

August 2024, Newsletter 1



Leadership and Ethics News Around the World

Greetings dear readers. In line with our vision of sharing knowledge that improves the way Leaders inspire and lead in Africa and the world, we bring you a section of interesting headlines relating to Leadership and Ethics in the global community.

Inform



Singapore's rigorous leadership selection process holds lessons for Nigeria

Nigeria could benefit from adopting a more stringent leadership selection process, akin to Singapore's, according to Christopher Kolade, former Nigerian High



When Asking Too Many Questions Undermines Your Leadership

Paul, a high-level executive in a technology company, former university professor, and expert in his field, attended a prestigious trade conference. Paul prides himself on having a learning mindset and

Commissioner to the United Kingdom. In an exclusive interview with BusinessDay, Kolade emphasized the importance of thorough vetting and preparation for leadership roles.

“Nigeria is brimming with rich human and material resources, waiting to be harnessed by purposeful, creative, and innovative leadership,” Kolade said. “Leadership that aligns with cultural values and follows a bottom-up approach is crucial for unlocking Nigeria’s developmental potential.”

However, Nigeria faces significant challenges due to leadership failures, corruption, and poor governance. A report by African Journals Online highlights these issues, underscoring the need for a transformative approach to leadership.

Speaking further, Kolade pointed to Singapore’s leadership selection process as a model to emulate. “In Singapore, they spend four years evaluating an individual for leadership,” he noted. “The character and temperament of a leader are key to performance. If a leader lacks the right qualities and understanding of people, their leadership can fail.”

He stressed the critical importance of selecting the right leaders through rigorous testing. “To choose a leader, assessing their past actions and behaviour is vital. What has this person done before? How have they performed? This evidence is crucial in determining their readiness for higher responsibilities,” Kolade explained.

Kolade, who is also the pioneer President/Chairman of the Society for Corporate Governance Nigeria, highlighted the contrast between business and national leadership training. “In business, we invest in training and

felt at home surrounded by leading industry experts. He was eagerly engaged, asking questions about the latest trends and technologies to broaden his understanding and take in the expertise around him.

However, a fellow attendee’s offhand comment during a break caught Paul off guard: “Your questions are great. It reminds me of my early days when everything was a learning opportunity.” They were making an assumption that Paul was a beginner rather than a seasoned professional.

The comment triggered a moment of introspection for Paul. He realized that his approach, meant to demonstrate openness and a desire to learn, might cast shadows on his perceived experience and authority. Recalling similar reactions at various gatherings, Paul confronted a paradox: Could his learning mentality, while enriching his knowledge, inadvertently diminish his stature in the eyes of his peers?

Although it’s widely accepted that [good leaders are good learners](#), a learning mentality can also have a darker side. If not carefully managed, it might lead to a perception of decreased effectiveness, less expertise, and lower efficiency.

The results of Paul’s 360-degree feedback provided the confirmation he needed to realize that his learning mindset, although well intentioned, had cemented a perception of a person who was indecisive, passive aggressive, and less competent. When I asked his stakeholders what that looked like, the answer was unanimous: He asks too many questions.

So, how can you keep your learning mentality from getting in the way of your growth and tarnishing others’ perception

preparing senior managers. But for national leadership, we often neglect this. Singapore's approach ensures that leaders have proven themselves at various levels before taking on new roles," he said.

He discussed the broader issue of leadership failure across Africa. "Leadership failure is inevitable if the conditions for good performance are not established. Leadership is a responsibility, not just a title or status. It requires learning and humility. Leaders must acknowledge the need to learn, sometimes even from those junior to them," he said.

[learn more...](#)

of you?

The Unintended Consequences of a Learning Mentality

Like Paul, many leaders with an ingrained learning mentality are sometimes oblivious to the signals their frequent question-asking sends. Here are three ways stakeholders might misperceive your inquisitive learning behavior:

1. Decreased effectiveness

Effective leaders [are expected to foster collaboration and productivity](#) within their teams. When a leader's learning approach appears to be overbearing or overly inquisitive, it can be [perceived as less effective](#). A leader's constant questioning can also make team members feel scrutinized and judged, leading to a defensive posture rather than an open and collaborative one and ultimately harming innovation and collaboration.

