AVENIR
LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

AVENIR LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE: THE LEADERS WE NEED

published by

AVENIR Leadership Institute
a subsidiary of Carey Community Resources

OUR SOCIAL COMMITMENT: AVENIR Leadership Institute is an initiative of The Carey Group and from its surplus assists the Carey Right Track Foundation and Carey Hope in their efforts to transform disadvantaged communities.

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DEVELOPING **LEADERS** WHO **SHAPE THE FUTURE** BY CULTIVATING **FLOURISHING** TEAMS, ORGANISATIONS, AND COMMUNITIES

THE WORLD WE SEE

Those who aim at nothing inevitably hit their target. There is little point in developing leaders unless we have a portrait of the future we hope they will birth. This portrait cannot be drawn in fine detail – for that would stifle creativity and initiative - but the lines can be clear enough to guide, yet generous enough for originality.

The future is not a passive reality.
It doesn't just happen to us.

We shape it with every decision we make and action we take. That's why leaders have such a profound responsibility to contribute to the shape of the world as we experience it.

At AVENIR we see a world where people matter, where our common humanity is celebrated, where leaders guide for the greater good, where effort is rewarded, where assistance is offered when needed. It is a world where differences enrich, and where leaders think deeply about their followers, asking how they can help each to become a better version of their current self. It is a world where people have space to grow, where hope triumphs over skepticism, where the greater good guides individual goals. It is a world where people develop in all their dimensions; one where intellectual, physical, emotional and spiritual maturity are valued. It is a world where we are in touch with our planet and the needs of our environment, a world where we ask the biggest and most significant of questions.

It is a world where we are unafraid to be stretched to reach our potential, and a world where we cheer when others reach theirs. This world is one where leaders take seriously their moral responsibility, where they recognise their responsibility to care for and support others, and where success and ethics are never in tension. It is a world where we are unafraid to be... a world where all can flourish.

This world that we see gives us the blueprints for the **leaders we need**...

EVERYONE THINKS OF CHANGING THE WORLD, BUT NOBODY THINKS ABOUT CHANGING THEMSELVES

–TOLSTOY

THE LEADERS WE NEED

Leaders shape the world.

Whether for better or worse, those who are willing to step up and lead, inevitably shape the experiences of others. We impact the landscape of tomorrow through the choices we make today.

Whilst there is much beauty in the world, there is also chaos. Polarising politics, fractious public dialogue and a culture of suspicion all contribute to the erosion of social trust and the entrenched dualistic thinking that often defines modern approaches to life and leadership.

People seem to qualify as a leader when their online platform is big enough, their voice is loud enough, or their opinions are divisive enough. Technologies and online platforms that offer us new ways of connection have made it possible for one to become a public leader without the painful process of developing character.

And yet we know that there is more to leadership than being the biggest, the loudest or the most opinionated.

So what makes a leader worth following?

Leaders are architects of the future. Because of this we give serious thought to the kind of leader we become, not just how we get there. At AVENIR we aim to develop and produce leaders who are not just *followed* but are *worthy* of following. We are on a mission to cultivate the leaders of tomorrow by instilling a desire for deep listening, personal reflection and respectful, thoughtful engagement in the public space. Our approach is oriented around core commitments that we believe characterise transformative leadership practice. We want to develop leaders who shape the future by cultivating flourishing teams, organisations, and communities.

This is a journey we want you to be a part of too...

OUR MISSION

to redefine leadership

The leaders we need are shaped by a different ethic.

We're on a mission to transform the face of modern leadership. We don't want to exist in cultures where everyone is scrambling to the top, desperate for recognition at the expense of those around them. Where ethics and success stand opposed, and where compassion and generosity are obstacles on the relentless road to profit.

At its core leadership is sacrifice. It is service. It's about giving ourselves to a worthy cause and committing to empower others. By creating environments that are psychologically safe, and fuelled by purpose and passion, we can lead people in ways that stretch and innovate. In turn, this enables teams and organisations to reach their full potential.

We want to usher in a new era of leadership. At AVENIR we aim to do three things. Firstly, we want to cultivate environments of **deep listening**. We also want to develop **reflective and transformative** leaders, and finally we want to engage in **thoughtful public dialogue.**

But what does this really mean?

