesses going. They are formulating plans for what their workplaces will look like as we reopen.

The speed of the innovation has been remarkable – not just in the shift to remote work but in all aspects of work and life. Privately leaders today are acknowledging that sometimes forced change can be effective.

We know that this pandemic has not been kind and has caused hardship and suffering, but we have also witnessed how people, and communities, have rallied around to help.

The world today is teaching us to focus on what we can control and let go of what we can't.

In Fresh Ideas this month, we bring you some interesting perspectives.

Bruce McLeod, a leadership coach with deep experience in HR, examines the golden opportunity organizations have today to define a high-performance culture.

The disruption brought on by COVID-19 creates a reset and gives senior leaders and their employees a chance to create an effective culture whether that be team or organizational culture.

Also this month, we talk to Sylvie Levesque-Finn, a woman with a long and successful career in the public service, on the importance of communication and motivation today, and how leaders need time for themselves to be effective.

And we hear from Sheldon Kennedy, the former NHL player who disclosed abuse by his junior hockey coach and who today advocates and teaches about respect in the workplace and in sport.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you. Drop me a line.

Be safe and well,



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## Disruption creates an opportunity to redesign corporate culture



My colleague Bruce McLeod, general manager of coaching for Vision Coaching, has been thinking a lot about organizational cultures lately amid the turmoil and disruption of COVID-19.

“With office towers empty and employees scattered to their homes to work remotely, the corporate culture that dominated the work day and drove organizational results hangs in the balance,” he writes [in a recent piece for Leadership Unleashed](#).

“As a leader still dealing in crisis, you might not be all that worried about that today,” Bruce says. “But you should be.”

A former global vice-president of human resources, Bruce argues that now is a good time to design a corporate culture for high performance.

“Organizational cultures are vulnerable now, and searching for a new normal. While that can be destabilizing, it also means that they are likely more pliable than at any point in their history,” he says. “As a leader, you can seize this opportunity to design the culture you want – or you can stand back and watch it redefine by default and root itself stronger than ever before.”

If you are a leader interested in assessing your team or organization’s culture or looking to seize the opportunity to create a culture for high performance, Bruce and the team at Vision Coaching can help.

# Confronting the critical questions facing leaders today



Uncertainties surrounding the pandemic have created uniquely challenging conditions for leaders. Massive disruptions are requiring them to summon all their skills in communicating and motivating in order to manage operations effectively.

After a long and successful career as a leader in the public service, Sylvie Levesque-Finn knows how important it is for leaders to be able to step back from a problem or issue, give themselves space and reflect on their world in a broader context.

*"The way we are doing business now will be the way for the next while,"*

*Sylvie says. "What matters is how leaders show up and continue to support employees during this time, how they adjust with customers and how they step up."*

"Communication is a critical issue for leaders. The last few months have been particularly challenging given that most of the communication has been happening virtually, not just with employees but with customers and stakeholders. They still have to show up as being supportive, as a team member, and they must communicate effectively."

For more insight from Sylvie, visit [Leadership Unleashed](#).

## Words of wisdom and inspiration

Some truly inspiring words this month from Sheldon Kennedy, the former NHL hockey player known for his courage in speaking out about the sexual abuse he suffered as a young man in junior hockey. Among his many accomplishments and accolades, he advocates for respect in the workplace.



**B** The Boiling Point  
Presents

**S** SHIFTING THE EMPLOYEE EXP



I had the privilege, together with my Vision Coaching colleague Dr. Bill Howatt, to speak with Sheldon recently for [an episode of The Boiling Point Podcast](#) series on mental health in the workplace.

Through Respect Group, he works to bring educational programs to workplaces, in sports and schools. These programs give people a baseline understanding and make it possible to build a climate of openness, so people are empowered to not only self-advocate about their mental wellbeing but to check in with others.

Sheldon points out that it's not about being perfect, but being available to listen and give feedback from an honest, caring place. He helps to highlight how we can all play a role in making our workplaces, schools and sports teams safer for everyone.

# Harvard Business Review

The Harvard Business Review features an insightful piece relevant for today, Growth After Trauma. The author, psychologist Richard G. Tedeschi, provides some good advice for the months and years ahead based on his study of posttraumatic growth. "We've learned that negative experiences can spur positive change," he writes, "including a recognition of personal strength, the exploration of new possibilities, improved relationships, a greater appreciation for life, and spiritual growth."

# Forbes

Forbes has a sobering piece entitled Leadership Fail: Why Your Employees Think You Are Failing To Lead. If you can get past the negative language, it has some strong and important reminders for all of us on evaluating our leadership and strengthening our skills as leaders.



At Vision Coaching, we have been engaging in discussions with HR professionals to help them navigate the challenges they are facing today. We already offer a highly-effective program to help them as leaders and influencers, Coaching to Lead for HR Professionals.

Like all of our services, it can be delivered virtually, but we are also now developing webinars packed with guidance and insight that will be of interest to not only HR leaders, but business owners and other executives.

We'll have more details soon. To ensure you don't miss out, register your interest with us [here](#).

*Have your say and drop me a line.  
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