2. Undermined expertise

[Leaders need to exude confidence](#) and demonstrate their expertise to maintain their authority in a subject matter. In corporate cultures where confidence is equated with having answers, a leader's persistent questioning can be perceived as a lack of self-assurance in their expertise.

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Lagos Business School's talents initiative recalibrates youth's career narratives

Nigeria is blessed with talented, industrious, and relentless [creative minds](#), but with no enablers to actualize their dreams.

The Lagos Business School's Young Talents Programme (YTP) is designed to bridge this mentorship gap.

Some of the innovative talents mentored through YTP shared their experiences with BusinessDay.

Victoria Okesipe-Babalola

Victoria Okesipe-Babalola, a mathematics graduate of the University of Ibadan and now a research assistant at LBS, was at the 2023 YTP with a lot of positive feelings.

"It feels like ages ago because I've learned so much from the brilliant minds at LBS," she said.

She said the experience was incredible and a perfect blend of academic rigour and real-world practicality.

"One of the highlights of my YTP experience was the "Meet the CEO" session, where I had the incredible opportunity to hear from the CEO of Sycamore. Ng.

"The insights highlighted how crucial investing in people is for any company's success and shaped my approach to personal development," she explained.

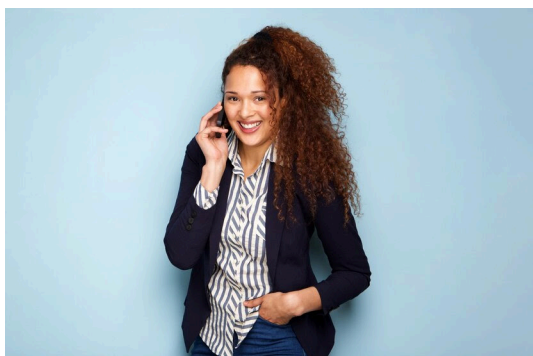
Okesipe-Babalola disclosed that the experience set her up for success by connecting her with Tayo Otubanjo, a professor of marketing at LBS.

Her childhood journey to life was shaped by her parents, who instilled in her the values of diligence and faith, which are the fulcrum of her life.

"Their constant encouragement to excel academically was the key to my unlimited possibilities and has been my driving force," she noted.

[Learn more](#)

Emulate



How To Prove You're A Leader When Your Title Says Individual Contributor

In most workplaces, leadership is often associated with titles, managerial positions, and having a team to lead, but true leadership extends beyond these traditional measures. You don't need the letters SVP before your name or a slew of direct reports to showcase leadership qualities. Whether you're an intern or someone who has just embarked on your career journey, you can be seen as a leader when you position yourself as a someone who has a leadership mindset, relevant skills and aspirations to become a successful leader. Here's how you can show you are a leader at work, even when you technically have no one to lead.

Become A Change Champion

With the rate and scope of change increasing, embracing and supporting change is critical. [Become a change agent](#) and initiate change to demonstrate



Leaders Need to Reframe the Return-to-Office Conversation

There is no easy solution for companies trying to craft policies that balance in-office and flexible working, as there are undeniable [benefits to both approaches](#). Not only that, [recent research](#) at Microsoft, SpaceX, and Apple found that the way RTO mandates were introduced and implemented had a significant impact on departures, particularly among employees with longer tenure. To be successful, one thing is certain: Companies need to [engage in dialogue](#) with employees and be explicit and honest about [which outcomes are most critical](#).

What's clear from our discussions with executives and employees is that how the issue is framed is an oft-overlooked — but very important —

piece of the puzzle. Framing refers to how an issue is presented; it's the meaning layered onto an issue or situation that shapes how people think about its objective facts. More precisely, it's about

strategic thinking – looking beyond your role and daily activities. Take initiative by identifying opportunities for improvement and acting on them without waiting for instructions. Whether it's proposing a new project, optimizing existing processes, or volunteering for challenging tasks, stepping up shows that you are not change averse and that you're committed to making a positive difference. This proactive approach not only demonstrates leadership, it also builds your personal brand as someone who is dedicated and resourceful.

