

Developing a **NEW BREED** of leaders

>> What do Mark Carney, Ruby McGregor-Smith and Dr Andy Wood have in common? They are all exemplars of the new breed of leaders that we need for 21st century organisations.

This new breed of leaders are reinventing the way things are done. From the general to the specific, they create a new culture; expect business decisions to fit with agreed values; communicate and engage about difficult issues with clarity and confidence; collaborate with others and develop leaders at every level.

Carney has challenged the Bank of England's attitude to women in senior roles and heralded a significant departure in the UK's monetary

strategy within weeks of taking office as Governor of the Bank of England.

McGregor-Smith has grown the outsourcing company MITIE Group PLC to £2bn pa revenues in her six years as CEO and created a collaborative, adaptive workforce that buzzes with enthusiasm, confidence and agility.

Wood has embraced an eco-friendly approach to business that has won two Queen's Enterprise Awards for

sustainable development as well as building Adnams, a family brewery, into the thriving heart of a Suffolk town.

Cranfield alumnus, Andy Wood, puts values at the heart of everything he does. "Of course, we must be financially successful. But we still run every decision past our values and there are tough conversations to be had when values are undermined. Managers have to have those conversations – the CEO can't do it all on his own.

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“We are hugely committed to our core company values and want to ‘do things right’ to make sure that our impact on society is a positive one. Our values are rooted in making great products without costing the earth.”

At Adnams the sustainability agenda runs throughout the organisation – 90% of waste heat from the brewing process is recycled; the new distribution centre is the greenest warehouse in the country; the anaerobic digester plant is fed by food and brewing waste and the biogas produced used as fuel for Adnams’ trucks. The Southwold brewery is now one of the most modern, energy and water efficient brew streams in the UK.

Adnams’ values also ensure that a proportion of profits are redistributed into the local community and employees at every level are encouraged to contribute to the leadership dialogue. This new breed of CEO recognises that leadership capability is needed throughout the organisation, not just at the top. More profit could be wrung from the business – but profit maximisation

is not as strong a value as customer and employee fulfilment – which has brought Adnams a string of prestigious awards: in 2013 the OBE for Andy Wood; Brewer of the Year for Master Brewer, Fergus Fitzgerald; First Women Business of the Year for Operations Director, Karen Hester; international medals for six different spirits and the coveted Gin Trophy; and, to cap it all, the Investors in People Gold Award.

Ruby McGregor-Smith runs MITIE on four interwoven values: people, passion, fresh thinking and exciting futures. “People and passion – that’s what MITIE is about” she says, “people achieving great things through their own efforts, creating exciting futures through fresh thinking, team spirit, pride and commitment.” They inspire one another to be innovative and create opportunities.

At MITIE, she has created an environment that invites people throughout the organisation to step into leadership. Like Andy Wood, she talks openly with everyone she meets.

She listens to ideas and sanctions experimentation. “We’re only as good as tomorrow” she says and “no ego – it destroys businesses”. With 72,000 staff across a range of businesses it would be easy to fragment but “there are huge benefits from working together” she told participants on the MITIE Executive Development Programme at Cranfield in June. “I want you to be moving jobs every two years – don’t worry about where you fit in the hierarchy, but about what you contribute. I want a more open culture: keep the approachability and caring about people that we’ve always had - it’s OK for people to talk about personal crises – no insecurity just more compassion. Tell people when they’re good at what they do – focus on their strengths not their weaknesses”.

How do you communicate with such a diverse workforce, spread the length and breadth of the country often working unsocial hours? Ruby McGregor-Smith uses social media to find out what people think and to encourage innovation. “I want everything in an app format so that

it can be accessed on a mobile” she says.

Radio 4’s Today programme, listened to by business leaders throughout the land, was the perfect vehicle for Mark Carney to explain his policy on interest rates and set expectations about the kind of leader he is. In ten minutes Carney made clear his intentions and how they would impact the country. He was realistic, reassuring and built a foundation for trust by reminding his audience of his experience and then putting his policies into context. Not once did he evade a question or give an ambiguous response. He was on top of the technicalities, referred to collaborative colleagues, and had a vision for his time in office: how he would “strip out” socially useless attitudes and behaviours by financial institutions and fundamentally change the banking culture so that focus returns to the real economy. Carney noted that the lack of diversity in the Bank of England was “striking”, pledged to “grow top female economists all the way through the ranks” and build capability and eligibility for high office.

It is too soon to judge Carney in his new role but he appears to have all the hallmarks of a new breed of leader.

These three leaders operate in different worlds – Carney on the national stage with international exposure; McGregor-Smith in the corporate sector and Wood in the small business/entrepreneurial field. Yet all three are leaders with very similar characteristics and all three inspire hope, confidence and admiration in their followers. So, how do we develop more leaders like them?

To answer this question we must ask some essential questions:

- What do you believe makes the organisation distinct and purposeful and how does this shape the goals you are trying to achieve?
- What are the values you embrace which will underpin business decisions?
- How do you personally behave so that these become embedded

- throughout the business?
- How will you align people, purpose and processes to work collaboratively to deliver the outputs in the way you want to achieve them?

These are just some of the questions explored by participants on our Executive MSc in Strategic Leadership programme as they develop the insights, knowledge and skills to be one of the new breed of leaders: leaders fit for our times. **MF**

Dr Jacquie Drake and Professor Kim Turnbull James are Directors of the Executive MSc in Strategic Leadership at Cranfield.

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Drake, Jacquie

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