DEEP **LISTENING**

Impact comes not through having the loudest voice, but by understanding the collective stories of those around us. As we listen to the stories of others, we discover who we truly are. In our mission to cultivate a leadership ethic that shapes the world for good we first need to rediscover the power of deep listening. As we listen – to ourselves, to others, and to the world – new futures begin to unfold. From this place of humility and strength we can become the leaders the world needs.

REFLECTIVE & TRANSFORMATIVE **LEADERSHIP**

Awareness sits at the heart of leadership. Becoming people who listen deeply grants us the ability to self-reflect and acknowledge that our actions make a difference. Good leaders are those who are honest about both their strengths and weaknesses as they seek to serve those they have been entrusted to lead. The mark of a good leader is not just what they accomplish, but the impact they have on those they lead. We develop leaders who are able to reflect on their own practice, as they contribute to the positive transformation of the people and environments they exist in.

THOUGHTFUL **PUBLIC DIALOGUE**

To speak is both a privilege and a gift. When it comes to developing a public voice, we know that genuine contributions come in the form of respectful and thoughtful conversations. Though most people are genuinely searching for meaning, because of the fractious state of public dialogue it is easy to fall prey to dualisms, polarisation or hostility. By becoming those who listen, reflect, and transform, we hope to step into the public conversation around leadership, faith, society and politics in a way that offers the opportunity to engage helpfully as we move collectively toward a future we can all find a home in.

WHAT CORE COMMITMENTS DEFINE YOUR LEADERSHIP?

WE HAVE SOME...

CURIOSITY

COURAGE

CREATIVITY

CANDOR

COMPASSION

CURIOSITY

AWE OVER JUDGEMENT

Curious leaders are eager to learn, grow and develop. Marked by deep humility, leaders who embrace curiosity are willing to ask questions of both themselves and others. They want to explore the intention behind the action; the feeling underneath the response; and the worldview informing the communication. Curious leaders face the world without judgement or hostility, but with openness and wonder. Curiosity is an antidote to cynicism and ensures ongoing growth and development.

COURAGE

RECKON WITH VULNERABILITY

Courageous leaders display a strength that neither overpowers nor diminishes, but is driven by a sense of justice. To be courageous is to acknowledge what is true at the same time as recognising that we all make mistakes. To be courageous is to reckon with our own failures before pointing at the lack in others, to seek to treat everyone with dignity and respect, and to stand up when others are unable to do so. It is the courage to face our own fears, and to tackle them head on. Courageous leaders recognise their role in inspiring and empowering others. It is about being willing to take risks, being stretched and resilient in the face of failure.

CREATIVITY

IMAGINE THE NEW

While leadership entails detail and process it revolves around vision and imagination. The creative leader sees into the future and guides people along the path to that imagined world. To be creative is to harness the force of imagination - for the creative leader is able to imagine new possibilities and move toward unseen horizons. Creativity is more than charisma and art. It is slow to self-censor and enables us to move beyond traditional conventions in pursuit of vision. The creative leader frees team members to dream.

CANDOUR

TRUTH IN KINDNESS

Candour is the quality of being honest and straightforward in both attitude and speech - the ability to make judgments free from discrimination. Candid leaders are honest but still kind. Humility and honesty converge as they seek to bring about positive change in those around them. This posture requires deep self-awareness - for change in others cannot come without change in ourselves. Being candid is a two-way street. It recognises that we *earn* the right to speak into the lives of others, while acknowledging that we must be open to feedback ourselves. Candid leaders speak the truth with care and compassion for the purpose of transformation.