Communicate Effectively

Effective communication is key to leadership, regardless of your position.

Clear, concise, and respectful communication fosters collaboration and trust. Share your ideas confidently in meetings, provide constructive feedback, and actively listen to others. Additionally, when you keep stakeholders informed about your progress and any challenges you encounter, you're demonstrating transparency and accountability, traits that are highly valued in leaders.

[Learn more](#)

re-framing: deliberately replacing taken-for-granted cognitive frames with more helpful ones. Consider the example of framing a tricky situation as an opportunity instead of a problem.

How to Reframe the Flexibility Conversation

We know from social science research that how a problem is framed has a huge impact on outcomes. Framing an issue in terms of loss-versus-gain changes decision outcomes, just as thinking in terms of fixed-pie versus win-win shapes negotiations, and growth-versus-fixed mindsets enable stretch goals and learning.

When the media presents endless headlines about the “fight,” “battle,” or “war” over flexible work, it matters. Framed with organizations’ interests on one side (e.g., the need for innovation, concerns about culture) and individual interests on the other (e.g., work-life balance, lower cost of living, less time spent commuting), the issue becomes harder to solve, because “wars” resist settlement and “contests” are either won or lost, not redesigned.

Our conversations with executives and employees echo this and reveal a core assumption that wins for one side mean losses for the other. One of us, Mark, has studied remote and hybrid work for over 20 years and found ample evidence that framing the situation not as us-versus-them but as a communal objective requiring collective effort [works](#). Meanwhile, Amy has found that how an innovation or improvement opportunity is [framed](#) affects its implementation success. Today's leaders need to reframe

their own narratives accordingly as they create and communicate flexible work policies.

[Learn more](#)

Inculcate



How CEOs Build Confidence in Their Leadership

New CEOs frequently face a conundrum. While the people around them publicly express high hopes for what they'll be able to achieve, in private those same people are skeptical. As a result many new CEOs underestimate how much work it takes to build confidence in their leadership—something that's crucial to their ability to effectively drive change. Buoyed by outward expressions of support and eager to make their mark, they steam ahead with bold new initiatives before they've won the full support and trust of all stakeholders—and that gets them into trouble.

You can't blame new CEOs for falling into the speed trap. The conventional wisdom, after all, is that they have roughly 90 days to prove themselves to their organizations. But the process actually takes longer than that—far longer, according to our research and experience. Gaining the confidence of all stakeholders, it turns out, takes a full two years. And only by focusing strategically and purposefully on building trust during that period can CEOs genuinely create the conditions for long-term success.

How did we arrive at that two-year figure? By carefully studying nearly 1,400 CEOs who have led S&P 500 firms during this century. First we had to devise a reliable way of defining and measuring confidence in them. Typically, we think of confidence as a quality

that has a social value, helping leaders influence others. But it also has a monetary value: Investors assign multiples to stocks that reflect their confidence in companies' continued ability to generate shareholder returns. We reasoned that the enterprise multiple could be considered a measurable proxy for the confidence in their leadership that CEOs build during the various phases of their time in office. (For more on that see "[The CEO Life Cycle](#)," HBR, November–December 2019.) The enterprise multiple is a company's total enterprise value divided by its earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortization (EBITDA); the higher it is, the greater the confidence in a CEO's ability to deliver superior performance in the future.

Once we had established a widely applicable measure, we rewound the clock to analyze how the CEOs in our study had gained people's confidence year after year. We combined those insights with interview data gathered by Spencer Stuart, a leadership-advisory firm that routinely partners with organizations to improve CEO performance (and that employs Claudius and Jason). We also looked at a range of other indicators of CEO effectiveness, including revenue growth, total shareholder returns, profitability, and ESG performance. This blend of quantitative and qualitative data provided us with strong evidence about the pace at which leaders earn stakeholders' support over time, the ways they manage that challenge, and the benefits that accrue from getting things right.