COMPASSION

LEAN IN, NOT OUT

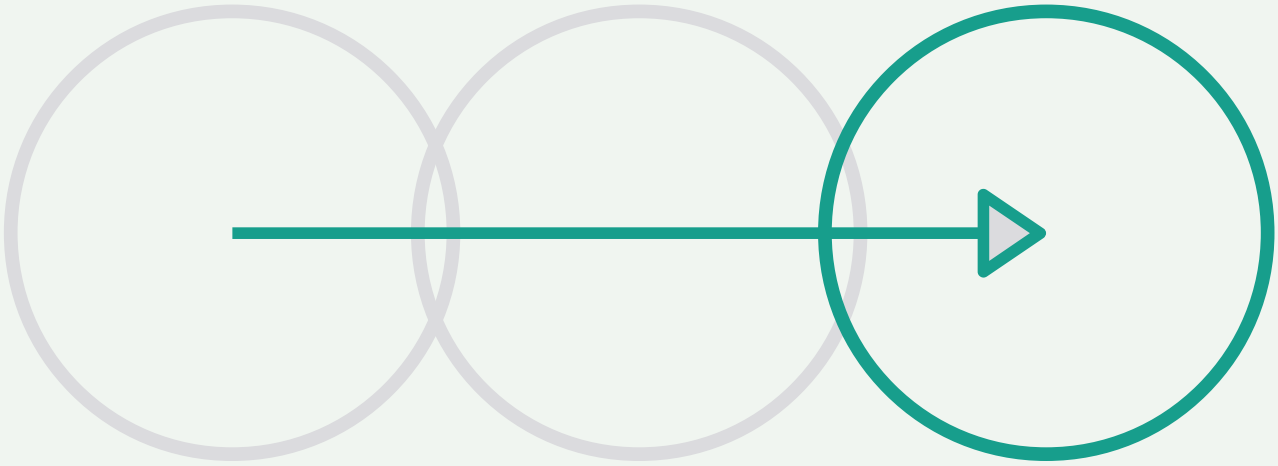
Compassionate leaders value mercy over judgment, support over punishment and recognise that people are wild and complex but inherently valuable. Leaders who embrace compassion place people at the forefront of their concern and are able to step into the messiness of working with others recognising that when people flourish a new kind of culture is born - one where collaboration and innovation is possible. Compassionate leaders seek to restore not reject, caring about each person as they strive to fulfil the mission of the organisation.

YOU MAY BE A LEADER, BUT ARE YOU A LEADER WORTH FOLLOWING?

THE GREEN CIRCLE

It's fine to talk about shaping the future but what does that look like? And how does it play out across multiple industries and organisations?

It is important to think about the future and to consider how we contribute to its arrival. To do this we cultivate conversations in **The Green Circle.** The Green Circle is a methodology we have developed which facilitates conversations about the future enabling leaders to position themselves and their organisations for success.



WHERE HAVE WE **BEEN?**

To think about the future we must be honest about where we have been. This circle recognises our past, identifying what is valuable about it and what must be left behind.

WHERE ARE WE **NOW**?

Realistically assessing our present context is the next step. Noting both strengths and challenges is important. After evaluating where we are now, we are in a position to map out future steps.

WHERE ARE WE **GOING?**

Here we move into The Green Circle, and begin to imagine the future. This isn't about fantasising or posturing, it's about exploring where we are and identifying a trajectory towards tomorrow. It is now our responsibility to shape it.

WHAT WE DO

So when all is said and done, what do we actually do?

In order to fulfil our mission of developing leaders who shape the future, we have a range of services that support organisations on their journey towards tomorrow.

To explore our services more fully, including prices, check out our 2021 Prospectus, or head to avenirleadership.org

OUR TEAM

AVENIR is overseen by an executive team working with a range of consultants, industry specialists, and independent contractors. Our executive team is:

DR BRIAN HARRIS

DIRECTOR

With extensive experience leading organisations and boards in both the education and NFP sectors, Brian brings a wealth of expertise and passion to his work. He is an internationally recognised author in the areas of theology and leadership, a cultural thought-leader, a popular speaker and presenter and an expert in matters relating to education and governance. Brian combines sage-like wisdom with creativity and innovation in order to strategically position individuals and organisations for success into the future.

JENNIFER ARGUE

EXECUTIVE COACH, EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT

Jennifer has been an executive leader in the education sector since 1998. She is passionate about creating cultures where people can flourish and find a community of connection and belonging. In the knowledge that organisational culture is powerfully influenced by leadership, she is committed to developing courageous and compassionate leaders who create and sustain flourishing communities. Jennifer has extensive experience on state and national boards and is regularly engaged as a coach and mentor to executive leaders.

JON BERGMANN

PROJECT MANAGEMENT, PRODUCT DESIGN

With experience in teaching and learning, as well as project management, Jon brings a diverse range of skills and innovations to the team. He has a focus on quality and outcomes and is a sought after speaker in the areas of theology, cultural thought, and leadership.