This led us to a striking discovery: While it typically takes far longer than we think for new CEOs to get others to believe in them, when they focus strategically on confidence building during their first two years, they set off a virtuous cycle that leads to a remarkable and consistent increase in their companies' enterprise multiples in the years that follow. We call this increase the *confidence premium*. (See the exhibit "Top Performers Take Off in Year Three.

[Learn more](#)

Empower



Delegating to AI? 5 Questions to Create Ethical Guardrails

AI is starting to hold rockstar status in our daily lives, prompting the question: **“In light of the risks, how can we use Artificial Intelligence (AI) ethically?”**

This was a key topic we discussed at [Nehemiah Entrepreneurship Community](#)'s recent Global Forum on Kingdom Business and Artificial Intelligence.

Whether we measure AI headlines or AI-related stock prices, enthusiasm for AI today is frenzied. As it synthesizes massive amounts of data in seconds and delivers answers to problems we never considered asking, AI is disrupting every industry by creating exponential improvements to efficiencies and creative content at a speed we've never seen.

Unlike tools of the past, AI continually **LEARNS** from vast amounts of data, enabling it to perform **NEW** tasks and create **NEW** content without having to be programmed.

The result?

Humans are delegating decisions to AI at a breathtaking rate.

This opens new windows of opportunity, but it also creates new risks:

- **Economic Risk:** AI is already displacing jobs, and even though new jobs will be created, it will likely not be for the same people.
- **Legal Risk:** AI scrapes large volumes of information, which may be stolen, inaccurate, or misrepresentative.
- **Security and Privacy Risk:** AI can collect and track enormous amounts of information, often without our knowledge, which can lead to privacy and security breaches.
- **Environmental Risk:** AI consumes ten times more computer energy than traditional IT applications, threatening to create a burden to the grid.
- **Decision-Making Risk:** AI has no moral center. AI's morality is shaped by the biases of its human trainers – intentionally or unintentionally. Unfair or unsafe decisions can result from biases or incorrect data.

How do we navigate all these risks?

We can start by realizing that AI is a bright, enthusiastic but naive child.

And as Graham Nash encouraged in his song, we need to “teach our children well.”

Humans: Teach Your "AI Children" Well

How do humans responsibly raise any child? By teaching them right from wrong. If AI is not taught ethical values, it can make unexpected or unethical decisions.

[Learn more](#)

CKCRLE News

Upcoming Programmes



Unlock the Power of Your Team: *Driving a High-Performing Culture 2.0*

Presented by: Christopher Kolade Center for Research in Leadership and Ethics at Lagos Business School

We are thrilled to announce the return of our acclaimed program, "Driving a High-Performing Culture: Elevate Your Organization to the Next Level."

Join us for an immersive experience that will empower you to unlock your team's full potential and achieve outstanding results. This program is designed to equip you with the essential strategies for cultivating a culture that fosters success, innovation, and growth.

Don't miss this opportunity to transform your organizational culture and drive exceptional performance.

Key Takeaways:

- Align your team around a shared vision and purpose
- Foster a culture of trust, accountability, and open communication
- Drive innovation and creativity through experimentation and learning
- Build a strong, cohesive team that works together towards common goals

Transform Your Organization:

- Learn from expert facilitators with real-world experience
- Engage in interactive exercises and group discussions
- Apply practical tools and frameworks to your own organization
- Network with like-minded leaders and professionals

Benefits:

- Effective leadership strategy
- Employee engagement and motivation
- Implementation framework
- Networking opportunity

Outcomes:

- Boost employee engagement and motivation
- Improve collaboration and teamwork
- Drive innovation and growth
- Achieve exceptional results and surpass your goals

Program Details:

- Date: October, 29th and 30th 2024
- Time: 9am
- Location: Lagos Business School

Register Now:

Don't miss this opportunity to elevate your team's performance. Register now and take the first step towards a high-performing culture.

We look forward to helping you unlock the power of your team!